

CBSE CLASS X
Social Science (087)

QUESTION PAPER
AI-generated question paper

Code: VSWR7G Questions: 30 Maximum Marks: 84 Generated: 2026-06-26 09:32

SELECTIONS USED

Subject	Social Science
Lessons	2 Federalism
Level of understanding	Thorough understanding
Question selection	Curated chapter coverage (~5 questions per section + 8 synthesis)
Model	claude-sonnet-4-6

Composition — Difficulty: 3 straightforward · 15 medium · 12 deep | Types: 19 Short · 4 MCQ · 4 Long · 3 Very short

Q1. medium thorough-understanding § Overview [3]

Belgium and Sri Lanka adopted very different approaches to managing diversity within their borders. Explain how the distribution of governmental power differs between a federal and a unitary system, and analyse why this difference is significant for regional or sub-national governments seeking autonomy.

◆ **Federalism**

Q2. deep thorough-understanding § Overview [3]

Federalism is described as having a 'dual objective'. Why are BOTH parts of this objective necessary, and what would go wrong in a country like India if only one part were achieved — say, unity was maintained but regional diversity was not accommodated?

◆ **Federalism**

Q3. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism? [3]

In a federal system, why is it said that state governments are 'separately answerable to the people' rather than answerable to the central government?

◆ **Federalism**

Q4. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism? [3]

Courts are described as playing the role of an 'umpire' in a federal system. What specific situations make this role necessary, and why can't the central government settle such disputes itself?

◆ **Federalism**

Q5. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism? [1]

[mcq] Which of the following best explains why amending the fundamental power-sharing provisions of a federal constitution requires approval from both the central government and the state governments?

- (A) Because the central government is always more powerful and must seek the consent of weaker state governments before making any change.
- (B) Because each level of government has constitutionally guaranteed authority that neither level can unilaterally alter or take away.
- (C) Because in a federation the states created the constitution and therefore retain the sole power to amend it.
- (D) Because all constitutional amendments must first be approved by the Supreme Court before they can take effect.
- A Because the central government always has more power than the states and must protect them.
- B Because each level of government has constitutionally guaranteed authority that cannot be taken away by the other level alone.
- C Because the courts must approve all constitutional changes before they can take effect.
- D Because federations are formed only through voluntary coming-together of independent states.

◆ Federalism

Q6. deep thorough-understanding § What is federalism? [3]

Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal system, while Sri Lanka has remained essentially unitary. Using the key difference between these two systems, explain why Tamil leaders in Sri Lanka demanded a federal arrangement rather than simply asking for more government spending in their regions.

◆ Federalism

Q7. deep thorough-understanding § What is federalism? [5]

Compare 'coming together' federations with 'holding together' federations on the following points: (i) how and why they were formed, (ii) the relative power of the central government versus constituent units, and (iii) whether constituent units tend to have equal or unequal powers among themselves. Give one example of each type.

◆ Federalism

Q8. straightforward thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [1]

[very_short_answer] Education appears on a list that allows both the Union and State Governments to legislate on it. Name that list. If a State law on education conflicts with a Union law on the same subject, whose law prevails and why?

◆ Federalism

Q9. medium thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [3]

[short_answer] Rajasthan strongly opposes a decision taken by the Union Government on a matter that falls under the Union List. Explain why the State Government cannot prevent the Union Government from implementing that decision. How does the existence of the Union List reflect the principle that certain matters require a uniform national policy?

◆ Federalism

Q10. medium thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [3]

Why do States such as Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh enjoy special constitutional powers that other Indian States do not? What does the existence of these special provisions suggest about the nature of Indian federalism compared to a 'coming together' federation like the USA?

◆ Federalism

Q11. deep thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [3]

Amending the power-sharing arrangement in the Indian Constitution requires more than a simple parliamentary majority. Why is such a high threshold set, and how does this requirement itself reflect a key principle of federalism?

◆ Federalism

Q12. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [1]

[mcq] Despite initial fears, the reorganisation of States on linguistic lines in India ultimately strengthened national unity. Which of the following best explains why?

- (A) It transferred more legislative powers from State Lists to the Union List.
- (B) It eliminated regional parties and reduced political fragmentation.
- (C) It made administration more effective and gave linguistic communities a sense of belonging within the Indian Union.
- (D) It resulted in Hindi becoming the sole medium of instruction in all States.

◆ Federalism

Q13. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [3]

Hindi is spoken by only about 40 per cent of Indians, yet it was made the official language of the Union. Why did many non-Hindi-speaking States strongly oppose the discontinuation of English for official purposes in 1965, and how did the Central Government's response reflect the federal spirit?

◆ Federalism

Q14. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [3]

For several decades after Independence, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most States. How did this situation undermine the federal principle, even though the constitutional provisions for federalism remained unchanged?

◆ Federalism

Q15. deep thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [3]

After 1990, the rise of regional political parties and the era of coalition governments at the Centre led to a significant change in Centre–State relations. Explain how the compulsion to form coalitions produced a more genuine practice of federalism than had existed before.

◆ Federalism

Q16. deep thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [5]

[long_answer] 'The constitutional provisions alone are not sufficient to ensure the genuine practice of federalism — political will and the nature of the party system matter equally.' Analyse this statement in the context of Centre–State relations in India, with reference to the period before and after 1990.

◆ Federalism

Q17. straightforward thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [1]

[very_short_answer] The Supreme Court gave a landmark ruling that the Central Government cannot arbitrarily dismiss a State government. How does this ruling strengthen the federal structure of India, and why is it significant for elected State governments?

◆ Federalism

Q18. straightforward thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [1]

[very_short_answer] Why is decentralisation considered especially necessary in a large and diverse country like India? Give two reasons.

◆ Federalism

Q19. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [3]

Before 1992, local government bodies like panchayats and municipalities existed in India, yet decentralisation was considered ineffective. Why?

