

QUESTION 01

भारतीय संदर्भ में "धर्मनिरपेक्षता" का क्या अर्थ है? भारतीय धर्मनिरपेक्षता की विशेषताओं पर चर्चा कीजिए और इसकी तुलना पश्चिमी मॉडल से कीजिए। (10 अंक, 150 शब्द)

What does "secularism" mean in the Indian context? Discuss the features of Indian secularism and compare it with the Western model. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

Thought Process (Pre-Writing Work)

- Parts of the question with expected marks criteria
- Directive Word(s)
- Topic Word(s)
- Limiting Words
- Writing Presentation
- Writing Interpretation

This section will be discussed in the Answer Discussion Class.

Description of the Answer Content

In the Indian context, secularism is a constitutional principle that does not separate the state and religion completely, but rather maintains a "principled distance" to ensure equal treatment and respect for all religions and reflects the philosophy of Sarva Dharma Sambhava, or "equal respect for all religions". The word "secular" was added to the Preamble by the 42nd Amendment in 1976 and in S. R. Bommai v. Union of India case, the Supreme Court of India has affirmed secularism as part of the "basic structure" of the Constitution.

Features of Indian Secularism:

1. **Equal respect for all religions:** The state treats all religions neutrally and does not patronize any single one.
2. **State-supported religious reform:** The state can interfere in religious practices to eliminate social evils, such as abolishing untouchability within Hinduism or criminalizing triple talaq among Muslims.

- 3. Constitutional guarantees as fundamental rights:** Article 14 guarantees equality before the law, regardless of religion, Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion and Articles 25 to 28 guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, including the right to manage religious affairs and freedom from religious instruction in state-funded schools.
- 4. Protection of religious minorities rights:** Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution ensure the freedom of religious minorities to establish and administer their own educational institutions with possible state aid.

Compare with the Western Model:

Key Aspects	Indian Secularism	Western Secularism
State-Religion relation	The state and religion are not mutually exclusive	The state and religion are mutually exclusive
Equal treatment	Emphasizes "equal respect for all religions" (Sarva Dharma Sambhava)	Treats all religions with equal indifference, relegating religion to the private sphere
Intervention	Allows for state intervention in religious affairs to enact social reforms	Non-interference is the norm; the state only intervenes if religious activities violate the law
Minority rights	Protects both the religious freedom of individuals and the specific rights of religious communities	Focuses primarily on individual rights and freedoms

If Aspirants have any doubts, kindly ask the Mentor in the Answer Discussion Class

The purpose of this explanation is to value addition only.

One Model Answer can be...

In India, secularism implies equal respect and treatment of all religions by the State. Unlike the Western notion of strict separation of religion and state, Indian secularism focuses on maintaining a principled distance from all religions while allowing state intervention to ensure equality and reform.

Features of Indian Secularism:

- 1. Equal Respect:** The State respects all religions equally.
- 2. Freedom of Religion:** Citizens have the right to profess, practice, and propagate their faith (Article 25).
- 3. Equal law for all religions:** All religions are equal in the eyes of law. (e.g., article 14 of the Constitution)
- 4. State Intervention:** The State can intervene in religious practices to ensure social reform (e.g., banning untouchability).
- 5. No Official Religion:** India has no state religion.
- 6. Religious Pluralism:** Emphasizes coexistence of diverse faiths.

Comparison with Western Model:

Key Aspects	Indian Secularism	Western Secularism
State-Religion relation	Principled distance	Strict separation
Equal treatment	Emphasizes "equal respect for all religions"	Relegating religion to the private sphere
Intervention	Allows reform within religions	Minimal or no intervention
Minority rights	Protects the rights of religious communities	Focuses primarily on individual rights and freedoms
Religion in Public life	Permitted with regulation	Largely excluded

In essence, Indian secularism is more accommodative and reformative compared to the Western model.

Aspirants can use the brainstorming method to answer such information. Such method helps in avoiding unnecessary rambling and ensures that all the main points are covered within the word count.

Space for Answer Discussion

www.mainspractice.com