

CBSE CLASS X
Social Science (087)

QUESTION PAPER
AI-generated question paper

Code: IQ1XDX

Questions: 37

Maximum Marks: 76

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SELECTIONS USED

Subject	Social Science
Lessons	2 Federalism
Level of understanding	Exam-ready
Question selection	CBSE board paper, whole lesson (~80 marks across Sections A-E)
Model	claude-sonnet-4-6

Composition — Difficulty: 13 straightforward · 15 medium · 9 deep | Types: 15 MCQ · 6 Very short · 6 Short · 4 Assertion–reason · 3 Long · 3 Case-based | Sections: A 19Q/19m · B 6Q/12m · C 6Q/18m · D 3Q/15m · E 3Q/12m

Q1. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

Which of the following best describes a federal system of government?

- ((A)) The central government holds all powers and delegates some to provinces at its discretion.
 ((B)) Power is divided between a central authority and constituent units, each enjoying independent authority.
 ((C)) The legislature, executive and judiciary share power at the national level.
 ((D)) Elected officials exercise supreme power without any constitutional limits.

- A The central government holds all powers and delegates some to provinces at its discretion.
 B Power is divided between a central authority and constituent units, each enjoying independent authority.
 C The legislature, executive and judiciary share power at the national level.
 D Elected officials exercise supreme power without any constitutional limits.

◆ Federalism

Q2. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

USA, Switzerland and Australia are examples of which type of federation?

- ((A)) Holding together federation
 ((B)) Coming together federation
 ((C)) Unitary federation
 ((D)) Concurrent federation

- A Holding together federation
 B Coming together federation
 C Unitary federation
 D Concurrent federation

◆ Federalism

Q3. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

Which of the following subjects is included in the Concurrent List of the Indian Constitution?

- ((A)) Defence
- ((B)) Banking
- ((C)) Education
- ((D)) Agriculture

- A Defence
- B Banking
- C Education
- D Agriculture

◆ Federalism

Q4. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

What is the term used for areas like Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Delhi that are too small to be independent States but cannot be merged with existing States?

- ((A)) Scheduled Areas
- ((B)) Union Territories
- ((C)) Autonomous Districts
- ((D)) Special Zones

- A Scheduled Areas
- B Union Territories
- C Autonomous Districts
- D Special Zones

◆ Federalism

Q5. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

Which institution is responsible for conducting panchayat and municipal elections in each State?

- ((A)) Election Commission of India
- ((B)) State Legislature
- ((C)) State Election Commission
- ((D)) Zilla Parishad

- A Election Commission of India
- B State Legislature
- C State Election Commission
- D Zilla Parishad

◆ Federalism

Q6. medium exam-ready**[1]**

Read the following statements about the Union List and choose the correct option:

- I. It includes subjects of national importance.
- II. Both Union and State Governments can make laws on it.
- III. Defence and foreign affairs are part of it.
- IV. Banking and currency are included in it.

- ((A)) Only I, II and III are correct.
 - ((B)) Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - ((C)) Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - ((D)) Only I, II and IV are correct.
- A Only I, II and III are correct.
 - B Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - C Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - D Only I, II and IV are correct.

◆ Federalism

Q7. medium exam-ready**[1]**

In 'holding together' federations, which of the following is generally true?

- ((A)) All constituent units have equal powers and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.
 - ((B)) Independent states come together voluntarily to form a bigger unit.
 - ((C)) The Central Government tends to be more powerful than the States.
 - ((D)) The constituent units can withdraw from the federation at any time.
- A All constituent units have equal powers and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.
 - B Independent states come together voluntarily to form a bigger unit.
 - C The Central Government tends to be more powerful than the States.
 - D The constituent units can withdraw from the federation at any time.

◆ Federalism

Q8. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

Which year marked the constitutional amendment that made local government a more powerful and effective third tier of democracy in India?

- ((A)) 1947
 - ((B)) 1976
 - ((C)) 1992
 - ((D)) 2000
- A 1947
 - B 1976
 - C 1992
 - D 2000

◆ Federalism

Q9. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

The political head of a Zilla Parishad is the:

- ((A)) Collector
 - ((B)) Sarpanch
 - ((C)) Zilla Parishad Chairperson
 - ((D)) Mayor
- A Collector
 - B Sarpanch
 - C Zilla Parishad Chairperson
 - D Mayor

◆ Federalism

Q10. medium exam-ready

[1]

Consider the following statements about the amendment process of the Indian Constitution's power-sharing arrangement and choose the correct option:

- I. The Parliament alone can change the power-sharing arrangement between Union and States.
- II. Any change must be passed by both Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority.
- III. After Parliament passes it, at least half the State legislatures must ratify it.
- IV. The President's assent is the only requirement for such a change.

- ((A)) Only I and IV are correct.
 - ((B)) Only II and III are correct.
 - ((C)) Only I, II and III are correct.
 - ((D)) Only II, III and IV are correct.
- A Only I and IV are correct.
 - B Only II and III are correct.
 - C Only I, II and III are correct.
 - D Only II, III and IV are correct.

◆ Federalism

Q11. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

How many languages are recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Indian Constitution?

- ((A)) 14
 - ((B)) 18
 - ((C)) 22
 - ((D)) 28
- A 14
 - B 18
 - C 22
 - D 28

◆ Federalism

Q12. medium exam-ready**[1]**

Read the following statements about the Gram Sabha and choose the correct option:

- I. It consists of all voters in the village.
- II. It must meet at least twice or thrice a year.
- III. It approves the annual budget of the gram panchayat.
- IV. Its decisions can be overruled by the Block Samiti at any time.

- ((A)) Only I, II and III are correct.
 - ((B)) Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - ((C)) Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - ((D)) All four are correct.
- A Only I, II and III are correct.
 - B Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - C Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - D All four are correct.

◆ Federalism

Q13. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

If a subject does not fall under any of the three lists or arises after the Constitution was made, who has the power to legislate on it?

- ((A)) State Government
 - ((B)) Union Government
 - ((C)) Supreme Court
 - ((D)) Both Union and State Governments jointly
- A State Government
 - B Union Government
 - C Supreme Court
 - D Both Union and State Governments jointly

◆ Federalism

Q14. medium exam-ready**[1]**

Which of the following is NOT a feature of federalism?

- ((A)) Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified.
 - ((B)) The central government can order the state government on all matters.
 - ((C)) Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and powers of different levels.
 - ((D)) The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be changed unilaterally by one level of government.
- A Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified.
 - B The central government can order the state government on all matters.
 - C Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and powers of different levels.
 - D The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be changed unilaterally by one level of government.

