UPSC
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Political Science

Comprehensive Test
Round - 1

Paper-1

Political Theory, Indian Government and Politics

Model Answers

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Time: 3 Hrs
Total Marks : 250

Q. 1. Answer the following questions in about 150 words each. (10x5=50)

a) Aristotle's notion of constitutional authority

Ans : Aristotle **investigated** the problem of **political instability** confronted by the city-states and concluded that a city-state needed an appropriate **constitution** to ensure stability in political life.

Aristotle believed that only an **appropriate guide** (constitution) for the rulers can ensure a stable and just polis. He propounded the conception of **constitutional authority or rule**, a **rule-based regime** as the **most preferable system** for it was based on the consent of the citizens. The constitutional rule had **three** elements.

(i) It was a rule in the **general or common interests** of the public.

(ii) It was **based on law** and hence the government was carried on in accordance with general regulations and not by the arbitrary decrees.

(iii) Constitutional rule meant willing subjects were ruled by **consent**, rather than by force.

While criticising Plato's idealism, Aristotle adopted a **pragmatic view** towards political life and advocated a '**rule based on law'** instead of rule of philosophers. He believed that **laws** were **necessary** for a **moral and civilized life.** Unlike Plato, he contended that the **collective wisdom** was **superior to** that of the **wisest ruler**, "for the reason of the statesman in a good state cannot be detached from the reason embodied in the law and the custom of the community he rules."

Moreover, a **constitution** was **not only a basic law determining the basic structure** of the government and allocation of powers between different branches within a government, **but** also reflected **a way of life**. A political community based on constitutional authority involved **concerted actions and joint activity** towards a common purpose.

Aristotle, thus, believed in the "**passionless authority of law**" and his faith in the rule of law laid the groundwork for the creation of an ordered society where **justice and equal treatment** was sacrosanct. It is noteworthy that Aristotle's concept of constitutional authority emerged as the **foundation of liberal democratic systems** in modern era.

b) Comment on "politics as authoritative allocation of values".

Ans : **David Easton**, the leading modern political analyst of WWII era, in his ***'Political System: An Inquiry into the state of Political Science' (1953),*** by employing systems analysis rooted in empirical method defined Politics as 'authoritative allocation of values'.

Easton underscores 'allocation of values' as the distinguishing feature of political system. Here, 'values' are the 'things considered valuable, including both material and/or spiritual'. 'Allocation' means distribution of these valuable things to various individuals or groups. A decision or policy is 'authoritative' when the allocation is binding on all members. This is not done on the basis of brute force or coercion but willing acceptance of the members.

However, some critics such as **Stephen Wasby** note that the 'authoritative allocation of values does not distinguish politics adequately from other means of social control. (Values are authoritatively allocated within the family, church, and business corporations, as well as government, political parties and interest groups'.)

Moreover, Easton's conception of politics is criticized for **leaving out the analysis of 'power'**. It does not offer any insight into the analysis of power in society.

However, for Easton, **command is the basis of allocation** and submission to the command can be enforced against the will of the other. This **makes politics different** from other types of social control and allocations.

To conclude, even though there are limitations in this view, it cannot be denied that Easton with the help of System's Theory put forth a **framework for analysis of politics** that was open to modification. Importantly it provided **a tool to compare political systems** on the basis of a system's ability to undertake this function.

c) Fascist idea of 'corporatism as a third way'.

Ans : The fascist idea of **Corporatism** was proclaimed as the '**third way'** between capitalism and socialism by **Benito Mussolini,** making it the distinguishing feature of the fascist ideology and state.

The corporate state was based on a foundation of **syndicates** (trade unions), wherein both **workers** and **owners-capitalists** were to be members. The corporate state was organized **pyramidically** in the form of **local syndicates,** brought together in **regional federations**, which in turn, became members of one of 22 **governing corporations**. In order to ensure **complete obedience** at every level, the state appointed the heads of all corporations, regional federations and syndicate.

Thus, It was, thus, argued that opposing both the free market and the idea of central planning, corporatism believed instead in an **organic relationship between business and labour**. It discarded the notion that the interests of different social classes were in conflict with each other, and advocated **all classes to work towards the common good**.

