



NOTES

SOCIAL SCIENCE

(POLITICAL SCIENCE)

FEDERALISM



**REVISION NOTES
CHAPTERWISE &
TOPICWISE**

Chapter 2: Federalism

Concepts Covered:

1. Introduction and recall from previous Chapter

- Federalism
- Unitary System
- Key features of Federalism
- Two kinds of Federation
 - Coming together federations
 - Holding together federations

2. What makes India a Federal Country?

- Union list
- State list
- Concurrent list
- Residuary subjects
- Provisions in Holding together federation
 - Special states
 - Union territories

3. How is Federalism Practised?

- Linguistic states
- Language Policy
 - Promotion of Hindi
- Centre - State relations and federalism
 - Before 1990s
 - After 1990s

4. Decentralisation in India

- The reasons behind decentralisation
- Major step towards decentralisation in 1992
- Rural local government
 - Structure of rural local government
- Urban local government
- Difficulties for local government

5. Mind Map

(Colourful & Interactive/ Complete All Concept Covered)

Practice Questions (All Topics Available)

FEDERALISM**INTRODUCTION AND RECALL FROM PREVIOUS CHAPTER****INTRODUCTION AND RECALL FROM PREVIOUS CHAPTER****Federalism**

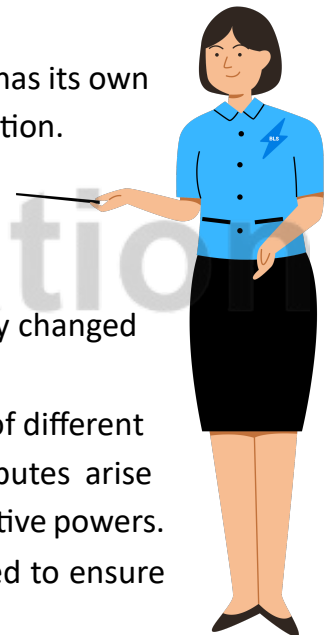
- Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country.
- Usually, a federation has two levels of government.
- One is the government for the entire country that is usually responsible for a few subjects of common national interest.
- The others are governments at the level of provinces or states that look after much of the day-to-day administering of their state.
- Both these levels of governments enjoy their power independent of the other.

**Unitary System**

- Federations are contrasted with unitary governments.
- Under the unitary system, either there is only one level of government, or the sub-units are subordinate to the central government.
- The central government can pass on orders to the provincial or the local government.

Key features of Federalism

- There are two or more levels (or tiers) of government.
- Different tiers of government govern the same citizens, but each tier has its own Jurisdiction in specific matters of legislation, taxation, and administration.
- The jurisdictions of the respective levels or tiers of government are specified in the constitution. So, the existence and authority of each tier of government is constitutionally guaranteed.
- The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be unilaterally changed by one level of government.
- Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and the powers of different levels of government. The highest court acts as an umpire if disputes arise between different levels of government in the exercise of their respective powers.
- Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified to ensure its financial autonomy.



The federal system thus has dual objectives -

- To safeguard and promote unity of the country.

FEDERALISM

INTRODUCTION AND RECALL FROM PREVIOUS CHAPTER

- Accommodate regional diversity.

Two aspects are crucial for the institutions and practice of federalism.

- Governments at different levels should agree to some rules of power-sharing.
- They should also trust that each would abide by its part of the agreement.