◆ Federalism

Q20. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [3]

The 1992 constitutional amendment on local government included a provision for State Election Commissions. Why was it important to create an independent body specifically for this purpose, rather than leaving elections to existing state authorities?

◆ Federalism

Q21. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [3]

[short_answer] In the three-tier rural local government structure in India, election methods differ across levels. Explain how members are chosen at each tier and what this variation reveals about the nature of democratic representation in the system.

◆ Federalism

Q22. deep thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [5]

Reserving at least one-third of all positions in local government bodies for women is described as a significant feature of the 1992 amendment. A student argues: 'This is unnecessary interference — if women are capable, they will win elections on their own.' Using what you know about the purpose of decentralisation and democratic participation, evaluate this argument.

◆ Federalism

Q23. deep thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [3]

Despite the constitutional mandate introduced in 1992, gram sabhas are not held regularly and most state governments have not transferred significant powers or resources to local bodies. How does this situation contradict the very logic that was used to justify decentralisation in the first place?

◆ Federalism

Q24. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [5]

India is described as a 'holding together' federation, yet after 1990 the rise of regional parties and coalition governments actually strengthened federal practice. How do the political developments after 1990 complement the constitutional design of Indian federalism to make it more effective in reality?

◆ Federalism

Q25. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [3]

Both the linguistic reorganisation of States and the language policy adopted by the Constitution were responses to India's diversity. In what way did each of these measures serve the same underlying goal, and where did their approaches differ?

◆ Federalism

Q26. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [1]

Assertion (A): Even though education is a Concurrent List subject, a State government can introduce new school textbooks without seeking the Union Government's approval.

Reason (R): On Concurrent List subjects, State laws are valid unless they conflict with a Central law, and no Central law mandates approval of State textbooks.

Choose the correct option:

- (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

Q27. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [3]

What is the key structural difference between a unitary system and a 'holding together' federation? Using India as an example, explain why this structural difference is important for protecting the interests of regional or linguistic groups.

◆ Federalism

Q28. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [3]

The Indian Constitution gives the Union Government exclusive power over 'residuary subjects' — topics not listed in any of the three lists. How is this feature consistent with India being a 'holding together' federation, and how does it differ from the balance of power typically found in a 'coming together' federation?

◆ Federalism

Q29. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [1]

Which of the following best describes the combined effect of the 1992 Constitutional amendment on local government in India?

- (A) It created a new Union List subject called 'local government' and gave the Centre power to run panchayats.
- (B) It made local elections mandatory, reserved seats for marginalised groups and women, and established independent State Election Commissions, thereby deepening democratic participation below the State level.
- (C) It merged the State List and the Concurrent List so that States could more easily share resources with panchayats.
- (D) It transferred all powers of State governments over agriculture and police directly to gram panchayats.

- A It created a new Union List subject called 'local government' and gave the Centre power to run panchayats.
- B It made local elections mandatory, reserved seats for marginalised groups and women, and established independent State Election Commissions, thereby deepening democratic participation below the State level.
- C It merged the State List and the Concurrent List so that States could more easily share resources with panchayats.
- D It transferred all powers of State governments over agriculture and police directly to gram panchayats.

◆ Federalism

Q30. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis) [3]

Identify ONE constitutional provision and ONE political development that have, together, helped protect the autonomy of State governments in India. Explain how each of these contributes to the same outcome.

◆ Federalism

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CBSE CLASS X
Social Science (087)

ANSWER KEY

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Q1. medium thorough-understanding § Overview

[3]

Belgium and Sri Lanka adopted very different approaches to managing diversity within their borders. Explain how the distribution of governmental power differs between a federal and a unitary system, and analyse why this difference is significant for regional or sub-national governments seeking autonomy.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

In a **federal system**, power is divided between a central authority and constituent units (states/regions), with each level enjoying constitutionally guaranteed jurisdiction. Neither level can unilaterally take away the other's powers.

In a **unitary system**, sub-units are subordinate to the central government, which can pass orders to them or even withdraw their powers.

This difference is significant because regional governments in a federal system have **constitutional protection** for their autonomy — as seen when Belgium shifted to federalism in 1993, making regional powers independent of the centre. In a unitary system like Sri Lanka, Tamil leaders lack such guaranteed autonomy, fuelling demands for federalism.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 2 — What is federalism?*

Explanation

- Examiners expect: (1) clear definition of both systems, (2) the key contrast — constitutional guarantee vs. subordination, (3) why this matters for regional autonomy, linked to Belgium/Sri Lanka examples.
- The phrase "constitutionally guaranteed" is critical — it's the core distinction the textbook emphasises.
- Don't write a long essay; 3 marks = ~3 distinct, tight points. Use the Belgium 1993 shift as your concrete example.

Q2. deep thorough-understanding § Overview

[3]

Federalism is described as having a 'dual objective'. Why are BOTH parts of this objective necessary, and what would go wrong in a country like India if only one part were achieved — say, unity was maintained but regional diversity was not accommodated?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

Federalism has a **dual objective**: to safeguard and promote the **unity** of the country, while simultaneously **accommodating regional diversity**.

Both parts are necessary because India is an extremely diverse nation with different languages, cultures, and regions. Unity ensures the country stays together under a common government; accommodating diversity ensures no region or group feels dominated or suppressed.

If unity were maintained but regional diversity was **not** accommodated — as happened in Sri Lanka with its Tamil minority — it would lead to resentment, demands for separation, and conflict. In India, ignoring linguistic diversity could have caused disintegration. Instead, creation of linguistic States and protection of multiple languages actually made India **more united**, not less. Without accommodation of diversity, forced uniformity breeds discontent and undermines democracy itself.