However, even though this idea seemed attractive, it was in fact a **distorted** idea. All corporations were **tightly controlled** by the state and in turn eliminated the autonomy of the corporations and the businesses. The **real motivation** behind this was **to ideologically defeat the working-class movement** by rejecting the fundamental idea of **class antagonism**. The fascists sought to use the corporations to **manage the day-to-day activities** of its citizens, as they regulated what was to be manufactured and sold. Finally, this idea gives way to

politicization and excessive regulation of the market, and damages its expansion in the long run.

It is for these reasons that corporatism fails to provide a concrete alternative to either capitalism or socialism.

d) Socialist view of property

Ans : Socialism has taken a **critical** view **of private property** and considers it as the **root cause of human misery and exploitation.** Socialists have traced the origins of competition and inequality to the institution of private property, by which they usually mean productive wealth or 'capital' rather than personal belongings such as clothes, furniture or houses etc. Their attitude to property sets them apart from liberalism and conservatism, which both regard property ownership as natural and proper.

Marxist socialism has categorically demanded **abolition of private property,** whereas the **social democrats** preferred collective ownership of property through the **state** and planned **economy**.

Socialists criticize private property for the following reasons.

i) **Unjust:** For them wealth is **produced** by the **collective effort** of human labour and should therefore be owned by the community, not by private individuals. Hence, the liberal conception of private property is unjust.

ii) **Morally Corrupt:** Property **breeds acquisitiveness** and so is morally corrupting. It encourages people to be **materialistic**, to believe that human happiness can be gained through the pursuit of wealth.

iii) **Divisive:** Private property **fosters conflict** in society between owners and workers, employers and employees or simply rich and poor.

iv) **Exploitative:** The owners of property seek to maintain the system which suits their interests and keep on exploiting the propertyless people. The predominance of the owner does not limit to economic sphere alone but spreads across various aspects of life. Thus, it causes creates the conditions of unfreedom, misery and exploitation for a vast number of people.

Therefore, socialists have **proposed** that the institution of **private property** either **be abolished** and replaced by common ownership of productive wealth, or more modestly, that the right to property be balanced against the interests of the community.

e) Elite conception of power.

Ans : Elitist theory of power as one of the prominent conventional notions of power, acknowledges the ***division of society*** into two groups, one that governs and the other that is governed. The former is known as '**elite'** and the latter the **mass** of common people. Here the former universally enjoys power over the latter.

The ***basis of division*** is the **competence** and its **multiple sources**. For **Mosca**, the source of elite power lies in their **organizational strength**, whereas **C.W. Mills'** concept of the '**power elite'** implies a combination of several groups who exercise power by virtue of their high

status in the important spheres of social life. According to **Robert Michel, political parties**, whether democratic or non-democratic are **ruled by oligarchy** ('the iron law of oligarchy'). **Pareto** underscores the '**lion'** and **'fox'** tendencies as the basis or source of power in society.

According to this view, the **elites lead** society **cleverly**. **C.W. Mills** illustrates how the power elites cleverly occupy strategic positions in the social structure and then themselves create social demands in order to project an image of being powerful and influential. This is carried out in a deceptive manner, without the notice of the masses.

Elitist theory of power argues that the ***masses*** are not in a position to exercise power and are ***subordinated***. Because, masses lack ability to reason, organize and lead. Elite theory, thus, underlines the **asymmetrical** nature of power. However, for Elite theory, there is **nothing wrong** in the elite power, rather it is a **natural and inevitable** phenomenon.

The Elite theory, therefore, does **not see any prospect of change** and also offer much in terms of a solution for greater distribution of power, except perhaps Pareto's conception of 'circulation of elites' that could prevent power getting concentrated in the hands of a single group.

Q. 2 a) Do you think that Plato's conception of justice manifests a belief that both 'nature' and 'nurture' play an important role in shaping the personality of an individual? Discuss. (20)

Ans : Plato's concept of justice is rooted in the **idealist intellectual tradition** and prevailing milieu. Plato in his magnum opus, ***'Republic'*** advances his concept of justice in the **context** of **relativism, crass materialism** and **perils of Athenian democracy**, and sets on to find out a perfect and eternal value to ensure harmony in society. He takes the **quality** of **human soul** as the **basis of justice** and allocates a particular role accordingly.