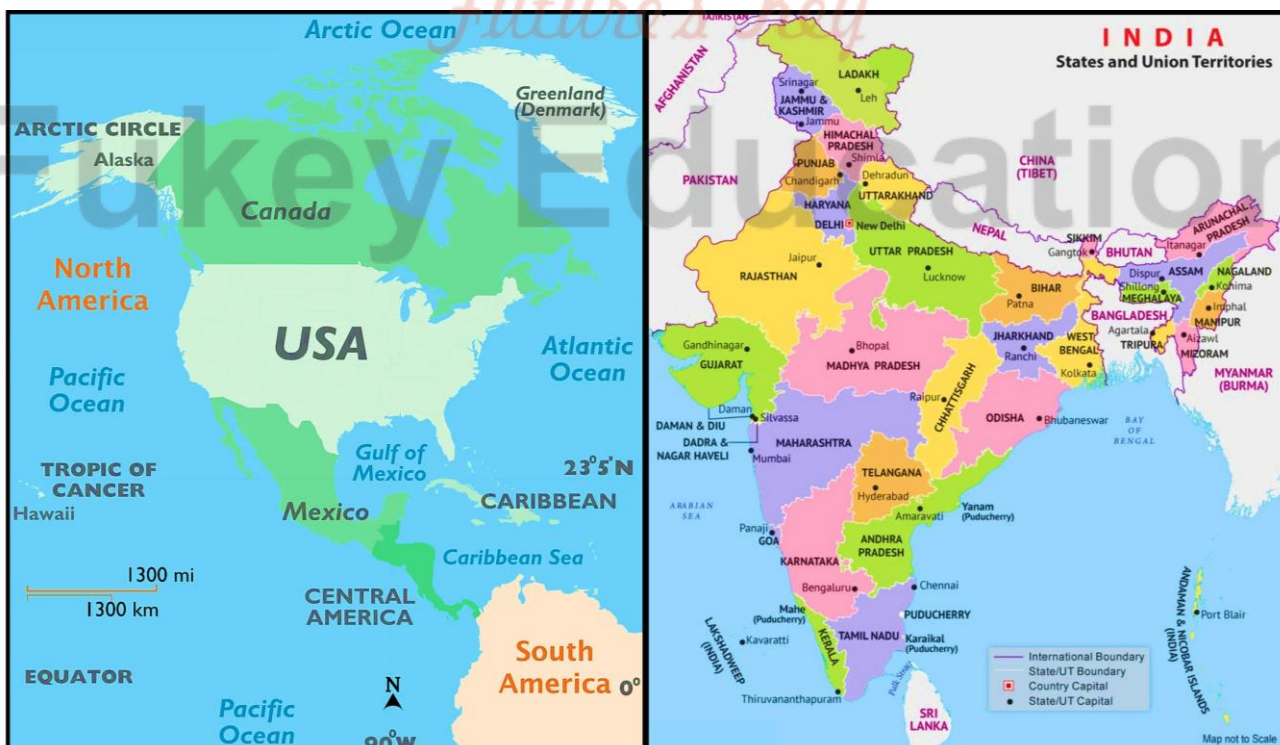
Two kinds of Federation

Coming together federations

- It Involves independent States coming together on their own to form a bigger unit, so that by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity they can increase their security.
- USA, Switzerland, and Australia.
- All the constituent States usually have equal power and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.

Holding together federations

- When a large country decides to divide its power between the constituent States and the national government, it is known as Holding **together federations**.
- India, Spain, and Belgium are examples of it.
- The central government tends to be more powerful vis-à-vis the States.
- Very often different constituent units of the federation have unequal powers. Some units are granted special powers.



FEDERALISM**WHAT MAKES INDIA A FEDERAL COUNTRY?****WHAT MAKES INDIA A FEDERAL COUNTRY?****Union list**

- Union list includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communications, and currency.
- They are included in this list because we need a uniform policy on these matters throughout the country.
- The Union Government alone can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the Union List.

**State list**

- State list contains subjects of State and local importance such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture, and irrigation.
- The State Governments alone can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the state list.

Concurrent list

- Includes subjects of common interest to both the Union government as well as the State government, such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption, and succession.
- Both the Union as well as the State Governments can make laws on the subjects mentioned in this list.
- If their laws conflict with each other, the law made by the Union Government will prevail.

Residuary subjects

All those subjects which do not fall in any of the list and came up after the constitution was made are included in the residuary list.

Example

- Computer Software

Only central government can make laws on them.

**Provisions in Holding together federation****Special states**

Do not give equal power to its constituent units.