Source: Chapter 2 — What is federalism?, Linguistic States, Language policy

Explanation

- The examiner wants you to **define** the dual objective first (1 mark), then explain **why both parts are needed** (1 mark), then give a **consequence** if only unity is maintained without diversity accommodation (1 mark).
- Use the Sri Lanka contrast — it's directly from the textbook and is the classic example examiners expect.
- The point that linguistic States made India *more* united is a key textbook finding — always include it.
- Don't write more than ~80 words in the actual exam answer.

Q3. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism?

[3]

In a federal system, why is it said that state governments are 'separately answerable to the people' rather than answerable to the central government?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

In a federal system, power is divided between the central and state governments by the Constitution. The state government has its own jurisdiction and powers guaranteed by the Constitution — it does not derive these powers from the central government. Therefore, the central government **cannot order** the state government to act in a particular way on matters within the state's jurisdiction.

Since both levels of government get their authority directly from the people through elections, and each is responsible for its own constitutionally assigned subjects, both are **separately answerable to the people** — not to each other.

Source: *Federalism, "What is Federalism?" — Chapter 2*

Explanation

- The key phrase from the textbook is: *"State government has powers of its own for which it is not answerable to the central government. Both these governments are separately answerable to the people."*
- Examiners expect you to contrast this with a **unitary system**, where sub-units are subordinate to the centre.
- Mention **Constitution as the source** of state power — this is what makes state authority independent, not a grant from the centre.
- Do not write more than ~75 words for a 3-mark answer.

Q4. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism?

[3]

Courts are described as playing the role of an 'umpire' in a federal system. What specific situations make this role necessary, and why can't the central government settle such disputes itself?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

Courts act as an 'umpire' in a federal system when disputes arise between different levels of government — for example, when the Union and State Governments disagree over their respective powers, or when a law passed by one level is seen as encroaching on the jurisdiction of another.

This role is necessary because:

- Each tier has its own constitutionally guaranteed jurisdiction (Union List, State List, Concurrent List).
- Disputes over these boundaries need an independent authority to resolve.

The Central Government cannot settle such disputes itself because it is itself a *party* to the dispute. Allowing it to be the judge would be unfair and would undermine the autonomy of State Governments. Therefore, the High Courts and the Supreme Court interpret the Constitution and give a final, impartial ruling.

Source: Chapter 2 — "What makes India a federal country?", section on Judiciary and federal features.

Explanation

Examiners expect three things here: (1) **what situations** require the umpire role (inter-governmental/jurisdictional disputes), (2) **why courts** are needed (independence/impartiality), and (3) **why the Centre cannot** decide (it is a party in the dispute, not a neutral body). The textbook explicitly states: "In case of any dispute about the division of powers, the High Courts and the Supreme Court make a decision" — use this directly. Mentioning the three lists shows you understand the source of disputes.

Q5. medium thorough-understanding § What is federalism?

[1]

[mcq] Which of the following best explains why amending the fundamental power-sharing provisions of a federal constitution requires approval from both the central government and the state governments?

- (A) Because the central government is always more powerful and must seek the consent of weaker state governments before making any change.
- (B) Because each level of government has constitutionally guaranteed authority that neither level can unilaterally alter or take away.
- (C) Because in a federation the states created the constitution and therefore retain the sole power to amend it.
- (D) Because all constitutional amendments must first be approved by the Supreme Court before they can take effect.
- A Because the central government always has more power than the states and must protect them.
- B Because each level of government has constitutionally guaranteed authority that cannot be taken away by the other level alone.
- C Because the courts must approve all constitutional changes before they can take effect.
- D Because federations are formed only through voluntary coming-together of independent states.

◆ **Federalism**

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Model Answer

Answer: (B)

In a federation, the jurisdictions and authority of each level of government are constitutionally guaranteed, so the fundamental power-sharing provisions cannot be unilaterally changed by one level alone — consent of both levels is required.

Explanation

The textbook (Chapter 2, "What is Federalism?") explicitly states: *"The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be unilaterally changed by one level of government. Such changes require the consent of both the levels of government."* This is a key feature of federalism. Option A is wrong because federal constitutions don't rest on a power hierarchy of protection; Option C is wrong because states don't hold sole amendment power; Option D is wrong because Supreme Court approval is not a precondition for amendments (courts act as umpires in disputes, not approvers of amendments).

Q6. deep thorough-understanding § What is federalism?

[3]

Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal system, while Sri Lanka has remained essentially unitary. Using the key difference between these two systems, explain why Tamil leaders in Sri Lanka demanded a federal arrangement rather than simply asking for more government spending in their regions.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

The key difference between a federal and unitary system is that in a federal system, regional governments have **constitutionally guaranteed powers** that cannot be taken away by the central government. In a unitary system, all powers rest with the central government, and regional units are subordinate to it.

Tamil leaders demanded a federal arrangement because more government spending can be withdrawn at any time by the Sinhala-dominated central government. Only constitutionally protected powers — as in a federation — would give Tamils secure autonomy over language, culture, and regional administration. Without such guarantees, any spending benefit could be reversed through majoritarian decisions.

Source: Chapter 2, "What is Federalism?" and Chapter 1, "Majoritarianism in Sri Lanka"

Explanation

- The examiner wants you to **apply the federal vs. unitary distinction** directly to the Tamil demand — not just define the terms.
- The crucial insight is **constitutional guarantee vs. discretionary grant**: spending can be reversed; constitutionally entrenched powers cannot.
- Link back to Sri Lanka's context: Sinhala majoritarian policies (1956 language act, job discrimination) showed Tamils that the central government would not protect their interests — making **guaranteed autonomy** essential, not just funds.
- At 3 marks, you need: (1) define the key difference, (2) explain why spending is insufficient, (3) explain why federal powers are necessary. One clear paragraph or 3 bullet points works.

Q7. deep thorough-understanding § What is federalism?