According to Plato, human soul comprises of three **qualities** namely **appetite, spirit and reason. He** asserts that in each soul, one of these qualities would be predominant, and there would be **justice** as the **fourth virtue**, which will **balance and harmonize** all three qualities. Thus, justice, at individual level, would mean that every individual was assigned a place in society according to one's predominant quality. The individuals with **appetitive souls** would constitute the artisan or **producing class**. Those with **spirit** (courage) as a predominant quality would become **warriors**. Those, with predominant **rational faculty** would become the **rulers**.

Thus, for Plato, Justice is a **harmony** between the **three qualities of mind** as well as the **three classes** in the state. It is only when all the three classes are performing their **obligatory duties** to the best of their capacities, justice is prevalent in that society. Plato employed the **notion of earthborn people** and **myth of metals** to legitimise his conception of virtue. He wanted people to believe that the **predominant quality** possessed by each one of them was **endowed by the nature** and hence constituted their **natural aptitude** to be followed in order to establish a just order.

It is in this context, the **natural aptitude** (virtue) of each individual and **good training and skills**, become critically important **proper discharge of one's responsibilities**. He believed that both '**nature' and 'nurture'** played an important role in shaping the personality of an individual. Hence, Plato prescribed the means of **education and communism** to realise a

system based on justice.

Plato put forth a comprehensive model of education, which was not only a way to realize and develop one's **inherent virtue**, but also an instrument of inculcating a deep **moral sense of responsibility** at an early age of following one's virtu. His philosophy of education aimed at **developing every aspect** of human personality. Hence, he included various subjects in curriculum at each stage of education. For the Philosopher Rulers, Plato sought a more rigorous and elaborate form of education, which included **theoretical as well as practical** knowledge to fully develop their 'wisdom' and thereby enable a just order.

Moreover, Plato put forth, through **communism of family**, an even more radical arrangement for the upbringing of children in the society, discarding the notion of family and instead suggesting state-run nurseries where a uniform and comprehensive teaching in **communal life** could be carried out.

Thus, Plato, emphasizes both the earth-born natural aptitude and training essential to make individuals to follow their virtue and be a just member of society.

b) 'Though the theses of end of ideology and end of history share a few similarities, there are significant differences between the two'. Explicate. (15)

Ans : The **End of Ideology** thesis was propagated in 1960s by French and American sociologists such as **Daniel Bell, Raymond Aron and S. M. Lipset.** Whereas an American political scientist **Francis Fukuyama** proclaimed the **End of History** around **1989,** during the period of decline of communism and collapse of Soviet Union.

The **End of Ideology** thesis asserted that due to **socio-economic development** in the industrially developed countries of the West, living conditions of masses have improved and the **intensity of class conflict has softened**. This has rendered the extreme ideological conflicts redundant.

Francis Fukuyama in 'The End of History' thesis asserted that in the post-cold-war era the great **ideological battles** between east and west were **over**, and that western liberal **democracy had triumphed**. Thus, the progress of history has reached its ultimate destination – hence the End of History'.

Similarities between the two theses

(1) Both these endist arguments celebrate Western triumphalism in some way or the other.

(2) Both predict Liberal democracy as the best against the rival ideologies and political systems.

(3) Both arguments have the same effect- they conceal and naturalise the dominance of the right, and erase the rationale for debate.

(4) Both have been criticized for being West-centric and ignoring the developments in the developing world/third world.

Differences

(1) The End of ideology thesis proclaimed **all the ideologies** have been **rendered redundant** due to **economic progress** and **increasing prosperity**. Whereas the End of History thesis by Fukuyama claimed not that ideology per se was finished, but that the **best possible ideology had evolved.** Thus, the liberal ideology has won the ideological battle and proven as the pinnacle of human evolution. Hence, it is argued that there is no need to

further look for alternative or new ideas.

(2) The **methodological core** or the primary logic behind the **End of Ideology** argument was **economic**. It claimed that economic development and welfare policies in the West have reduced disparities of income and wealth, thus solving socio-economic conflicts, which had given rise to extreme ideologies. Now that these conflicts have been resolved, the need for these ideologies has subsided.