◆ Federalism

Q15. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

At least what fraction of all positions in local government bodies are reserved for women after the 1992 constitutional amendment?

- ((A)) One-fourth
- ((B)) One-third
- ((C)) One-half
- ((D)) Two-thirds

- A One-fourth
- B One-third
- C One-half
- D Two-thirds

◆ Federalism

Q16. deep exam-ready

[1]

****Assertion (A):**** The formation of linguistic States in India strengthened national unity rather than weakening it.

****Reason (R):**** The demand for linguistic States was initially resisted by national leaders who feared it would lead to the country's disintegration.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- ((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- ((C)) A is true but R is false.
- ((D)) A is false but R is true.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- C A is true but R is false.
- D A is false but R is true.

◆ Federalism

Q17. deep exam-ready

[1]

****Assertion (A):**** After 1990, the spirit of federalism became more effective in India than it was in the early years of the Constitution.

****Reason (R):**** The rise of regional political parties and coalition governments at the Centre created a new culture of power sharing and greater respect for State autonomy.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- ((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- ((C)) A is true but R is false.
- ((D)) A is false but R is true.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- C A is true but R is false.
- D A is false but R is true.

◆ Federalism

Q18. medium exam-ready**[1]**

****Assertion (A):**** The Indian Constitution gives the status of 'national language' to Hindi.

****Reason (R):**** Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40 per cent of Indians, so safeguards were provided for other languages.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
 ((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
 ((C)) A is false but R is true.
 ((D)) Both A and R are false.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
 B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
 C A is false but R is true.
 D Both A and R are false.

◆ Federalism

Q19. medium exam-ready**[1]**

****Assertion (A):**** Local self-government in India still has a long way to go in realising its ideal.

****Reason (R):**** Most State governments have not transferred significant powers or adequate resources to local government bodies, and Gram Sabhas are not held regularly.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
 ((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
 ((C)) A is true but R is false.
 ((D)) A is false but R is true.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
 B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
 C A is true but R is false.
 D A is false but R is true.

◆ Federalism

Q20. straightforward exam-ready**[2]**

State two features that distinguish a federal government from a unitary government.

◆ Federalism

Q21. medium exam-ready**[2]**

Distinguish between 'coming together' and 'holding together' federations in terms of the relative power enjoyed by the constituent units. Give one example of each type.

◆ Federalism

Q22. medium exam-ready**[2]**

What are 'residuary powers' in the context of the Indian Constitution? Why do they exist?

◆ Federalism

Q23. straightforward exam-ready**[2]**

Mention any two special powers that States like Nagaland and Mizoram enjoy under the Indian Constitution that other States do not.

◆ Federalism

Q24. straightforward exam-ready [2]

State two ways in which the 1992 constitutional amendment changed the position of local government bodies in India.

◆ Federalism

Q25. medium exam-ready [2]

Why did the Central Government agree to continue the use of English for official purposes even after 1965, when the Constitution had originally set a deadline to stop its use?

◆ Federalism

Q26. medium exam-ready [3]

Explain how the judiciary safeguards the federal system in India. In what situations does it play the role of an 'umpire'?

◆ Federalism

Q27. medium exam-ready [3]

Describe the structure of rural local government in India, starting from the Gram Panchayat level up to the district level.

◆ Federalism

Q28. medium exam-ready [3]

How did the era of coalition governments after 1990 change the practice of federalism in India? Explain with two points.

◆ Federalism

Q29. medium exam-ready [3]

What is decentralisation? State three reasons why decentralisation is important for a large and diverse country like India.

◆ Federalism

Q30. deep exam-ready [3]

If a law made by a State Government on a Concurrent List subject conflicts with a law made by the Union Government on the same subject, which law prevails? Explain the significance of this provision for Indian federalism.

◆ Federalism

Q31. deep exam-ready [3]

Explain how India's language policy reflects the spirit of federalism. Why was this policy considered important for national unity?

◆ Federalism

Q32. deep exam-ready [5]

Describe the dual objectives of a federal system. How do the features of federalism — particularly financial autonomy and constitutional guarantees — help in achieving these objectives? Explain with examples from India.

◆ Federalism

Q33. deep exam-ready [5]

Explain how the three-list system distributes legislative powers between the Union and the States in India. Why is the Union Government given power over the Concurrent List? What happens when there is a conflict between Union and State laws on Concurrent List subjects? Support your answer with examples from each list.

◆ Federalism

Q34. deep exam-ready

[5]

What was the state of local government in India before the constitutional amendment of 1992? What major changes did the amendment bring about? Despite these changes, why is it said that India is still far from realising the ideal of self-government at the local level?

◆ Federalism

Q35. deep exam-ready

[4]

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

In the early decades after Independence, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most of the States. State Governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units. When the ruling party at the State level was different, the Centre often misused the Constitution to dismiss State Governments controlled by rival parties. All this changed significantly after 1990. Regional political parties rose in many States. Since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, major national parties had to enter into alliances with regional parties to form a government at the Centre. A major judgement of the Supreme Court also made it difficult for the Central Government to dismiss State Governments in an arbitrary manner.

- (i) How did single-party dominance affect federal relations in the early decades after Independence? (1 mark)
- (ii) What role did regional parties play in strengthening federalism after 1990? (1 mark)
- (iii) What does the Supreme Court judgement mentioned above indicate about the role of the judiciary in a federal system? (2 marks)

◆ Federalism

Q36. medium exam-ready

[4]

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government, it is called decentralisation. The basic idea behind decentralisation is that a large number of problems and issues are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities. They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently. At the local level, it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation. Some cities across the world have carried out extraordinary experiments in combining decentralisation with participative democracy, where thousands of ordinary citizens participate in budget-making exercises every year. This method has helped ensure that public money is spent equitably across different sections of society.

- (i) Define decentralisation in your own words. (1 mark)
- (ii) State any two advantages of decision-making at the local level as described above. (1 mark)
- (iii) How does participatory budget-making reflect the principle of local self-government? What outcome does it achieve in terms of equity? (2 marks)

◆ Federalism

Q37. deep exam-ready**[4]**

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

The Indian Union is based on the principles of federalism even though the Constitution declared India a 'Union of States' and did not use the word 'federation'. The Constitution provided for a three-fold distribution of legislative powers: the Union List, the State List and the Concurrent List. The Parliament cannot on its own change this arrangement. Any change to it has to be first passed by both Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority and then ratified by the legislatures of at least half of the total States. India, Spain and Belgium are examples of 'holding together' federations. In this type, the Central Government tends to be more powerful vis-à-vis the States, and different constituent units may have unequal powers.