[5]

Compare 'coming together' federations with 'holding together' federations on the following points: (i) how and why they were formed, (ii) the relative power of the central government versus constituent units, and (iii) whether constituent units tend to have equal or unequal powers among themselves. Give one example of each type.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

Comparison of 'Coming Together' and 'Holding Together' Federations:

(i) How and Why Formed:

In 'coming together' federations, independent states voluntarily unite to form a larger unit, pooling their sovereignty to increase security while retaining identity. In 'holding together' federations, a large country decides to divide its powers between the national government and constituent states, usually to accommodate regional diversity.

(ii) Power of Central Government vs. Constituent Units:

In 'coming together' federations, constituent states are strong vis-à-vis the federal government. In 'holding together' federations, the Central Government tends to be more powerful compared to the states.

(iii) Equal or Unequal Powers Among Constituent Units:

In 'coming together' federations, all constituent states usually have equal powers. In 'holding together' federations, constituent units often have unequal powers; some units are granted special powers.

Examples: USA — 'coming together'; India — 'holding together'.

Source: *What is federalism?*, Chapter 2

Explanation

- The textbook gives this comparison explicitly — examiners expect the exact three points covered with both types contrasted side by side.
- Always name the examples: USA/Switzerland/Australia for 'coming together'; India/Spain/Belgium for 'holding together'. One example each is sufficient.
- The fill-in-the-blank exercise (Q6, Chapter 2 exercises) reinforces this directly — use the same language as the textbook for full marks.

Q8. straightforward thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [1]

[very_short_answer] Education appears on a list that allows both the Union and State Governments to legislate on it. Name that list. If a State law on education conflicts with a Union law on the same subject, whose law prevails and why?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

Education appears in the **Concurrent List**. If a State law conflicts with a Union law on a Concurrent List subject, the **Union (Central) Government's law prevails**, because both can legislate on it, but Central law takes precedence in case of conflict.

Explanation

The key facts examiners expect: (1) name — *Concurrent List*, and (2) Union law prevails with a brief reason. Both points are needed even in a 1-mark question, so keep it in one sentence. Avoid confusing the Concurrent List with the Union or State List.

Q9. medium thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country? [3]

[short_answer] Rajasthan strongly opposes a decision taken by the Union Government on a matter that falls under the Union List. Explain why the State Government cannot prevent the Union Government from implementing that decision. How does the existence of the Union List reflect the principle that certain matters require a uniform national policy?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

The Union Government's decision cannot be prevented by Rajasthan because **defence, foreign affairs, banking, communications, and currency** — matters of national importance — fall under the **Union List**, on which **only the Union Government has the authority to make laws**. State governments have no jurisdiction over Union List subjects; their legislative power is limited to the State List. Since nuclear policy (defence) is a Union List subject, Rajasthan has no constitutional power to stop the Centre.

The Union List reflects the principle of **uniform national policy** because these subjects — such as defence and currency — require the same rules across the entire country. If each state made its own laws on these matters, it would create chaos and threaten national unity and security.

Source: Chapter 2 — Federalism, Three-fold distribution of legislative powers

Explanation

- Examiners expect you to name the Union List and state that only the Union Government can legislate on it — this is the core legal reason.
- Link to the "uniform national policy" principle using the textbook's own language and examples (defence, currency, etc.).
- The Pokharan/nuclear test example from the textbook directly supports this question — use it confidently.
- Avoid writing about the Concurrent List or State List unless asked; stay focused on what the question asks.

Q10. medium thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country?

[3]

Why do States such as Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh enjoy special constitutional powers that other Indian States do not? What does the existence of these special provisions suggest about the nature of Indian federalism compared to a 'coming together' federation like the USA?

◆ **Federalism**

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Model Answer

States like Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh enjoy special powers under Article 371 of the Constitution due to their peculiar social and historical circumstances. These include protection of land rights of indigenous peoples, their culture, and preferential employment in government services. Non-permanent residents cannot buy land there.

This shows that Indian federalism is a "**holding together**" federation, unlike the USA which is a "**coming together**" federation. In the USA, all constituent States have equal powers. In India, not all States have identical powers — the Union Government is stronger and some States enjoy more powers than others based on special needs.

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

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to name Article 371 and the specific special powers (land, culture, employment).
- The key contrast is "**holding together**" vs "**coming together**" federation — this is the core concept. In coming-together federations (USA), constituent units are equal; in holding-together federations (India), units can have unequal powers.
- Fill-in-the-blank Q6 in the textbook exercises directly tests this — memorise the exact terms.
- Do not write a general essay; stick to the two parts of the question.

Q11. deep thorough-understanding § What makes India a federal country?

[3]

Amending the power-sharing arrangement in the Indian Constitution requires more than a simple parliamentary majority. Why is such a high threshold set, and how does this requirement itself reflect a key principle of federalism?

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

The Indian Constitution requires any change to the power-sharing arrangement between the Union and State Governments to be passed by both Houses of Parliament with at least a **two-thirds majority**, and then ratified by the legislatures of **at least half of all States**.

This high threshold is set because such changes directly affect the powers of State Governments. Allowing Parliament alone to alter this arrangement would let the Centre unilaterally reduce the autonomy of States, destroying the very basis of federal governance.

This requirement itself reflects the key federal principle that **both levels of government are sovereign within their own spheres** — States must have a say in decisions that affect their powers. It ensures that federalism is not merely on paper but is protected in practice.

Source: Chapter 2 — What makes India a federal country?

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to state the exact procedure (2/3 majority in both Houses + ratification by at least half the States) — get these figures right.
- Then explain *why* this is needed: prevents the Centre from unilaterally amending federal arrangements.
- Finally, link the procedure back to the federal principle: States share sovereignty, so their consent is mandatory — this is what makes it a true federal safeguard.
- Avoid writing vague general statements about democracy; keep it specific to federalism and Centre-State relations.

Q12. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [1]

[mcq] Despite initial fears, the reorganisation of States on linguistic lines in India ultimately strengthened national unity. Which of the following best explains why?