FEDERALISM**WHAT MAKES INDIA A FEDERAL COUNTRY?**

- All States in the Indian Union do not have identical powers.
- Some States enjoy a special status.

Explain

- Earlier Jammu and Kashmir had its own constitution.
- Article 371 gives many special powers to some of the states.

Example: - States in Northeast

Union territories

- Units of the Indian Union which enjoy very little power.
- These are areas which are too small to become an independent State, but which could not be merged with any of the existing States.
- These territories do not have the powers of a State.
- The Central Government has special powers in running these areas.

Example: Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, and Delhi.

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

level of government.

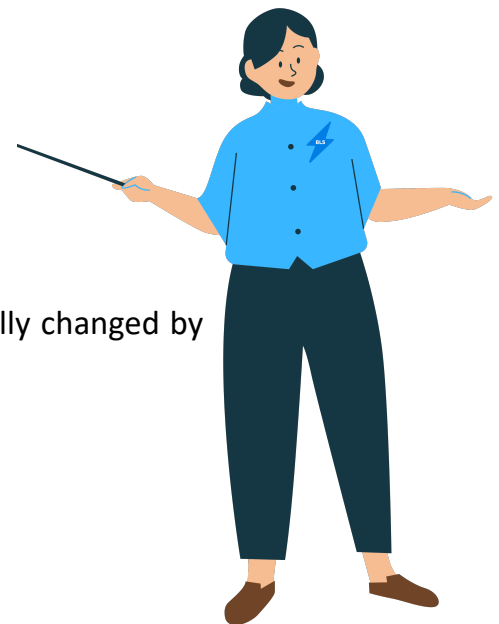
Power Sharing

- Basic to the structure of the Constitution.
- It is not easy to make changes to this power sharing arrangement.
- 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 State.

The judiciary plays an important role in overseeing the implementation of constitutional provisions and procedures.

In case of any dispute about the division of powers, the High Courts, and the Supreme Court make a decision.

The Union and State governments have the power to raise resources by levying taxes in order to carry on the government and the responsibilities assigned to each of them.