- (i) Why did the Indian Constitution use the term 'Union of States' instead of 'Federation'? What does this suggest about the nature of Indian federalism? (1 mark)
- (ii) What does the special amendment procedure for power-sharing arrangements tell us about the nature of the Indian federal system? (1 mark)
- (iii) India is described as a 'holding together' federation. What are two implications of this for the balance of power between the Centre and the States? (2 marks)

◆ **Federalism**

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ANSWER KEY

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Questions: 37

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Q1. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

Which of the following best describes a federal system of government?

- ((A)) The central government holds all powers and delegates some to provinces at its discretion.
((B)) Power is divided between a central authority and constituent units, each enjoying independent authority.
((C)) The legislature, executive and judiciary share power at the national level.
((D)) Elected officials exercise supreme power without any constitutional limits.

A The central government holds all powers and delegates some to provinces at its discretion.

B Power is divided between a central authority and constituent units, each enjoying independent authority.

C The legislature, executive and judiciary share power at the national level.

D Elected officials exercise supreme power without any constitutional limits.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer**(B)** Power is divided between a central authority and constituent units, each enjoying independent authority.**Explanation**

The textbook defines federalism as "a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units... Both these levels of governments enjoy their power independent of the other." Option A describes a **unitary** system; C describes separation of powers; D contradicts constitutional limits essential to federalism.

Q2. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

USA, Switzerland and Australia are examples of which type of federation?

- ((A)) Holding together federation
- ((B)) Coming together federation
- ((C)) Unitary federation
- ((D)) Concurrent federation

- A Holding together federation
- B Coming together federation
- C Unitary federation
- D Concurrent federation

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

(B) Coming together federation

USA, Switzerland and Australia are examples of **coming together** federations, where independent states voluntarily unite to form a bigger unit.

Explanation

The textbook (Ch. 2) explicitly states: "This type of 'coming together' federations include the USA, Switzerland and Australia." In such federations, constituent states have equal power and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government. Contrast this with 'holding together' federations (India, Spain, Belgium) where the central government is more powerful.

Q3. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

Which of the following subjects is included in the Concurrent List of the Indian Constitution?

- ((A)) Defence
- ((B)) Banking
- ((C)) Education
- ((D)) Agriculture

- A Defence
- B Banking
- C Education
- D Agriculture

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

The correct answer is **(C) Education**.

Education is a subject included in the Concurrent List, meaning both the Central and State governments can make laws on it.

Explanation

The Indian Constitution has three lists — Union List, State List, and Concurrent List. Defence is in the Union List; Agriculture is in the State List; Banking is in the Union List. Education was moved to the Concurrent List by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976). This is a standard Civics (Political Science) fact from the Federalism chapter (Chapter 2, Class 10). The source passages provided do not cover this topic, but the answer is grounded in the NCERT textbook content.

Q4. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

What is the term used for areas like Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Delhi that are too small to be independent States but cannot be merged with existing States?

- (A) Scheduled Areas
- (B) Union Territories
- (C) Autonomous Districts
- (D) Special Zones

- A Scheduled Areas
- B Union Territories
- C Autonomous Districts
- D Special Zones

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

(B) Union Territories

Areas like Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Delhi, which are too small to become independent States but cannot be merged with existing States, are called **Union Territories**.

Explanation

The answer is directly stated in the textbook: "These areas, like Chandigarh, or Lakshadweep or the capital city of Delhi, are called Union Territories." For MCQs, write the option letter clearly and state the term. Avoid confusing Union Territories with Autonomous Districts (which are within States under the Sixth Schedule) or Scheduled Areas.

Q5. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

Which institution is responsible for conducting panchayat and municipal elections in each State?

- ((A)) Election Commission of India
- ((B)) State Legislature
- ((C)) State Election Commission
- ((D)) Zilla Parishad

- A Election Commission of India
- B State Legislature
- C State Election Commission
- D Zilla Parishad

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer**(C) State Election Commission**

Each State has a State Election Commission responsible for conducting panchayat and municipal elections in that state.

Explanation

This is from the chapter on Federalism (Power Sharing). The Constitution (73rd and 74th Amendments) established State Election Commissions — separate from the Election Commission of India — to supervise local body elections. Don't confuse the two: ECI handles Lok Sabha and state legislative assembly elections, while the **State Election Commission** handles panchayat and municipal elections.

Q6. medium exam-ready**[1]**

Read the following statements about the Union List and choose the correct option:

- I. It includes subjects of national importance.
- II. Both Union and State Governments can make laws on it.
- III. Defence and foreign affairs are part of it.
- IV. Banking and currency are included in it.

- ((A)) Only I, II and III are correct.
 - ((B)) Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - ((C)) Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - ((D)) Only I, II and IV are correct.
- A Only I, II and III are correct.
 - B Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - C Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - D Only I, II and IV are correct.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

(B) Only I, III and IV are correct.

Statement II is incorrect — only the Union Government (not both) can make laws on the Union List.

Explanation

The source passage clearly states: "The Union Government **alone** can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the Union List." Statements I (national importance), III (defence, foreign affairs), and IV (banking, currency) are directly supported by the passage. Statement II is the trap — it describes the **Concurrent List**, not the Union List.

Q7. medium exam-ready

[1]

In 'holding together' federations, which of the following is generally true?

- (A) All constituent units have equal powers and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.
- (B) Independent states come together voluntarily to form a bigger unit.
- (C) The Central Government tends to be more powerful than the States.
- (D) The constituent units can withdraw from the federation at any time.

- A All constituent units have equal powers and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.
- B Independent states come together voluntarily to form a bigger unit.
- C The Central Government tends to be more powerful than the States.
- D The constituent units can withdraw from the federation at any time.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

(C) The Central Government tends to be more powerful than the States.

In 'holding together' federations (like India), the Central Government is generally more powerful than the constituent State Governments.

Explanation

The textbook (Chapter 2) distinguishes two types of federations: '**coming together**' (e.g., USA) where constituent states have equal powers, and '**holding together**' (e.g., India) where the Central Government tends to be stronger. The fill-in-the-blank exercise (Q6 of exercises) directly supports this — "India is a **holding together** type of federation and the **Central** government has more powers." Options A and B describe 'coming together' federations; D is incorrect as constituent units cannot freely withdraw.

Q8. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

Which year marked the constitutional amendment that made local government a more powerful and effective third tier of democracy in India?

- ((A)) 1947
- ((B)) 1976
- ((C)) 1992
- ((D)) 2000

- A 1947
- B 1976
- C 1992
- D 2000

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer**(C) 1992**

In 1992, a constitutional amendment made local government a more powerful and effective third tier of democracy in India.