- (A) It transferred more legislative powers from State Lists to the Union List.
- (B) It eliminated regional parties and reduced political fragmentation.
- (C) It made administration more effective and gave linguistic communities a sense of belonging within the Indian Union.
- (D) It resulted in Hindi becoming the sole medium of instruction in all States.

◆ **Federalism**

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Model Answer

(C) It made administration more effective and gave linguistic communities a sense of belonging within the Indian Union.

The formation of linguistic States made administration easier and ensured that people felt included within India, thus uniting the country rather than dividing it.

Source: How is federalism practised?, Linguistic States — Chapter 2

Explanation

The textbook directly states: *"the formation of linguistic States has actually made the country more united. It has also made administration easier."* Options A and D are factually incorrect per the chapter. Option B is wrong — regional parties actually *rose* after reorganisation. Examiners expect students to recall the exact outcome mentioned in the source.

Q13. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised?

[3]

Hindi is spoken by only about 40 per cent of Indians, yet it was made the official language of the Union. Why did many non-Hindi-speaking States strongly oppose the discontinuation of English for official purposes in 1965, and how did the Central Government's response reflect the federal spirit?

◆ **Federalism**

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Model Answer

Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40% of Indians. Non-Hindi-speaking States, especially Tamil Nadu where the movement turned violent, feared that imposing Hindi would disadvantage their people in government jobs and public life, effectively reducing them to second-class citizens.

The Central Government, reflecting the federal spirit, responded by agreeing to **continue the use of English alongside Hindi** for official purposes beyond 1965. This showed flexibility and respect for linguistic diversity rather than imposing the majority language on minorities — unlike Sri Lanka's majoritarian language policy which led to civil war.

Source: *Federalism – Language Policy, Chapter 2*

Explanation

- The examiner expects **three elements**: the reason Hindi was controversial (only 40% speak it), why non-Hindi States opposed the 1965 deadline (fear of disadvantage/discrimination), and how the Centre responded (continued English + Hindi).
- Mention Tamil Nadu's violent agitation — it's a key textbook detail.
- Draw the contrast with Sri Lanka's majoritarian approach to show you understand "federal spirit."
- Avoid writing a long essay; three tight points in 3–4 sentences is ideal for 3 marks.

Q14. medium thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised?

[3]

For several decades after Independence, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most States. How did this situation undermine the federal principle, even though the constitutional provisions for federalism remained unchanged?

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Model Answer

For a long time, the same party (Congress) ruled both at the Centre and in most States. As a result, State Governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units — they simply followed the directives of the central leadership. When a rival party ruled a State, the Central Government often misused constitutional provisions to dismiss that State Government. This undermined the spirit of federalism even though the constitutional provisions remained unchanged, because the practice of power-sharing depends on how ruling parties actually follow those arrangements.

Source: *How is federalism practised?*, *Centre-State relations*, Chapter 2

Explanation

- The examiner wants you to distinguish between **constitutional provisions** (which were unchanged) and **actual practice** (which undermined federalism).
- Two key points must be covered: (1) same-party dominance → States didn't act autonomously; (2) Central Government dismissed rival-party State Governments.
- Avoid writing about post-1990 changes — the question asks only about the undermining, not the improvement.
- Cite the chapter; it shows you know the source.

Q15. deep thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised?

[3]

After 1990, the rise of regional political parties and the era of coalition governments at the Centre led to a significant change in Centre–State relations. Explain how the compulsion to form coalitions produced a more genuine practice of federalism than had existed before.

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Model Answer

After 1990, the rise of regional parties and coalition politics changed Centre–State relations in three key ways:

1. **No single party majority:** No national party could win a clear majority in the Lok Sabha on its own, so they were *compelled* to ally with regional (State) parties to form the government.
1. **Power sharing culture:** Since regional parties became coalition partners, the Central Government had to respect and accommodate the interests of State governments, creating a genuine culture of power sharing and autonomy.
1. **End of arbitrary dismissal:** A Supreme Court judgement made it difficult for the Centre to dismiss State governments arbitrarily, further strengthening federalism in practice.

Thus, political compulsion—not just constitutional provisions—made federalism more genuine after 1990.

Source: Chapter 2 (Democratic Politics), Section: How is federalism practised? – Centre–State relations

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to link **coalition compulsion** → **respect for State autonomy** as the core argument.
- Mention: (i) no single-party majority, (ii) alliances with regional parties, (iii) new culture of power sharing, and optionally the Supreme Court judgement. These are the textbook's exact points.
- Avoid writing vague statements like "federalism improved"—always explain *why* (coalition compulsion forced national parties to respect States).

Q16. deep thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised?

[5]

[long_answer] 'The constitutional provisions alone are not sufficient to ensure the genuine practice of federalism — political will and the nature of the party system matter equally.' Analyse this statement in the context of Centre–State relations in India, with reference to the period before and after 1990.

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Model Answer

Constitutional provisions alone cannot ensure genuine federalism — political will and the party system are equally crucial.

Before 1990: The same party (Indian National Congress) ruled at both Centre and most States for long periods. State governments did not exercise autonomous rights. The Central Government misused constitutional provisions — including dismissal of rival State governments — undermining the spirit of federalism.

After 1990: Regional parties rose to prominence and no single party won a clear Lok Sabha majority, leading to the era of coalition governments. National parties allied with regional parties, creating a new culture of power-sharing and respect for State autonomy. A major Supreme Court judgement also made arbitrary dismissal of State governments difficult.

Thus, federal power sharing became more effective after 1990 — not because the Constitution changed, but because the nature of democratic politics changed.

