



Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 1
- ✓ About secularism and significance of separating religion from a state
- ✓ Indian secularism

What is Secularism?

- Secularism means separating religion from the state.
- Secularism is the principle of the separation of government institutions and persons mandated to represent the state from religious institutions and religious dignitaries.
- A secular state must not identify with any one religion or be controlled by it.
- It is because such identification accords privileged recognition to one religion, which violates the principle of equality.

What is it significant to separate Religion from State?

- It is important to separate religion from State, so that a country can function democratically.
- Almost all countries of the World will have more than one religious group living in them. One of these would be a majority religious group.
- If this majority religious group has access to State power, then it could quite easily use this power & financial resources to discriminate against & persecute persons of other religions.
- This tyranny of the majority could result in the discrimination & coercion.
- Thus any form of domination based on religion is in violation of the rights that a democratic society guarantees to each & every citizen irrespective of their religion.
- It also becomes important to separate religion from the state in democratic societies because we need to protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion, embrace another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

Understanding Indian Secularism

- The Indian Constitution mandates that the Indian state be secular.
- The state must keep a 'principled distance' from all religions.
- The Indian Constitution allows the state to play a legitimate role in the affairs of religion. e.g Article 25 that permits the state to regulate/restrict the secular activities of the religion
- Likewise, it permits religious considerations to sometimes enter governance.
- In India legitimate principled intervention of the state in religion and vice versa is constitutional.
- The two are distanced but not completely separated.

How the Indian State works to prevent the domination of religion in the affairs of the state?

- In India, government institutions like law courts, police stations, government offices, schools etc., are not supposed to display or promote any one religion.
- The Indian secularism works to prevent the domination through a strategy of non-interference.
- This means that in order to respect the sentiments of all religions & not interfere with religious practices, the State makes certain exceptions for particular religious communities.
- Indian Secularism prevents the domination through a strategy of intervention. Eg-In order to prevent religion-based exclusion & discrimination of lower castes the Indian Constitution has banned untouchability.



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- The intervention of the State can also be in the form of support. For instance – The Indian Constitution grants the right to religious communities to set up their own schools & colleges & also gives them financial aid on a non-preferential basis.
- In Indian Secularism, the State can intervene in religious affairs but religion cannot.
- Though the State is not strictly separated from religion, however it does maintain a principled distance vis-à-vis religion. This means that any interference in religion by the State has to be based on the ideals laid out in the Constitution.
- The Indian Constitution guarantees Fundamental Rights that are based on secular principles.
- The knowledge that such rights exist makes us sensitive to their violations & enables us to take action when these violations take place.



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2G scam and CBI

Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 2
- ✓ Brief history of 2G case and damage brought to CBI's reputation
- ✓ How CBI can retain its lost credibility

Recently:

- ❖ The recent 2G scam case verdict caused serious damage to CBI's reputation because the trial court judge in the 2G case had criticized CBI for its incompetence.
- ❖ Recently, all the members on trial were acquitted due to lack of conclusive evidence and the judgement also questioned the CBI's resolve in case.

A brief history of the 2G case:

- The 2G case rocked the telecom sector and played a major role in allegations about massive corruption against the UPA.
- The case involved enquiry into the 2008 spectrum allocations by the telecom ministry at throwaway prices, which was supposedly with immoral intentions.
- The alleged scam was touted to be the biggest in India's history and the CAG report estimating a notional loss of Rs 1.76 lakh crores to the exchequer.
- 16 people that included high profile politicians, bureaucrats and many business executives of India's top telcos were on trial.
- In 2012 the Supreme Court had cancelled all the spectrum licences allocated as it was convinced of procedural irregularities.

What brought the damage to CBI's reputation?

- CBI's failure to establish the criminality of any of the accused despite the case being massively strong
- The court noted that the CBI's start in the case was good but the prosecution steadily deteriorated and became directionless.
- The prosecution even refrained from signing documents and replies before the court, thus robbing the whole process of any credibility.
- The CBI however stated that it will appeal against the verdict in the Delhi High Court, but the credibility of it as an institution has been damaged.

How can CBI regain its lost credibility?

- CBI must substantiate its claims regarding the proceedings with appropriate supporting evidences in higher courts to resolve the case and restore its reputation.
- The judgment also underscores the indispensable need for much greater maturity and case-building capability on the part of CBI.
- It is high time that CBI genuinely obtains independence in order to acquire its lost credibility.



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Wheat Diplomacy

Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 3
- ✓ India's wheat diplomacy w.r.t Afghanistan
- ✓ Significance of Chabhar port

Recently

- ❖ The last year saw four border blockages by Pakistan, and steep decline of about 26 per cent in its exports to Afghanistan. Any attempts to fuel inflation or trigger a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan have clearly backfired.
- ❖ India, in a first, sent across its first shipment of wheat in October this year (through the strategically located Chabahar port in Iran), the first in a series of six shipments totalling 1.1 million tonnes of wheat, on a grant basis.

