

Very Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. Name the marginal groups.

Ans. Adivasis, Dalits, Muslims, women and others.

Q. 2. Explain the Safai Karamchari Andolan.

Ans. Safai Karamchari Andolan is an organisation in Andhra Pradesh, working with manual scavengers.

Q. 3. Explain Article 15 of the Constitution.

Ans. Article 15 of the Constitution states that no citizen of India shall be discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Q. 4. Which Fundamental Rights have been drawn upon the minority groups?

Ans. The Right to Freedom of Religion and Cultural and Educational Rights have been drawn upon the minority groups.

Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. Define manual scavenging.

Ans. Manual scavenging refers to the practice of removing human and animal waste/excreta using brooms, tin plates and baskets from dry latrines and carrying it on the head to disposal grounds some distance away.

Q. 2. To protect the manual scavengers from serious health hazards what did the government do?

Ans. In 1993, the government passed the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act. This law prohibits the employment of manual scavengers as well as the construction of dry latrines.

Q. 3. How do the government and the Constitution promote social justice? Give an example.

Ans. (i) Both Central and State governments create specific schemes in tribal areas or in areas that have a high Dalit population.

(ii) For example, the government provides for free or subsidised hostels for students of Dalit and Adivasi communities so that they can avail of education facilities that are not available in their localities.

Q. 4. What is reservation policy?

Ans. (i) Reservation policy is very significant and highly contentious.

(ii) The laws which reserve seats in education and government employment for Dalits and Adivasis are based on an important argument that in a society like ours, where for centuries various sections of the population have been denied opportunities to learn and to work in order to develop new skills or vocations, a democratic government needs to step in and assist these sections.

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Describe the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Ans. (i) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was framed in 1989 to protest against the domination and violence of the powerful communities against Dalits and other tribal groups.

(ii) In order to indicate to the government that untouchability was still being practised and in the most hideous manner, Dalit groups demanded new laws that would list the various sorts of violence against Dalits and prescribe stringent punishment for those who indulge in them.

Q. 2. Mention the crimes that have been dealt with by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act?

Ans. This act contains a very long list of crimes, some of which are too horrible even to contemplate. The act distinguishes several levels of crimes

(i) Firstly, it lists modes of humiliation that are both physically horrific and morally reprehensible and seeks to punish those who:

- a. Force a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe to drink or eat any inedible or obnoxious substance.
- b. Forcibly removes clothes of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe member or parades him or her naked or with painted face or body, or commits any similar act which is derogatory to human dignity.

(ii) The act recognises crimes against Dalit and tribal/women and therefore seeks to penalise anyone who:

- a. Assaults or uses force on any woman belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe with intent to dishonour her.

(iii) Actions that disposes Dalits and Adivasis.

Q. 3. Define the demands of Adivasis and the 1989 Act.

Ans. (i) The 1989 Act is important as Adivasi activists refer to it to defend their right to occupy land that was traditionally theirs.

(ii) Adivasis, often unwilling to move from their land, are forcibly displaced.

(iii) This Act merely confirm that the land belonging to the tribal people cannot be sold to or bought by non-tribal people.

(iv) C K Janu, an Adivasi activist, has pointed out that one of the violaters of Constitutional Rights guaranteed to tribal people are governments in the various states

of India—for it is they who allow non-tribal encroachers in the form of timber merchants, paper mills, etc. to exploit tribal land and to forcibly evict tribal people from their traditional forests in the process of declaring forests as reserved or as sanctuaries.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q. 1. Describe Article 17 of the Constitution.

Ans. (i) Article 17 of the Constitution states that untouchability has been abolished.

(ii) This means no one can henceforth prevent Dalits from educating themselves, entering temples, using public facilities, etc.

(iii) It is wrong to practise untouchability and is a punishable crime now.

Q. 2. How does the reservation policy work?

Ans. (i) Students applying to the educational institutions and those applying for posts in government are expected to furnish proof of their caste or tribe status, in the form of caste and tribe certificates.

(ii) If a particular Dalit caste or a certain tribe is on the government list, then a candidate from that caste or tribe can avail of the benefit of reservation.