Source: *Democratic Politics*, Chapter 2, "Centre-State relations"

Explanation

- Examiners expect contrast between pre-1990 (one-party dominance, Article 356 misuse) and post-1990 (coalition era, regional parties, Supreme Court ruling).
- The core argument must be: constitutional provisions are *necessary but not sufficient* — quote or paraphrase this.
- Don't forget the Supreme Court judgement point; it shows how judicial will also supports federalism.
- Avoid vague statements — be specific (Congress dominance, coalition era, regional parties, dismissal of state governments).

Q17. straightforward thorough-understanding § How is federalism practised? [1]

[very_short_answer] The Supreme Court gave a landmark ruling that the Central Government cannot arbitrarily dismiss a State government. How does this ruling strengthen the federal structure of India, and why is it significant for elected State governments?

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Model Answer

The Supreme Court ruled that the Central Government cannot arbitrarily dismiss State governments, thus protecting elected State governments from political interference and ensuring they can function as autonomous units within India's federal structure.

Source: Centre-State relations, Chapter 2

Explanation

For a 1-mark answer, examiners expect one clear sentence linking the ruling to federal autonomy. The key points are: (1) protection from arbitrary dismissal, and (2) strengthening State autonomy. The textbook states this judgement made federal power sharing "more effective today than it was in the early years."

Q18. straightforward thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India [1]

[very_short_answer] Why is decentralisation considered especially necessary in a large and diverse country like India? Give two reasons.

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Model Answer

Decentralisation is especially necessary in India because: (i) India is a vast country with states as large as European nations, making two-tier governance insufficient; (ii) states are internally very diverse, so local problems are best understood and resolved at the local level with people's direct participation.

Explanation

Even though this is a 1-mark question, it asks for **two** reasons — so give both briefly in one-two lines. Examiners expect: (1) the size/vastness argument and (2) the diversity/local knowledge argument. Both are directly from the passage on decentralisation. Avoid writing lengthy explanations; keep it crisp.

Q19. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India

[3]

Before 1992, local government bodies like panchayats and municipalities existed in India, yet decentralisation was considered ineffective. Why?

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Model Answer

Before 1992, decentralisation was ineffective because:

1. **No constitutional status:** Local bodies like panchayats and municipalities were directly under the control of state governments, with no independent powers of their own.
2. **Irregular elections:** Elections to these local governments were not held regularly.
3. **No resources:** Local governments did not have financial resources of their own, making them dependent on the state government.

Without powers, regular elections, or funds, these bodies could not function as true self-governing institutions.

Source: *Decentralisation in India, Chapter 2*

Explanation

The examiner wants **three distinct reasons**, each clearly stated — matching the 3 marks. The key contrast to highlight is *before vs. after 1992*: before 1992, local bodies existed but lacked constitutional backing, regular elections, and independent resources. These are the three points directly from the textbook paragraph on decentralisation. Avoid writing about post-1992 reforms unless specifically asked — that would waste time and space.

Q20. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India

[3]

The 1992 constitutional amendment on local government included a provision for State Election Commissions. Why was it important to create an independent body specifically for this purpose, rather than leaving elections to existing state authorities?

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Model Answer

The 1992 constitutional amendment made it mandatory for every state to set up an independent **State Election Commission** to superintend, direct, and control the preparation of electoral rolls and conduct of elections to local bodies (Panchayats and Municipalities).

An independent body was necessary because:

1. **Preventing political interference** — leaving elections to existing state authorities (controlled by the ruling party) could lead to manipulation of local body elections in their favour.
2. **Ensuring free and fair elections** — an autonomous commission operates without pressure from the state government, ensuring impartiality.
3. **Strengthening the third tier** — genuine democratic decentralisation requires that local elections are credible and independent, just as the Election Commission of India oversees state and national elections.

Thus, independence of the election body is essential to make local self-government meaningful and effective.

Source: Decentralisation / Local Government, Chapter 2 (Democratic Politics)

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to state **what** the State Election Commission is, then give **reasons** why independence matters — focus on neutrality, preventing misuse by ruling party, and strengthening decentralisation.
- The source passages do not give explicit detail on State Election Commissions, so this answer draws on the standard NCERT content for this topic. Always link back to the broader principle of federalism and free elections.
- Avoid writing vague points like "it is important for democracy" — be specific about *who* might interfere and *why* independence prevents that.

Q21. medium thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India

[3]

[short_answer] In the three-tier rural local government structure in India, election methods differ across levels. Explain how members are chosen at each tier and what this variation reveals about the nature of democratic representation in the system.

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Model Answer

The three-tier rural local government (Panchayati Raj) structure chooses members differently at each level:

- **Gram Panchayat (village level):** Ward members (panch) and sarpanch are **directly elected** by all adult voters of that ward/village.
- **Panchayat Samiti (block level):** Members are **elected by all panchayat members** of that area — an indirect method.
- **Zilla Parishad (district level):** **Most members are elected;** however, Lok Sabha MPs, MLAs of the district, and officials of district bodies are also included as members.

This variation shows that direct democracy operates at the grassroots, while higher tiers use indirect/representative methods, reflecting a balance between mass participation and administrative practicability.

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

Explanation

- The examiner wants **all three tiers named** with their specific election method — missing even one tier costs marks.
- The key contrast is **direct election (Gram Panchayat) vs. indirect election (Panchayat Samiti) vs. mixed/mostly elected (Zilla Parishad).**
- The final inference about what this reveals about democratic representation is what earns the analysis mark in a 3-mark question — don't skip it.
- Avoid copying large chunks; state facts precisely and concisely.

Q22. deep thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India

[5]

Reserving at least one-third of all positions in local government bodies for women is described as a significant feature of the 1992 amendment. A student argues: 'This is unnecessary interference — if women are capable, they will win elections on their own.' Using what you know about the purpose of decentralisation and democratic participation, evaluate this argument.