However, the **methodological core** of the End of History thesis has been not economic but **primarily ideological** i.e. emphasizing on the realm of ideas. Fukuyama insists that Liberal Democracy, as an idea, is the supreme because it fulfils the eternal human struggle for 'recognition'. It also is the epoch, which has achieved science's mastery over nature reflected through the efficient and technocratic organization of production brought about by capitalism. In this way, capitalist liberal democracy fulfils the incessant human pursuit for the ultimate 'idea'.

Thus, even though both the theses primarily celebrate triumph of western liberal democracy, they differ in their methodological core.

c) Political theory seeks to transcend the sphere of immediate practical concerns and 'view' man's societal existence from a critical perspective. In the context of this statement, bring out the role and significance of political theory. (15)

Ans : The above statement, made by **Dante Germino** in his ***'Beyond Ideology: The Revival of Political Theory' (1967),*** gives a snapshot of the **role and significance** of **political theory**. Germino tries to reestablish the **significance of critical political theory** as against the so-called 'political science', emphasizing 'facts' over 'values'.

(1) Germino suggested that the **proper role** of political theory is **akin to political philosophy**, which is *neither* reductionist behavioural science *nor* opinionated ideology which accepts some principles to be true without inquiring into their validity.

(2) Political theory is **grounded in human experience**. Political theory's conclusions are based on the *observation of human nature in its* ***constant*** **and** ***universal*** *aspects*. Hence, it cannot be equated with the subjective opinion of an idiosyncratic philosopher, but it rests on **propositions**, which can be **verified objectively.** (**Marx's** theory)

(3) A political theorist is one who seeks in the first instance **knowledge about political reality** for its **own sake**, rather than for some immediate, practical end, although his knowledge can be used for the guidance of the statesman and the citizen in practical affairs. (**Plato, Aristotle)**

(4) The unity of political theory as a **tradition of inquiry** will be found to consist not so much in the conclusions reached as in the kinds of **questions asked,** the attitude of mind in which they are framed, and the method followed for their exploration. (**Hannah Arendt, Gandhi**)

(5) Political theory and philosophy deals with **perennial problems confronting man** in his social existence. (thinkers like **Rawls, Macpherson, Marcuse** etc**.**)

(6) Germino laments that the behavioural political theory has uncritically endorsed the policies and practices of the established order instead of performing the Socratic function

of **'speaking truth to power.'** He warns that full **recovery of critical political** theory cannot be achieved within the positivist universe of discourse. (**Plato**, **Gandhi**)

Thus, Germino captures the very essence of political theory by underlining the **critical role** of political theory.

Q. 3. a) John Rawls employed the tool of 'veil of ignorance' to address the problems associated with evolving principles of justice. Though the tool could facilitate the essential consensus among people, nonetheless, it has its inherent problems. Analyze. (20)

Ans : **John Rawls** propounded his conception of **justice as fairness** in his magnum opus **'A Theory of Justice' (1971).** A society is just, according to Rawls, when its basic structure--its social, economic and political institutions, as well as its constitution--manifests the **two principles** namely, **equal right to extensive liberty** and the **difference principle** along with the principle of **fair equality of opportunity** in regard with public employment.

The Rawlsian theory derives its principles of justice by putting rational, self-interested individuals in '**original position'** and behind a '**veil of ignorance'** and then expecting them to choose an outcome which will adhere to equality, and in the absence of equality, favour the least advantaged. Rawls employs the tool of **veil of ignorance** to **overcome the immediate stumbling block** that is the **role of self-interest** that often plays in our deliberations about justice. Our own interests have the potential to skew our deliberations as each one of us may prefer that idea of justice which is most suitable to one's interest. If this happens, it is likely that we will never agree upon a single conception of justice.

Rawls suggests one way of achieving agreement, which is to **exclude knowledge** that would make our decisions partisan. His **hypothetical device** of original position exactly does this, wherein **people** are **placed** behind a '**veil of ignorance'**. The veil hides certain pieces of knowledge from us. We don't know such things as our class position, level of intelligence, talents and disabilities, family background or our conception of good life. Without access to this knowledge, Rawls argues, we are able to reach agreement on principles of justice.