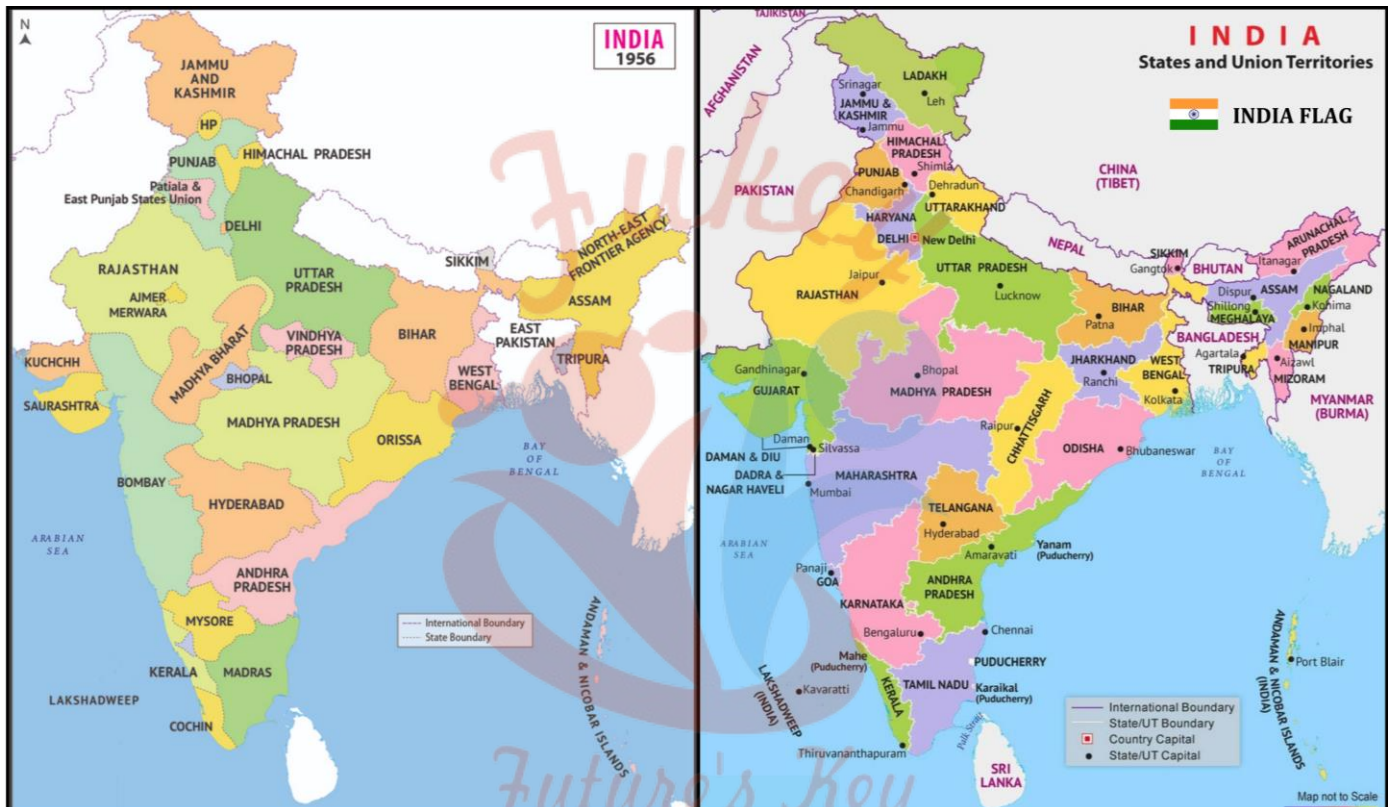


HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED?

Linguistic states

People who spoke the same language lived in the same State.

The creation of linguistic states was the first and a major test for democratic politics in our country.



Creation of linguistic state

- Some States were created not on the basis of language but to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography.
- These include States like Nagaland, Uttarakhand, and Jharkhand.



FEDERALISM

HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED?



- Some national leaders feared that creation of linguistic state would lead to the disintegration of the country. The Central Government resisted linguistic States for some time.

Outcome

- But the experience has shown that the formation of linguistic states has actually made the country, more united.
- It has also made administration easier.

FEDERALISM

HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED?



Language Policy

Connect with federalism.

Our Constitution did not give the status of national language to any one language.

Is Hindi our national language?

Hindi was identified as the official language.

- Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution.
- A candidate in an examination conducted for the Central Government positions may opt to take the examination in any of these languages.
- States too have their own official languages.



Hindi and English

- The leaders of our country adopted a very cautious attitude in spreading the use of Hindi. According to the Constitution, the use of English for official purposes was to stop in 1965.
- Many non-Hindi speaking States demanded that the use of English continue.
- In Tamil Nadu, this movement took a violent form.
- The Central Government responded by agreeing to continue the use of English along with Hindi for official purposes.

Promotion of Hindi

FEDERALISM**HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED?**

Promotion of Hindi continues to be the official policy of the Government of India **Right OR Wrong**

Promotion does not mean that the Central Government can impose Hindi on States where people speak a different language.

The flexibility shown by Indian political leaders helped our country avoid the kind of situation that Sri Lanka finds itself in.

Centre - State relations and federalism

Influences the practice of federalism in the country.

Constitutional arrangements for sharing power work in reality depends to a large extent on how the ruling parties and leaders follow these arrangements.

**Before 1990s**

- The same party ruled both at the Centre and in most of the States.
- This meant that the State governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units.
- The Central Government would often misuse the Constitution to dismiss the State governments that were controlled by rival parties.
- This undermined the spirit of federalism.

After 1990s

- This period saw the rise of regional political parties in many States of the country.
- This was also the beginning of the era of Coalition Government at the Centre.