Source: Overview, Chapter 2

Explanation

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were passed in 1992, giving constitutional status to Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies, making them the third tier of federalism. Examiners expect the correct year — 1992 — as the answer.

Q9. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

The political head of a Zilla Parishad is the:

- ((A)) Collector
 - ((B)) Sarpanch
 - ((C)) Zilla Parishad Chairperson
 - ((D)) Mayor
- A Collector
 - B Sarpanch
 - C Zilla Parishad Chairperson
 - D Mayor

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer**(C) Zilla Parishad Chairperson****Explanation**

The political/elected head of a Zilla Parishad is the **Chairperson** (also called Adhyaksha in some states), who is an elected representative. The Collector is an administrative/bureaucratic head, not political. Sarpanch heads a Gram Panchayat, and Mayor heads a Municipal Corporation. Note: The source passages provided do not directly cover this topic — this answer is based on standard CBSE Civics (Class 10) content on local self-government.

Q10. medium exam-ready

[1]

Consider the following statements about the amendment process of the Indian Constitution's power-sharing arrangement and choose the correct option:

- I. The Parliament alone can change the power-sharing arrangement between Union and States.
- II. Any change must be passed by both Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority.
- III. After Parliament passes it, at least half the State legislatures must ratify it.
- IV. The President's assent is the only requirement for such a change.

- ((A)) Only I and IV are correct.
- ((B)) Only II and III are correct.
- ((C)) Only I, II and III are correct.
- ((D)) Only II, III and IV are correct.

- A Only I and IV are correct.
- B Only II and III are correct.
- C Only I, II and III are correct.
- D Only II, III and IV are correct.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer**(B) Only II and III are correct.**

As per the textbook, the Parliament **cannot on its own** change the power-sharing arrangement (Statement I is wrong). Any change must be passed by both Houses with at least two-thirds majority (II ✓), then ratified by at least half the State legislatures (III ✓). President's assent alone is insufficient (IV is wrong).

Source: *Democratic Politics I*, Chapter 2 — "What makes India a federal country?"

Explanation

The key passage states: "*The Parliament cannot on its own change this arrangement. Any change to it has to be first passed by both the Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority. Then it has to be ratified by the legislatures of at least half of the total States.*" Statement I is false (Parliament cannot act alone) and Statement IV is false (President's assent is not mentioned as sufficient). Only II and III match the textbook exactly.

Q11. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

How many languages are recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Indian Constitution?

((A)) 14

((B)) 18

((C)) 22

((D)) 28

A 14

B 18

C 22

D 28

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

The correct answer is **(C) 22**.

The Indian Constitution recognises 22 languages as Scheduled Languages, listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

Explanation

The passage clearly states: "22 languages are now included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and are therefore called 'Scheduled Languages'." The table in the textbook also lists exactly 22 languages. Note that the figure was 14 originally (at the time of Constitution's adoption) and later increased to 22 — examiners expect the **current figure of 22**.

Q12. medium exam-ready

[1]

Read the following statements about the Gram Sabha and choose the correct option:

- I. It consists of all voters in the village.
- II. It must meet at least twice or thrice a year.
- III. It approves the annual budget of the gram panchayat.
- IV. Its decisions can be overruled by the Block Samiti at any time.

- ((A)) Only I, II and III are correct.
 - ((B)) Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - ((C)) Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - ((D)) All four are correct.
- A Only I, II and III are correct.
 - B Only II, III and IV are correct.
 - C Only I, III and IV are correct.
 - D All four are correct.

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Model Answer**(A) Only I, II and III are correct.**

Statement IV is incorrect — the Block Samiti cannot overrule Gram Sabha decisions at any time; the Gram Sabha is a sovereign body at the village level.

Explanation

The Gram Sabha consists of all registered voters in the village (I ✓), meets at least twice or thrice a year (II ✓), and approves the Gram Panchayat's budget (III ✓). Statement IV is false — no higher body has unrestricted power to overrule the Gram Sabha. Note: The source passages provided do not directly cover this topic; this answer is based on standard CBSE Class 10 Civics (Democratic Politics II), Chapter 2 — Federalism / Local Government content.

Q13. straightforward exam-ready**[1]**

If a subject does not fall under any of the three lists or arises after the Constitution was made, who has the power to legislate on it?

- (A) State Government
 - (B) Union Government
 - (C) Supreme Court
 - (D) Both Union and State Governments jointly
- A State Government
 - B Union Government
 - C Supreme Court
 - D Both Union and State Governments jointly

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Model Answer**(B) Union Government**

According to the Constitution, the Union Government has the power to legislate on 'residuary' subjects — those not in any of the three lists or that arose after the Constitution was made.

Explanation

This is based on the concept of **residuary powers** in Indian federalism. The textbook explicitly states: "*According to our constitution, the Union Government has the power to legislate on these 'residuary' subjects.*"

This is a common MCQ point — don't confuse it with Concurrent List powers (shared) or State List powers.

Source: *Federalism*, Chapter 2, "What makes India a federal country?"

Q14. medium exam-ready

[1]

Which of the following is NOT a feature of federalism?

- ((A)) Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified.
- ((B)) The central government can order the state government on all matters.
- ((C)) Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and powers of different levels.
- ((D)) The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be changed unilaterally by one level of government.

A Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified.

B The central government can order the state government on all matters.

C Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and powers of different levels.

D The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be changed unilaterally by one level of government.

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Model Answer

(B) The central government can order the state government on all matters.

In a federal system, the central government **cannot** order state governments. Each level has independent powers. This is a feature of a **unitary** system, not federalism.

Explanation

The textbook clearly states: "in a federal system, the central government cannot order the state government to do something." Options A, C, and D are all listed as key features of federalism in the chapter. Option B describes a unitary system. Examiners expect you to identify the odd one out using the textbook definition directly.

Q15. straightforward exam-ready

[1]

At least what fraction of all positions in local government bodies are reserved for women after the 1992 constitutional amendment?

- ((A)) One-fourth
- ((B)) One-third
- ((C)) One-half
- ((D)) Two-thirds

- A One-fourth
- B One-third
- C One-half
- D Two-thirds

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Model Answer**(B) One-third**

One-third of seats in local government bodies (panchayats and municipalities) are reserved for women.

Explanation

The textbook (Chapter 3, Gender and Politics) clearly states: "*One-third of seats in local government bodies – in panchayats and municipalities – are now reserved for women.*" This was done through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1992. Remember: this one-third reservation applies to *local bodies*, not Lok Sabha or State Assemblies (where the Women's Reservation Act 2023 now provides 33% reservation, but that is a separate Act, not the 1992 amendment).

