

Secularism

Exercises

1. Multiple choice questions:

(I) A Secular State

(ii) Secularism

(iii) 1976

(iv) The state intervenes in order to prevent the domination of some members within a religious community.

(V) American Secularism

2. Very Short Answers:

(I) Secularism refers to the belief that religion should not be involved in the organisation of society.

(ii) India is a secular state because it does not favour any particular religion nor does it discriminate against any religion.

(iii) The term "Secular" was inserted in the preamble of our constitution in the year 1976.

(iv) Yes, India adopted a strategy of non-interference with religious practices in order to respect the sentiments of all religions. For example, as per the law in Delhi, wearing a helmet is essential for persons driving two wheelers. But, the Sikhs have been exempted from this law because wearing a pugri is a very important part of Sikh religion. So the government cannot force the Sikhs to wear a helmet.

3. Short Answers:

(I) It is essential for a democratic country to be secular because it has to protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion, adopt another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

(ii) Indian secularism means:

(a) India has no official religion.

(b) All citizens have the right to follow their own religion.

(c) India does not favour any particular religion nor does it discriminate against any religion.

(iii) A Secular state can achieve its objectives by ensuring certain elements. These elements are :

(a) One religious community does not dominate another religious groups in the country .

(b) Some members of religious groups do not dominate other members of the same religious community.

(c) The state does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals.

(iv) Indian secularism is similar to that of other democratic countries of the world because

(a) Some of the objectives regarding secularism are similar in other countries too and have been included in the Constitutions of other democratic countries of the world and it is same in India.

(b) According to the first Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the legislature can not declare any religion as the official religion and it is same in India.

4. Long Answers:

(I) (a) Since the practice of foeticide is a social evil so, the state can you intervene in the order to prevent an evil social practise.

(b) If the state believes that a particular social evil violates the Fundamental Rights of any class interfere in it.

(c) If a religious group says that their religion allows them to practise infoeticide then the state has the right to interfere in it to check it.

(ii) It is important to separate religion from the state because:

(a) Secularism is important for a country to function democratically.

(b) Any form of domination based on religion may violate the Fundamental Rights that a democratic country guarantees to its citizens.

(c) To protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion,adopt another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

(d) The dominate religious groups may face a lot of resistance from fellow members of the same community.

(iii) To prevent the religious dominations India has taken the following steps:

(a) India has adopted a strategy of separating religion from the state. It does not support any religion . For example, we cannot celebrate any religious practices in order to respect the

sentiments of all religions.

(c) The state also intervenes in the religion-based personal laws of communities in order to ensure equal inheritance rights.

(d) The State intervenes in the religion through its support.

(iv) Indian Secularism is different from that other democratic countries of the world in the following ways:

(a) Indian secularism can intervene in religious affairs e.g., in case of untouchability. But, there is strict separation between religion and State in American secularism.

(b) In Indian secularism, any interference in religion by the state has to be on the ideals laid out in the constitution.

(c) Thus, we find that India is a secular state. It works in various ways to prevent religious dominations by any community. Our country guarantees Fundamental Rights that are based on these secular principles.

(d) However, we may find many examples of the violations of these rights in our society. Therefore, the laws should be strictly implemented.

5. State True or False:

(I) True

(ii) False

(iii) True

(iv) True

(V) False