FEDERALISM**HOW IS FEDERALISM PRACTISED?**

- Since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the major national parties had to enter into an alliance with many parties including several regional parties to form a government at the Centre.
- This led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of State Governments.



Fukey Education

DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA

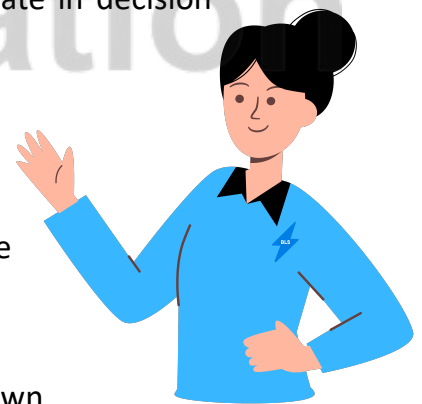
Federal power sharing in India needs another tier of government, below that of the State governments.

Decentralisation: - When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government.

The reasons behind decentralisation



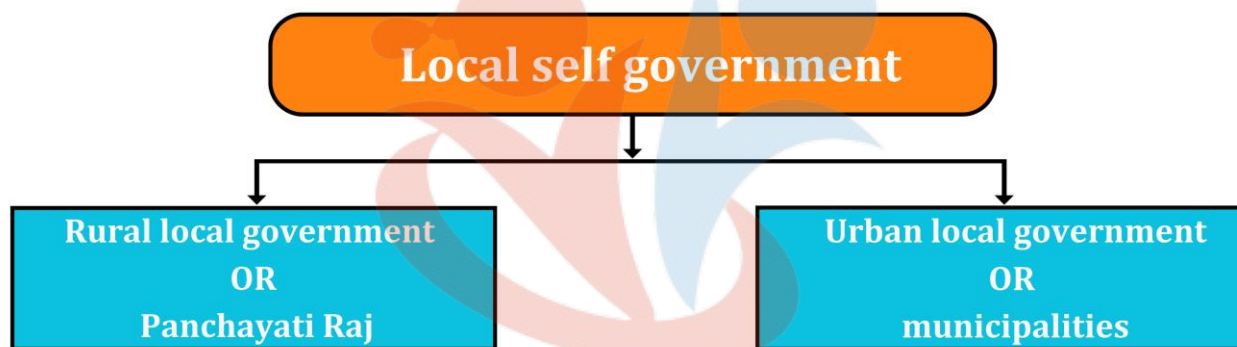
- There are a large number of problems and issues which are best settled at the local level.
- People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.
- They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently.
- At the local level it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making.
- This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation.
- There were several attempts to decentralise power which were not very much successful.
- Panchayat and municipalities were set up in all the states, but these were directly under the control of state governments.
- Elections to these local governments were not held regularly.
- Local governments did not have any powers or resources of their own.
- Thus, there was very little decentralisation in effective terms.



Major step towards decentralisation in 1992

A major step towards decentralisation was taken in 1992 by Constitutional Amendment (73rd and 74th)

- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.
- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each State to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- The State governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies. The nature of sharing varies from State to State.