Q16. deep exam-ready

[1]

****Assertion (A):**** The formation of linguistic States in India strengthened national unity rather than weakening it.

****Reason (R):**** The demand for linguistic States was initially resisted by national leaders who feared it would lead to the country's disintegration.

((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.

((C)) A is true but R is false.

((D)) A is false but R is true.

A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.

C A is true but R is false.

D A is false but R is true.

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Model Answer

(B) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.

Assertion A is true — linguistic States actually made the country more united and administration easier. Reason R is also true — national leaders did initially fear disintegration. However, R describes the *initial resistance*, not an explanation for why unity was strengthened.

Explanation

The key is: R is a historical fact (leaders feared disintegration) but it does not *explain* why linguistic States strengthened unity — it is the opposite concern. The text states "the experience has shown that the formation of linguistic States has actually made the country more united," which is the actual explanation for A. So both statements are independently true but R does not logically explain A — hence option (B).

Q17. deep exam-ready

[1]

****Assertion (A):**** After 1990, the spirit of federalism became more effective in India than it was in the early years of the Constitution.

****Reason (R):**** The rise of regional political parties and coalition governments at the Centre created a new culture of power sharing and greater respect for State autonomy.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
((C)) A is true but R is false.
((D)) A is false but R is true.
- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
C A is true but R is false.
D A is false but R is true.

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Model Answer**Answer: (A)**

Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A. After 1990, the rise of regional parties and coalition governments led to a new culture of power sharing and greater respect for State autonomy, making federal power sharing more effective.

Source: Federalism, Centre-State Relations – Chapter 2

Explanation

The textbook explicitly states: "This period saw the rise of regional political parties... the beginning of the era of coalition governments... This led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of State Governments... federal power sharing is more effective today than it was in the early years." This directly links the Assertion to the Reason, making (A) the correct choice. Both statements are true, and R directly explains why A is true.

Q18. medium exam-ready

[1]

Assertion (A): The Indian Constitution gives the status of 'national language' to Hindi.

Reason (R): Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40 per cent of Indians, so safeguards were provided for other languages.

- ((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
((C)) A is false but R is true.
((D)) Both A and R are false.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
C A is false but R is true.
D Both A and R are false.

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Model Answer**(C) A is false but R is true.**

The Constitution gave Hindi the status of *official language*, not 'national language'. No language was given the status of national language. The Reason is correct — Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40% of Indians, hence safeguards were provided for other languages.

Explanation

- The Assertion is **false**: The Constitution explicitly did *not* give any language the status of 'national language'. Hindi was made the **official language** of the Union — a crucial distinction.
- The Reason is **true**: The textbook states "Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40 per cent of Indians. Therefore, there were many safeguards to protect other languages" (22 Scheduled Languages).
- Since A is false but R is true, the answer is **(C)**. Students often confuse 'official language' with 'national language' — avoid this error in board exams.

Q19. medium exam-ready

[1]

****Assertion (A):**** Local self-government in India still has a long way to go in realising its ideal.

****Reason (R):**** Most State governments have not transferred significant powers or adequate resources to local government bodies, and Gram Sabhas are not held regularly.

((A)) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

((B)) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.

((C)) A is true but R is false.

((D)) A is false but R is true.

A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.

C A is true but R is false.

D A is false but R is true.

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Model Answer

(A) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation

The textbook explicitly states: "Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to local governments. Nor have they given adequate resources. Gram sabhas are not held regularly. We are thus still a long way from realising the ideal of self-government." — R directly explains why A is true, making option (A) correct.

Source: *Federalism*, Decentralisation in India — Chapter 2

Q20. straightforward exam-ready

[2]

State two features that distinguish a federal government from a unitary government.

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Model Answer

Feature 1: In a federal government, power is divided between the central and state governments, and each level has its own jurisdiction guaranteed by the Constitution. In a unitary government, either there is one level of government or sub-units are subordinate to the central government.

Feature 2: In a federal system, the central government cannot order the state government on matters within the state's jurisdiction; both are separately answerable to the people. In a unitary system, the central government can pass orders to provincial or local governments.

Source: *Federalism*, Chapter 2

Explanation

Examiners look for a clear **contrast** between the two systems for each point — not just describing federalism. Key terms to use: *jurisdiction*, *subordinate*, *constitutional guarantee*, *autonomy*. Avoid vague answers like "federal has states" — always contrast with the unitary side. Two distinct points = 1 mark each.

Q21. medium exam-ready

[2]

Distinguish between 'coming together' and 'holding together' federations in terms of the relative power enjoyed by the constituent units. Give one example of each type.

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Model Answer

Coming together federation: Independent states join together voluntarily to form a bigger union. Constituent units enjoy **more power** and are stronger vis-à-vis the central government. *Example: USA.*

Holding together federation: A large country divides power between the central government and states. The central government is usually **more powerful** than the constituent units. *Example: India.*

Source: Federalism, Chapter 2

Explanation

- The key contrast examiners look for is the **relative power** of constituent units vs. the centre — *more power to states* in "coming together," *more power to centre* in "holding together."
- One correct example for each type is mandatory for full marks.
- USA, Switzerland, Australia = coming together; India, Spain, Belgium = holding together.
- Keep each part to one sentence + one example; this is a 2-mark answer.

Q22. medium exam-ready

[2]

What are 'residuary powers' in the context of the Indian Constitution? Why do they exist?

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Model Answer

Residuary powers refer to the power of the Union Government to legislate on subjects **not included** in any of the three lists — Union List, State List, or Concurrent List — as well as on new subjects (e.g., computer software) that arose after the Constitution was framed.

They exist because it is impossible to foresee and list every subject at the time of drafting a constitution. Assigning these leftover subjects to the Union prevents a legal vacuum.

Source: Chapter 2, "What makes India a federal country?"

Explanation

- The textbook explicitly mentions residuary powers in the context of the three lists. State both **what** they are and **why** they exist — both parts carry marks in a 2-mark question.
- The example of "computer software" is straight from the textbook — using it shows you have read carefully and impresses examiners.
- Keep it to 2–3 sentences; no need for elaboration beyond what the source passage says.

Q23. straightforward exam-ready**[2]**

Mention any two special powers that States like Nagaland and Mizoram enjoy under the Indian Constitution that other States do not.

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Model Answer

Under Article 371 of the Indian Constitution, States like Nagaland and Mizoram enjoy the following special powers:

1. **Protection of land rights** of indigenous/local peoples — people who are not permanent residents cannot buy land or property there.
2. **Protection of their culture** and **preferential employment** for local people in government services.

Explanation

The textbook specifically mentions these special powers under the section "What makes India a federal country?" (Article 371). Examiners expect students to name at least two distinct special powers — land rights and preferential employment/cultural protection are the standard two. Avoid vague answers like "more autonomy"; be specific. One mark per valid point.

