

Mains PYQs - GS-II (2026) (Q. 13 - 15)

13. How far has the Indian federal framework been successful in accommodating regional and cultural diversities? Highlight the role of asymmetric federalism and suggest measures to make dispute resolution mechanisms more effective. (15 marks, 250 words)

Direction: Intro----How far the success? + Role of asymmetric federalism + Measures-----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Describe the Indian federal system.

Main Body

How far has the Indian federal framework been successful?

- Linguistic reorganisation of states
- Special category status to states - Under Article 371 series, 5th and 6th Schedule.
- Democratic decentralisation - 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts.
- Cultural rights under Article 29 and 30.
- Classical language status.

Role of asymmetric federalism

- Asymmetric federalism - Different States/regions may enjoy different constitutional arrangements according to their historical, cultural and geographical circumstances.
- Special category status to states - Under Article 371 series.
- 5th and 6th Schedule areas.
- Finance Commission.

Measures to make dispute resolution mechanisms more effective

- Strengthen the Inter-State Council
- Strengthen Zonal Councils
- Reform water-dispute mechanisms
- Promote cooperative federalism
- Improve fiscal federalism
- GST Council meeting
- Reforming various institutions like NITI Aayog, etc.

Conclusion:

Give a balanced conclusion.

India's federal success lies not in uniformity but in its ability to accommodate diversity within constitutional unity.

14. Examine how the separation of powers is practised in India compared to the rigid presidential model of the United States of America. In this context, compare the actual authority of the Indian Prime Minister with that of the President of the USA. (15 marks, 250 words)

Direction: Intro-----Separation of Power + PM (India) vs President (USA)-----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Brief about separation of powers.

Main Body

Separation of powers: India vs the USA

Features	Indian Model	USA's Model
Separation of powers	Not strict separation of powers	Rigid and strict separation
Constitutional system	Parliamentary	Presidential
Executive-legislature relationship	Fused - Executive is a subset of the Legislature and is directly accountable to it.	Strictly Separated - Members of the Executive cannot hold a seat in Congress.
Executive authority	Formally vested in the President; exercised by the CoM headed by the Prime Minister.	Vested in the President, who heads the executive.
Judicial review	Courts can review legislative and executive action for constitutional validity	Courts can review legislative and executive action for constitutional validity
Legislative accountability	Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha	President is not politically accountable to Congress through a confidence vote

Authority of the Indian Prime Minister vs the US President

Features	PM (India)	President (USA)
Executive Authority	Head of the Government	Both the Head of State and Head of Government

Appointment/ Selection	Indirect appointment - The political party with a majority chooses its leader.	Directly elected
Tenure	Dynamic. The PM remains in power only as long as they retain the confidence of the Lok Sabha.	Fixed four-year term (maximum of two terms)
Military authority	Exercised through the constitutional and statutory chain of command.	President is Commander-in-Chief, subject to constitutional and congressional limits
Removal	Loss of majority or resignation	Only by impeachment by the House of Representatives and conviction by the Senate

Conclusion:

Give a balanced conclusion.

India adopts a system of functional separation combined with parliamentary responsibility, whereas the USA relies on institutional separation and constitutional checks and balances.

15. To what extent do pressure groups, social movements and corporate lobbies deepen pluralistic democracy in India by representing excluded interests? Analyse whether the growing convergence of corporate wealth and political power poses a threat to the autonomy of formal democratic institutions. (15 marks, 250 words)

Direction: Intro ----- to what extent does it deepen pluralist democracy? + Whether growing convergence pose a threat?-----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Describe Pressure groups (or) Pluralist Democracy.

Main Body

To what extent do these groups deepen pluralistic democracy?

- Empowering the excluded groups interest by organizing movements, protest, etc. Examples: Narmada Bachao Andolan (advocating for displaced indigenous populations).
- Movements result in major legislative frameworks – RTI Act, 2005, Forest Rights Act, 2006
- Influencing policy outcomes
- Monitor governance, raise awareness and hold authorities accountable
- Public consultations and community mobilisation can enable direct citizen engagement.

Threat of Corporate-Political Convergence to Institutional Autonomy

- Unequal access to policymaking
- Opaque political financing
- Excessive corporate influence affects institutional autonomy
- Unequal digital access
- Threatening media neutrality

Conclusion:

Give a balanced conclusion.