Rural local government

Gram Panchayat

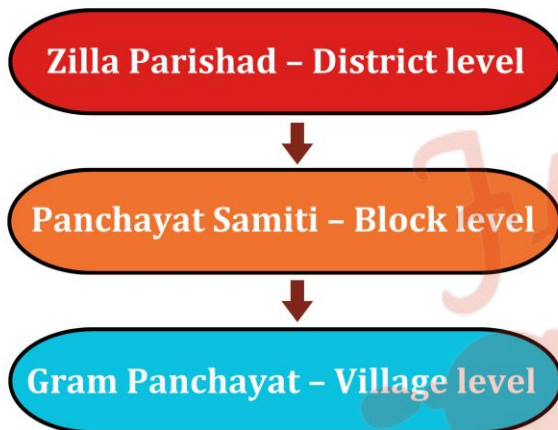
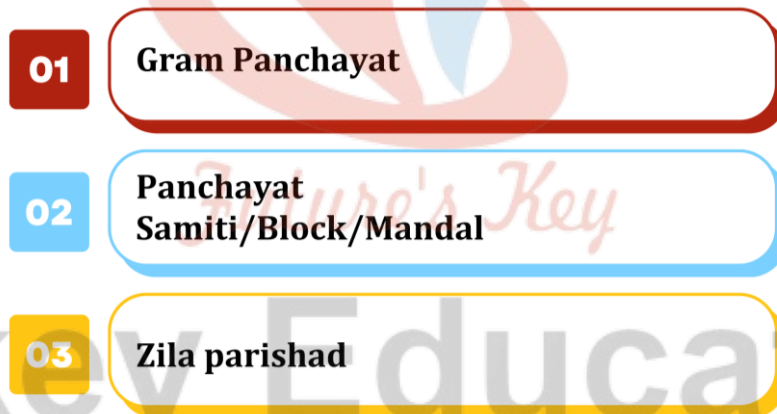
- Each village, or a group of villages in some States, has a gram panchayat.
- This is a council consisting of several ward members, often called Panch, and a president or sarpanch.
- They are directly elected by all the adult population living in that ward or village.

FEDERALISM**DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA**

- It is the decision-making body for the entire village.
- The panchayat works under the overall supervision of the gram Sabha.

Gram Sabha is a body consisting of all adult voters in a gram panchayat.

It has to meet at least twice or thrice in a year to approve the annual budget of the gram panchayat and to review the performance of the gram panchayat.

**Structure of rural local government**

A few gram panchayats are grouped together to form what is usually called a panchayat samiti or block or mandal.

The members of this representative body are elected by all the panchayat members in that area.

- All the panchayat samitis or mandals in a district together constitute the zilla (district) parishad.
- Most members of the zilla parishad are elected.
- Members of the Lok Sabha and MLAs of that district and some other officials of other district level

FEDERALISM**DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA**

- bodies are also its members.
- Zilla parishad chairperson is the political head of the zilla parishad.

Urban local government

Local government bodies for urban areas.

- Municipalities are set up in towns.
- Big cities are constituted into Municipal Corporations.
- Both municipalities and municipal corporations are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people's representatives.
- Municipal chairperson is the political head of the municipality.
- In a municipal corporation such an officer is called the Mayor.

Difficulties for local government**Achievement**

- There are now about 36 lakh elected representatives in the panchayats and municipalities etc., all over the country.
- Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy in our country.
- It has also increased women's representation and voice in our democracy.

Challenges

- While elections are held regularly and enthusiastically, gram sabhas are not held regularly.
- Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to the local governments.
- They are not given adequate resources.
- We are thus still a long way from realising the ideal of self-government.

02

FEDERALISM**MIND MAPD**

In 1992, the Constitution was amended to make the third-tier of democracy more powerful and effective. Seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. The State governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies. There are now about 36 lakh elected representatives in the panchayats, municipalities etc.,

Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country. Different tiers of government govern the same citizens, but each tier has its own JURISDICTION. The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be unilaterally changed by one level of government. Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified.

Decentralisation in India

What is federalism

What makes India a federal country?

The Constitution clearly provided a threefold distribution of legislative powers between the Union Government and the State Governments. Union List includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communications and currency. The State Governments can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the State List. Concurrent List includes subjects of common interest to both the Union Governments as well as the State Governments, such as education, forest, trade unions, marriage, etc.

Federalism

How is federalism practised?

Language policy

Hindi was identified as the official language. There are 21 other languages recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution. The Central Government responded by agreeing to continue the use of English along with Hindi for official purposes.

Centre-State relations

After 1990, there was the beginning of the era of COALITION GOVERNMENTS at the Centre. 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 after the Constitution came into force.

Linguistic States

In 1947, the boundaries of several old States of India were changed in order to create new States. This was done to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same State. Some States were created on the bases of culture, ethnicity or geography.