Q24. straightforward exam-ready**[2]**

State two ways in which the 1992 constitutional amendment changed the position of local government bodies in India.

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Model Answer

The 1992 Constitutional Amendment (73rd and 74th) brought two major changes:

1. **Constitutional status:** Local government bodies (Panchayats and Municipalities) were given constitutional status, making their existence legally guaranteed instead of being dependent on state governments.
2. **Regular elections:** It became constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to these bodies, ensuring they function as a genuine third tier of government.

Explanation

This question is directly from Exercise Q.5 of Chapter 2 (Federalism). Examiners expect two distinct points — constitutional status/guarantee and mandatory elections are the most commonly expected answers. You may also mention reservation of seats (for women/SC/ST) or creation of State Election Commissions as valid points. Stick to two clear, distinct points for full marks.

Q25. medium exam-ready

[2]

Why did the Central Government agree to continue the use of English for official purposes even after 1965, when the Constitution had originally set a deadline to stop its use?

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Model Answer

According to the Constitution, the use of English for official purposes was to stop in 1965. However, many non-Hindi-speaking States demanded its continuation. In Tamil Nadu, this movement took a violent form. The Central Government therefore agreed to continue English along with Hindi for official purposes, to respect regional sentiments and maintain national unity.

Source: *How is federalism practised?, Language policy*

Explanation

The examiner wants two key points: (1) the demand from non-Hindi-speaking States (especially Tamil Nadu's violent agitation) and (2) the Central Government's accommodative response. Avoid writing about Sri Lanka or Belgium comparisons — they are not asked here. Always name Tamil Nadu specifically, as it is explicitly mentioned in the passage.

Q26. medium exam-ready

[3]

Explain how the judiciary safeguards the federal system in India. In what situations does it play the role of an 'umpire'?

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Model Answer

The judiciary safeguards the federal system in India by overseeing the implementation of constitutional provisions and ensuring that neither the Union nor the State Governments overstep their respective jurisdictions.

The Constitution distributes legislative powers through three lists — Union List, State List, and Concurrent List — clearly defining the jurisdiction of each level of government. The judiciary ensures these boundaries are respected.

The **Supreme Court and High Courts act as 'umpires'** when disputes arise between the Union and State Governments over the division of powers. In such cases, they interpret the Constitution and give a binding decision, ensuring that the federal balance is maintained.

Source: *Chapter 2 (Federalism), "What makes India a federal country?"*

Explanation

- The question has two parts: (1) how judiciary safeguards federalism, and (2) when it acts as an 'umpire' — address both clearly.
- The key textbook line is: "*Courts have the power to interpret the constitution... The highest court acts as an umpire if disputes arise between different levels of government.*" Quote or paraphrase this directly.
- Mention the three lists briefly to show you understand *what* the judiciary is protecting.
- Do not over-elaborate; 3 marks = ~3 distinct points.

Q27. medium exam-ready

[3]

Describe the structure of rural local government in India, starting from the Gram Panchayat level up to the district level.

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Model Answer

Rural local government in India is organized as follows:

1. **Gram Panchayat** – At the village level, each village or group of villages has a gram panchayat consisting of ward members (panch) and a sarpanch, directly elected by adult voters. It is supervised by the Gram Sabha (all voters of the village).
1. **Panchayat Samiti (Block/Mandal)** – A few gram panchayats are grouped together to form a panchayat samiti, whose members are elected by all panchayat members in that area.
1. **Zilla Parishad (District Level)** – All panchayat samitis in a district together constitute the Zilla Parishad. Most of its members are elected; MPs, MLAs, and some district officials are also members. Its political head is the Zilla Parishad Chairperson.

Source: Democratic Politics – II, Chapter 2 (Federalism – Decentralisation in India)

Explanation

- The examiner expects all **three tiers** named correctly with key details.
- Mention **Gram Sabha** briefly under Gram Panchayat – it's a frequently tested point.
- Note the **composition** of Zilla Parishad (elected + MPs/MLAs) – a common MCQ/short-answer detail.
- Avoid confusing **Panchayat Samiti** (intermediate tier) with Zilla Parishad (district tier).

Q28. medium exam-ready

[3]

How did the era of coalition governments after 1990 change the practice of federalism in India? Explain with two points.

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Model Answer

After 1990, the rise of regional political parties led to the era of coalition governments at the Centre, as no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. This changed federalism in two important ways:

1. **Respect for State autonomy:** Major national parties had to ally with regional parties to form the government. This created a new culture of power-sharing and greater respect for the autonomy of State Governments.
1. **Difficult to dismiss State governments arbitrarily:** A Supreme Court judgement made it harder for the Central Government to dismiss State Governments in an arbitrary manner, making federal power-sharing more effective than in the early years.

Source: Chapter 2 – Federalism, Section: Centre-State Relations

Explanation

- The examiner expects two clear, distinct points — label them or write in separate sentences.
- The key phrase from the textbook is "**new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of State Governments**" — try to include it.
- Mentioning the **Supreme Court judgement** as a supporting factor for the second point earns full marks.
- Avoid writing about linguistic states or decentralisation here — the question is specifically about the **post-1990 coalition era**.

Q29. medium exam-ready

[3]

What is decentralisation? State three reasons why decentralisation is important for a large and diverse country like India.

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Model Answer

Decentralisation is the process of taking power away from the Central and State governments and giving it to local governments (like panchayats and municipalities) so that issues can be resolved at the local level.

Three reasons why decentralisation is important for India:

1. **Vast and diverse country:** India's states are as large and populous as independent nations (e.g., UP's population exceeds Russia's), making two-tier governance insufficient.
2. **Better local knowledge:** Local people understand the problems of their area better and can decide how to use resources more efficiently.
3. **Direct participation:** At the local level, people can directly participate in decision-making, strengthening democratic habits and promoting local self-government.

Source: *Federalism, Decentralisation in India* — Chapter 2

Explanation

- The definition must include both elements: *power transferred from Central/State governments AND given to local governments*.
- For the three reasons, the examiner expects points drawn from the textbook: size/diversity, local knowledge, and direct participation. Don't mix these up or write them vaguely.
- At 3 marks, one-line definition + three distinct labeled points is the ideal structure — no need to elaborate beyond one sentence per point.

Q30. deep exam-ready

[3]

If a law made by a State Government on a Concurrent List subject conflicts with a law made by the Union Government on the same subject, which law prevails? Explain the significance of this provision for Indian federalism.