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Model Answer

The student's argument is flawed for the following reasons:

1. **Historical barriers exist:** Women in India face deep-rooted patriarchal disadvantages — lower literacy (54% vs 76% for men), domestic burden, and lack of financial independence — which make fair electoral competition impossible without structural support.
1. **Low representation is evidence:** Women make up barely 14.36% of Lok Sabha; India ranks among the lowest nations globally. This proves that merit alone has not translated into representation, reflecting systemic bias, not lack of capability.
1. **Purpose of reservation:** Reservation corrects historical injustice and ensures women's issues receive political attention. As the textbook states, unless women control power, their problems will not get adequate attention.
1. **Democratic principle:** Democracy must promote dignity and freedom for all. Excluding half the population from effective governance undermines democratic participation.
1. **Proven success:** The 1992 amendment has produced over **10 lakh elected women representatives** in Panchayati Raj bodies — demonstrating that reservation creates genuine participation, not artificial interference.

Therefore, reservation is not unnecessary interference but a corrective democratic mechanism.

Source: *Gender and Politics, Chapter 3; Dignity and Freedom of the Citizens, Chapter 5*

Explanation

- The question is evaluate-type, so state the argument, then counter it systematically with evidence from the textbook.
- Key facts examiners expect: 54% female literacy vs 76% male, 14.36% in Lok Sabha, 10 lakh women in Panchayati Raj, India at bottom globally.
- Link reservation to *why* it is needed (systemic barriers) and *what* it achieves (political attention to women's issues).
- Do not just list facts — frame each point as a *counter* to the student's claim. That satisfies the "evaluate" demand.
- Answer Q8 from exercises confirms reservation is in **Panchayati Raj bodies** (option d) — a good factual anchor.

Q23. deep thorough-understanding § Decentralisation in India

[3]

Despite the constitutional mandate introduced in 1992, gram sabhas are not held regularly and most state governments have not transferred significant powers or resources to local bodies. How does this situation contradict the very logic that was used to justify decentralisation in the first place?

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Model Answer

The justification for decentralisation was that local people have better knowledge of local problems, can participate directly in decision-making, and can manage resources more efficiently — making local self-government meaningful. However, if gram sabhas are not held regularly, ordinary citizens lose their direct role in approving budgets and reviewing panchayat performance. If state governments do not transfer significant powers or adequate resources to local bodies, these bodies remain powerless. This defeats the very purpose of decentralisation — genuine self-governance at the grassroots — reducing the third tier to a mere formality rather than real democratic participation.

Source: *Decentralisation in India, Chapter 2*

Explanation

Examiners expect you to:

1. **State the logic/rationale** of decentralisation (local knowledge, direct participation, efficient management).
2. **Show the contradiction** — without regular gram sabhas and transferred powers/resources, that logic fails completely.
3. Use textbook phrases like "local self-government," "direct participation," and "adequate resources."

Avoid writing vague generalities. Link the *reason* for decentralisation directly to the *gap* in practice — that contrast is the core of the answer.

Q24. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[5]

India is described as a 'holding together' federation, yet after 1990 the rise of regional parties and coalition governments actually strengthened federal practice. How do the political developments after 1990 complement the constitutional design of Indian federalism to make it more effective in reality?

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Model Answer

India is a **'holding together' federation** where the Constitution gave the Centre more powers than the States. However, political developments after 1990 made federalism more effective in practice.

Constitutional design: The Constitution divides powers into Union List, State List, and Concurrent List, guaranteeing each tier autonomous jurisdiction. Changes to power-sharing require consent of both levels, and the judiciary acts as umpire in disputes.

Post-1990 political shift: The rise of **regional parties** and the era of **coalition governments** meant no single national party could win a Lok Sabha majority alone. National parties were compelled to form alliances with regional/State parties, giving State governments greater bargaining power and respect.

Key outcomes:

- A new culture of **power-sharing** and respect for State autonomy emerged.
- The Supreme Court made **arbitrary dismissal of State governments** significantly more difficult.
- Regional parties regularly participated in national coalition governments, strengthening federal practice.

Thus, constitutional provisions provided the framework, while democratic politics after 1990 gave federalism real substance.

Source: Chapter 2 – How is federalism practised?; Chapter 4 – State parties

Explanation

Examiners expect you to link **two layers**: (1) constitutional design ('holding together', three lists, judicial role) and (2) political practice post-1990 (coalition era, regional parties, Supreme Court judgement on dismissal of State governments). Avoid writing only about the Constitution — the question specifically asks how political developments *complement* constitutional design. Use the key terms: coalition government, regional parties, autonomy of States. About 110–120 words is the right length for 5 marks.

Q25. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

Both the linguistic reorganisation of States and the language policy adopted by the Constitution were responses to India's diversity. In what way did each of these measures serve the same underlying goal, and where did their approaches differ?

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Model Answer

Both measures aimed to accommodate India's linguistic and cultural diversity while maintaining national unity.

Linguistic reorganisation redrew state boundaries so that people speaking the same language lived in the same state. Though initially feared to be divisive, it actually made administration easier and strengthened unity by giving communities a sense of recognition.

Language policy avoided imposing any single language on all citizens. Hindi was made official language, but 22 languages received constitutional recognition as Scheduled Languages. English was continued alongside Hindi after non-Hindi states protested.

Difference in approach: Linguistic reorganisation dealt with *territorial* accommodation, while language policy addressed *administrative and official* use of languages. One restructured political boundaries; the other regulated communication across those boundaries.

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

Explanation

- The question asks two things: (1) shared goal and (2) difference in approach — address both clearly.
- Examiners expect you to use textbook terms: "Scheduled Languages," "official language," "linguistic States."
- Avoid writing a general essay on federalism; stay focused on these two specific measures.
- 3 marks = roughly 3 distinct points: common goal + one measure + the contrast.

Q26. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[1]

Assertion (A): Even though education is a Concurrent List subject, a State government can introduce new school textbooks without seeking the Union Government's approval.

Reason (R): On Concurrent List subjects, State laws are valid unless they conflict with a Central law, and no Central law mandates approval of State textbooks.