What is India's wheat diplomacy w.r.t Afghanistan?

- India's Wheat Diplomacy to reach out to Afghanistan received a boost, when two ships carrying 15,000 and 110,000 tons of wheat, arrived in Chabahar Port from Indian port of Kandla, within a span of three days.
- India plans to send seven shipments of wheat to Afghanistan through Chabahar. by the end of January. The cargoes are expected to be loaded on thousands of trucks and then taken to Western Afghanistan.
- The shipments are meant to demonstrate the route's viability and the plan is to broaden the cargo flow before the port is fully operationalised by the end of next year.
- The new route would create a unique opportunity for India to send its goods to landlocked Afghanistan through a safe route.
- It would also enable Afghan merchants to export their commodities – mainly fruits and vegetables as well as nuts and more importantly minerals – to global markets, through Chabahar.
- India has announced an investment of \$500 million in the Chabahar port complex and is hopeful that the strategic port will be operational by the end of 2018.

What is the significance of Chabhar port?

- Located on the confluence of the Indian Ocean and the Sea of Oman in southeastern Iran, Chabahar is India's first foreign port project.
- Chabahar is planned to be linked with Delaram-Zaranj road, built by India in Afghanistan that connects at Afghan-Iran border via rail through Zahedan.
- A road already connects the Iran-Afghan border point to Chabahar.
- India is also constructing a railway line between Chabahar and Zahedan to connect the port to rest of the Iranian railway network. Once completed, the project would enable the world to connect with Afghanistan, Central Asia and beyond.
- The port, through this railway network, could also be linked with the International North South Transit Corridor connecting India with Russia.

How will the Chabahar port help India to COUNTER China?

- Chabahar masterstroke demonstrates that, now obstructionist Pakistan cannot dictate the pace of India-Afghanistan bilateral trade.



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- In addition, Chabahar Port is also likely to play significant role in countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea through Gwadar port.
- It can be used to place naval security vessels for merchant ships off the African coast giving the country a foothold in the western Arabian Sea, which is an important energy route.
- In other words the Chahabar when fully operational, will seriously dent Chinese strategic advantage accruing through OBOR(CPEC).



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Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka

Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 3
- ✓ Causes of ethnic conflict and main cause of the conflict in Sri Lanka
- ✓ Potential solutions to the ethnic conflict

What causes Ethnic conflict?

- Violent conflict is caused mainly by social and political systems that lead to inequality and grievances and do not offer options for the peaceful expression of differences. Changes in social interactions, such as increased tensions or violent conflict, influence the socially constructed nature of ethnicity.

What is the main cause of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka?

Sri Lanka has been ravaged by a long running and bloody civil war, due to ethnic tensions between the Buddhist Sinhalese majority and the Hindu Tamil minority.

- Sinhals are the majority in Sri Lanka with 70% of the population.
- The Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils and Moors are the remaining part of the population.
- The conflict between the Tamils and Sinhals started due to the suppressive Sinhala only Act which recognised only the Sinhals as the citizens of Sri Lanka and it did not recognise the other ethnic minority communities.
- This led to the Sri Lankan Civil War which began on 23rd July 1983 and lasted till 18th May 2009.
- Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant organisation was formed in 1976 to fight against Sri Lankan government and also to create a nation for the Tamils.
- LTTE gained momentum in 1983 with the attacks against the Sri Lankan officials.
- They occupied the northern and north eastern parts of the Sri Lanka. LTTE is one of the militant organisation in the world, believed to have been destroyed completely.

What could be the potential solutions to the ethnic conflict?

- Sri Lanka needs a political solution to embark on a journey towards genuine development and progress, based on the equality of all its people.
- A Multi-party consensus should be there particularly between the two main political parties, on the Tamil question.
- release of [civilians'] land held by the armed forces, the question of continued detention of political detainees and missing persons.
- The government must address its commitments on the question of accountability adopted by the UN Human Rights Council, and co-sponsored by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2015.
- Rule of law must be maintained, culture of impunity should be discarded, and the independence of the judiciary and civilian institutions should be maintained.
- There should be an environment conducive to the resolution of the issues pertaining to the Tamil people.
- The Tamil people need to come out of the sense of them being second class citizens in this country and not equal citizens.
- There should be a balance and a cautious approach to different issues, there is a basic root cause that also needs to be addressed. If the new Constitution is able to provide the Tamil people with some belief in their future, these issues can probably be better addressed at that point of time than now.
- Proper and equal representation of the tamils in the electorate.

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