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Model Answer

When a State Government's law on a Concurrent List subject conflicts with a Union Government's law on the same subject, **the law made by the Union Government prevails.**

Significance for Indian federalism:

- It ensures **national uniformity** on subjects of common interest (e.g., education, forests, marriage).
- It prevents conflicting laws from creating confusion across states.
- It reflects India's "**holding together**" **federation**, where the Central Government is relatively stronger than the States.
- However, States still retain the right to legislate on Concurrent List subjects, preserving their autonomy unless there is a conflict.

This provision balances unity with diversity — a core goal of Indian federalism.

Source: Chapter 2 — Federalism, "What makes India a federal country?" section

Explanation

What examiners look for:

1. The direct answer — Union Government's law prevails (must state this clearly for 1 mark).
2. At least 2–3 significance points for the remaining 2 marks.
3. Use of correct terms: Concurrent List, Union Government, federalism.

Key to remember: The three lists — Union, State, and Concurrent — and the rule that Central law overrides State law in case of conflict on the Concurrent List. Don't confuse this with the State List, where only State Governments legislate.

Q31. deep exam-ready

[3]

Explain how India's language policy reflects the spirit of federalism. Why was this policy considered important for national unity?

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Model Answer

India's Constitution did not grant national language status to any single language. Hindi was made the official language, but since it is the mother tongue of only about 40% of Indians, strong safeguards were provided for other languages.

Key features of the language policy:

- **22 Scheduled Languages** are recognised in the Constitution.
- Candidates for Central Government exams may opt for any Scheduled Language.
- States have their own official languages for government work.
- English was continued alongside Hindi for official purposes after non-Hindi States, especially Tamil Nadu, strongly opposed its discontinuation in 1965.

This policy was important for national unity because it ensured no linguistic group felt dominated or sidelined. Unlike Sri Lanka, India showed flexibility and accommodation, preventing violent conflict over language. The spirit of federalism — respecting regional diversity while maintaining unity — was upheld.

Source: *How is federalism practised?*, Chapter 2

Explanation

- Examiners expect you to mention: no national language, Hindi as official language, 22 Scheduled Languages, continuation of English, and the contrast with Sri Lanka.
- Link the policy explicitly to **federalism** (respect for diversity + unity) — that is the core of the question.
- The Tamil Nadu agitation and the government's flexible response are key examples to include.
- Avoid writing a general essay on Indian languages; stay focused on the policy and its federal significance.

Q32. deep exam-ready

[5]

Describe the dual objectives of a federal system. How do the features of federalism — particularly financial autonomy and constitutional guarantees — help in achieving these objectives? Explain with examples from India.

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Model Answer**Dual Objectives of Federalism:**

The federal system has two objectives: (i) to safeguard and promote the **unity of the country**, and (ii) to **accommodate regional diversity**.

How Features Help Achieve These Objectives:

1. **Constitutional Guarantees:** The existence and authority of each tier of government is constitutionally guaranteed. Neither level can unilaterally change jurisdictions. In India, the Union, State, and Concurrent Lists clearly distribute powers between Centre and States, ensuring no level dominates arbitrarily.
1. **Financial Autonomy:** Sources of revenue for each level are clearly specified. This ensures State governments can function independently without depending on the Centre, making them genuine partners in governance.
1. **Example — Linguistic States:** Creation of States like Nagaland, Uttarakhand, and Jharkhand accommodated regional and cultural diversity while keeping India united.
1. **Example — Language Policy:** Recognising 22 Scheduled Languages and allowing States to use their own official languages respects diversity without breaking national unity.
1. **Centre-State Relations:** After 1990, rise of regional parties and coalition governments strengthened State autonomy; Supreme Court judgements prevented arbitrary dismissal of State governments.

Source: Chapter 2 — Federalism, "What is federalism?" and "How is federalism practised?"

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to **name both objectives first**, then link features to them with Indian examples.
- **Financial autonomy** and **constitutional guarantees** are explicitly listed as key features in the textbook — always mention both.
- Use specific Indian examples (linguistic states, language policy, Centre-State relations post-1990) — vague answers lose marks.
- 5 marks = ~5 distinct points; do not write a lengthy essay. Each point should be one to two sentences.

Q33. deep exam-ready

[5]

Explain how the three-list system distributes legislative powers between the Union and the States in India. Why is the Union Government given power over the Concurrent List? What happens when there is a conflict between Union and State laws on Concurrent List subjects? Support your answer with examples from each list.

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Model Answer

The Constitution provides a **three-fold distribution of legislative powers** between the Union and State Governments through three lists:

- **Union List** (97 subjects): Subjects of national importance — defence, foreign affairs, banking, communications, currency. Only the Union Government makes laws on these, as uniform national policy is needed. *Example: Defence.*
- **State List** (66 subjects): Subjects of State/local importance — police, trade, commerce, agriculture, irrigation. Only State Governments make laws on these. *Example: Agriculture.*
- **Concurrent List** (47 subjects): Subjects of common interest to both — education, forests, trade unions, marriage, adoption. Both Union and State Governments can legislate on these. *Example: Education.*

Why Union Government controls the Concurrent List: These subjects require both national consistency and local flexibility. Giving the Union authority ensures a uniform framework across all states while allowing states to legislate for local needs.

Conflict resolution: If a Union law and a State law on a Concurrent List subject conflict, **the Union law prevails**. The State law becomes void to the extent of repugnancy.

Subjects not in any list (e.g., computer software) fall under **residuary powers**, which belong to the Union Government.

Source: Chapter 2 — Federalism, "What makes India a Federal Country?"

Explanation

Examiners look for: correct identification and description of all three lists with examples, the reason for Union control over Concurrent List, and the conflict-resolution rule (Union law prevails). Mentioning residuary powers earns an extra point. Keep examples from the textbook — defence, agriculture, education are the safest choices. Avoid vague language; use terms like "repugnancy" or "Union law prevails" to show precision.

Q34. deep exam-ready

[5]

What was the state of local government in India before the constitutional amendment of 1992? What major changes did the amendment bring about? Despite these changes, why is it said that India is still far from realising the ideal of self-government at the local level?

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Model Answer

Before 1992: Local government bodies like panchayats and municipalities existed but were directly under state government control. Elections were not held regularly, and these bodies had no powers or resources of their own. Thus, there was very little decentralisation in effective terms.

Changes brought by the 1992 Amendment:

- Regular elections to local bodies became constitutionally mandatory.
- Seats reserved for SCs, STs, and OBCs in elected bodies.
- At least one-third positions reserved for women.
- An independent State Election Commission created in each State to conduct elections.
- State governments required to share powers and revenue with local bodies.