Choose the correct option:

- (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.

Education is a Concurrent List subject; States can legislate on it. Since no Central law requires prior approval for State textbooks, State action is valid. R correctly explains A.

Explanation

The key principle is: on Concurrent List subjects, both Parliament and State Legislatures can make laws. A State law stands unless it conflicts with an existing Central law. Since no Central law mandates Union approval before a State introduces school textbooks, the State is free to do so. R directly explains *why* A is true — making option (A) correct. Students often confuse Concurrent List powers thinking States always need Union permission; that is only when there is a direct conflict with a Central law.

Q27. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

What is the key structural difference between a unitary system and a 'holding together' federation? Using India as an example, explain why this structural difference is important for protecting the interests of regional or linguistic groups.

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Model Answer

Key Structural Difference:

In a **unitary system**, sub-units are subordinate to the central government — it can pass orders to them and even withdraw their powers. In a **'holding together' federation**, power is constitutionally divided between the Centre and states; neither can unilaterally change this arrangement.

Importance for India:

India is a 'holding together' federation where states have constitutionally guaranteed jurisdiction over subjects in the State List (e.g., police, agriculture). This protects regional/linguistic groups because:

- Linguistic states were created so people speaking the same language could have their own government.
- States have their own official languages for administration.
- Northeastern states like Nagaland and Mizoram enjoy special constitutional powers (Article 371) to protect indigenous land rights and culture.

These protections cannot be removed by the Centre alone, unlike in a unitary system.

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

Explanation

Examiners look for: (1) a clear contrast between unitary and 'holding together' federation, (2) at least one specific Indian example (linguistic states, State List, or Article 371 special powers). The phrase "constitutionally guaranteed" is key — it is what makes the difference meaningful. Don't write a general essay on federalism; keep the answer focused on *why the structure matters* for regional/linguistic groups.

Q28. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

The Indian Constitution gives the Union Government exclusive power over 'residuary subjects' — topics not listed in any of the three lists. How is this feature consistent with India being a 'holding together' federation, and how does it differ from the balance of power typically found in a 'coming together' federation?

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Model Answer

In a **'holding together' federation**, the central government is more powerful than the states, as power is devolved from the centre outward. Giving the Union Government power over **residuary subjects** (topics not in any list) is consistent with this, as it ensures central authority over new or unanticipated matters, keeping the country united.

In contrast, **'coming together' federations** (like the USA, Switzerland, Australia) are formed by independent states voluntarily pooling sovereignty. Here, constituent units are generally **strong and equal** vis-à-vis the federal government, and residual powers typically rest with the states, not the centre.

Thus, India's residuary power with the Union reinforces the centralising tendency characteristic of 'holding together' federations.

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

Explanation

- Examiners expect you to **define both types of federations** briefly and link the residuary power feature specifically to the 'holding together' logic.
- Key contrast: in 'coming together' federations, states are strong and residual powers stay with states; in 'holding together' federations, the centre is stronger.
- Avoid writing a general essay on federalism — stay focused on the specific feature asked (residuary subjects) and the contrast between the two routes.

Q29. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[1]

Which of the following best describes the combined effect of the 1992 Constitutional amendment on local government in India?

- (A) It created a new Union List subject called 'local government' and gave the Centre power to run panchayats.
- (B) It made local elections mandatory, reserved seats for marginalised groups and women, and established independent State Election Commissions, thereby deepening democratic participation below the State level.
- (C) It merged the State List and the Concurrent List so that States could more easily share resources with panchayats.
- (D) It transferred all powers of State governments over agriculture and police directly to gram panchayats.

A It created a new Union List subject called 'local government' and gave the Centre power to run panchayats.

B It made local elections mandatory, reserved seats for marginalised groups and women, and established independent State Election Commissions, thereby deepening democratic participation below the State level.

C It merged the State List and the Concurrent List so that States could more easily share resources with panchayats.

D It transferred all powers of State governments over agriculture and police directly to gram panchayats.

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Model Answer

(B) It made local elections mandatory, reserved seats for marginalised groups and women, and established independent State Election Commissions, thereby deepening democratic participation below the State level.

Explanation

The 1992 Constitutional amendment (73rd and 74th Amendments) created a third tier of federalism — Panchayats and Municipalities. Key features: mandatory regular elections for local bodies, reservation of seats for SCs, STs, and women (at least one-third), and creation of State Election Commissions. Options A, C, and D are factually incorrect — local government remains a State subject, the Lists were not merged, and powers were not directly transferred from States to gram panchayats.

Q30. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

Identify ONE constitutional provision and ONE political development that have, together, helped protect the autonomy of State governments in India. Explain how each of these contributes to the same outcome.

◆ Federalism

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Model Answer

Constitutional Provision — Three Lists (Union, State, Concurrent):

The Indian Constitution divides legislative powers into three lists. Subjects in the State List, such as police and agriculture, fall exclusively under State jurisdiction. This guarantees States their own domain where the Centre cannot interfere, thereby protecting State autonomy constitutionally.

Political Development — Rise of Coalition Governments (after 1990):

After 1990, no single party won a clear Lok Sabha majority, so national parties had to ally with regional parties to form coalition governments. This gave regional parties significant bargaining power, forcing the Centre to respect State governments' rights and creating a new culture of power-sharing.

Together, both factors ensure States have legally protected powers that are politically difficult to override.

Source: Chapter 2 — How is federalism practised? / What is federalism?

Explanation

- Examiners expect ONE constitutional provision and ONE political development — name each clearly, don't blend them.
- The Three Lists (especially the State List) is the standard constitutional answer; you could also mention that jurisdictions are constitutionally guaranteed.
- The rise of coalition governments post-1990 is the textbook's own example of a political development strengthening federalism — use it.
- End with a linking sentence showing how both work toward the same outcome (State autonomy) — this earns the third mark.

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