Why self-government is still far from realised:

Despite these provisions, gram sabhas are not held regularly. Most state governments have not transferred significant powers or adequate resources to local governments. Real decision-making power remains with state governments.

Source: *Decentralisation in India, Chapter 2*

Explanation

- The question has three clear parts — answer all three in sequence.
- Examiners look for: the pre-1992 situation (2 points), the five changes (roughly 1 mark each in brief), and the remaining challenges (1–2 points). Balance your marks accordingly.
- Quote exact constitutional provisions (one-third reservation, State Election Commission) — these fetch marks.
- Avoid padding; "gram sabha not held regularly" and "powers/resources not transferred" are the two key limitations the textbook states.

Q35. deep exam-ready

[4]

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

In the early decades after Independence, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most of the States. State Governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units. When the ruling party at the State level was different, the Centre often misused the Constitution to dismiss State Governments controlled by rival parties. All this changed significantly after 1990. Regional political parties rose in many States. Since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, major national parties had to enter into alliances with regional parties to form a government at the Centre. A major judgement of the Supreme Court also made it difficult for the Central Government to dismiss State Governments in an arbitrary manner.

- (i) How did single-party dominance affect federal relations in the early decades after Independence? (1 mark)
 (ii) What role did regional parties play in strengthening federalism after 1990? (1 mark)
 (iii) What does the Supreme Court judgement mentioned above indicate about the role of the judiciary in a federal system? (2 marks)

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

- (i)** In the early decades after Independence, the same party ruled at both the Centre and in most States. State Governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units. The Central Government often misused the Constitution to dismiss State Governments controlled by rival parties, undermining the spirit of federalism.
- (ii)** After 1990, regional parties rose in many States. Since no single national party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, national parties had to form alliances with regional parties. This created a new culture of power-sharing and respect for State autonomy, strengthening federalism.
- (iii)** The Supreme Court's judgement made it difficult for the Central Government to dismiss State Governments in an arbitrary manner. This shows that the judiciary acts as a guardian of the federal structure — it ensures constitutional provisions are followed and prevents the misuse of power by one level of government against another, thereby protecting the autonomy of States.

Source: *Democratic Politics – II*, Chapter 2, Section: Centre–State Relations

Explanation

- **(i)** is 1 mark — one focused point on how single-party rule weakened State autonomy.
- **(ii)** is 1 mark — focus on coalition politics and alliances as the mechanism; don't elaborate beyond one point.
- **(iii)** is 2 marks — needs two aspects: what the judgement did (prevented arbitrary dismissal) AND what it shows about the judiciary's role (guardian/protector of federal structure). Examiners look for both.
- All answers must come from the passage; the chapter's "Centre–State relations" section is the direct source.

Q36. medium exam-ready**[4]**

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government, it is called decentralisation. The basic idea behind decentralisation is that a large number of problems and issues are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities. They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently. At the local level, it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation. Some cities across the world have carried out extraordinary experiments in combining decentralisation with participative democracy, where thousands of ordinary citizens participate in budget-making exercises every year. This method has helped ensure that public money is spent equitably across different sections of society.

- (i) Define decentralisation in your own words. (1 mark)
(ii) State any two advantages of decision-making at the local level as described above. (1 mark)
(iii) How does participatory budget-making reflect the principle of local self-government? What outcome does it achieve in terms of equity? (2 marks)

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

(i) Decentralisation is the transfer of power from the Central and State governments to local governments, so that people can manage their own affairs at the local level.

(ii) Two advantages of local-level decision-making:

- People have better knowledge of problems in their localities and can manage resources more efficiently.
- People can directly participate in decision-making, which inculcates a habit of democratic participation.

(iii) Participatory budget-making reflects local self-government because ordinary citizens directly take part in deciding how public money is spent in their area — a core principle of democracy at the grassroots. In terms of equity, it ensures that public money is spent fairly across all sections of society, including the poor, rather than only in wealthy neighbourhoods (as seen in Porto Alegre, Brazil).

Source: *Decentralisation in India — Chapter 2*

Explanation

- **(i)** is 1 mark — one crisp sentence definition is enough.
- **(ii)** is 1 mark — two short points from the passage; don't over-explain.
- **(iii)** is 2 marks — link participatory budgeting to the principle of self-government, then state the equity outcome (money spent for all, not just the rich). The Porto Alegre example from the passage directly supports this.
- Always use words/ideas from the passage in case-study questions; examiners check alignment with the source.

Q37. deep exam-ready

[4]

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

The Indian Union is based on the principles of federalism even though the Constitution declared India a 'Union of States' and did not use the word 'federation'. The Constitution provided for a three-fold distribution of legislative powers: the Union List, the State List and the Concurrent List. The Parliament cannot on its own change this arrangement. Any change to it has to be first passed by both Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority and then ratified by the legislatures of at least half of the total States. India, Spain and Belgium are examples of 'holding together' federations. In this type, the Central Government tends to be more powerful vis-à-vis the States, and different constituent units may have unequal powers.

- (i) Why did the Indian Constitution use the term 'Union of States' instead of 'Federation'? What does this suggest about the nature of Indian federalism? (1 mark)
- (ii) What does the special amendment procedure for power-sharing arrangements tell us about the nature of the Indian federal system? (1 mark)
- (iii) India is described as a 'holding together' federation. What are two implications of this for the balance of power between the Centre and the States? (2 marks)

◆ **Federalism**

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Model Answer

(i) The term 'Union of States' was used because India was formed after a painful partition and merger of princely states, suggesting a strong Centre was needed. It implies that though India follows federal principles, the Union is indestructible — states cannot secede from it.

(ii) The special amendment procedure — requiring a two-thirds majority in both Houses of Parliament AND ratification by at least half the State legislatures — shows that power-sharing is constitutionally protected. Neither the Centre alone nor the States alone can alter it, reflecting the federal spirit of mutual consent.

(iii) Two implications:

- The Central Government is more powerful than the States.
- Different constituent units may have **unequal powers** — for example, some States enjoy special status under Article 371, while Union Territories have very limited powers.

Source: "What makes India a federal country?" and "What is federalism?", Chapter 2

Explanation

- **(i)** Focus on *why* the term was chosen (historical context + strong Centre) and what it *suggests* (indestructible union, not a loose alliance).
- **(ii)** The key idea is **joint consent** — both levels must agree, which protects federal balance. Mention the specific procedure briefly.
- **(iii)** Two clear, distinct points are needed for 2 marks. "Centre more powerful" is one; "unequal powers among states" is the second. Examples like Article 371 or Union Territories strengthen the answer.
- Always anchor answers to the passage — the examiner rewards textbook-aligned responses.

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