However, the notion of 'veil of ignorance' is criticized by various scholars for the following reasons.

(1) The **communitarians** have criticized Rawls' ideas of 'original position' and 'veil of ignorance'. He essentially views the **individual as an 'isolated self'** in contrast to the communitarians who view the individual as a 'situated self'. **Michael Sandel** criticizes Rawls for resting his entire theory upon an '**empty' metaphysics** of the **self**. Similarly, in '***After Virtue' (1981),*** **Alasdair MacIntyre** criticizes Rawls for his supposed failure to acknowledge that in order to comprehend who we are, we must understand where we come from.

(2) The **communitarians further** believe that the **individual's ideas and opinions** are **heavily influenced** by his **surroundings**. His choices and beliefs must be viewed in the context of his culture, social norms, religion, etc. Hence, **isolated individuals cannot be relied upon to discover** the idea of **justice**.

(3) Moreover, **communitarians also** point towards the **difficulty in applying the concept of justice discovered behind a veil of ignorance** i.e. in an abstract situation, to a concrete societal context. So, a pertinent question is raised about the very utility of such an idea of justice.

(4) Similarly, the **feminist school** has criticized Rawls idea for completely **excluding** the **private domain form** the ambit of discussion of **justice**, thereby leaving the gender dimension of justice unattended. For them, the idea of justice invented by individuals ignorant about patriarchal system cannot be relevant in the process of establishing justice in a gendered society.

(5) Also, Rawls is criticized for conceiving human being as a rational individual, which is rooted in Western liberal cultural ethos and neglects the non-Western cultural ethos.

Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the idea of a 'veil of ignorance' is an attempt by Rawls to evolve the original position to ensure fairness and impartiality essential in the process of inventing justice in society characterized by various inequalities.

b) Karl Marx saw civil society as the real theatre of human history. In this context, differentiate between the Marxian and liberal-idealist conceptions of civil society. (15)

Ans : Karl Marx presented a radically different analysis of civil society by applying the method of dialectical materialism. Marx saw civil society as a domain of class conflict and exploitation, and hence constituted that sphere which needed radical transformation for human emancipation.

In ***A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*** (1859) Marx explained the nature of civil society through his materialist dialectics. For Marx the form and character of civil society was wholly dependent on the material conditions that exist within the society. And the material conditions in capitalism were characterized by class antagonism between the two major classes namely capitalist and working class. The capitalists dominated not only the economic domain but other domains including political domain. The capitalist class, thus, used political apparatus to continue their dominance.

Unlike the classical liberal thinkers, such as **Locke**, **Smith, Ricardo,** who considered **civil society as a domain of individual choice, freedom and autonomy,** Marx analyzed civil society, not as an autonomous sphere but something deeply rooted in and determined by the existing capitalist political economy. Marx accused the **liberal** thinkers of falsely depicting civil society as an **autonomous** and **ideologically independent** realm, whereas in reality its existence and character was dictated by the social relations of production that were characterized by **class antagonism.**

Moreover, Marx appreciated **Hegel** for underscoring the egoistic nature of civil society but found his conception inadequate to lay bare the class character and exploitative nature of civil society. For Marx, civil society constituted not just a domain where human being conducted egoistically but a domain where one class exploited the other class. Thus, it was a site of human exploitation. Marx, therefore, disagreed with Hegel who sought to bypass civil society and rely on state to overcome the human egoism. Instead, Marx argued that civil society was the real theatre of human history and it needed to be radically transformed. To that end, Marx prescribed a socialist revolution led by the class of workers.

To sum up, civil society for Marx was **structurally** and **ideologically** rooted in the material conditions prevailing in modern times. Hence, Marx underlined the need to radically transform the very nature of civil society to attain human emancipation.

c) How does radical feminism differ from the socialist-Marxist feminism? (15)

Ans : **Alison Jaggar** in her classic text ***Feminist Politics and Human Nature*** (1983) differentiates feminist political philosophy into four broad categories – liberal feminism, socialist feminism, Marxist feminism and radical feminism. Against this background, a comparison between socialist-Marxist and radical feminism has been discussed below:

(i) **Roots:** The socialist feminism and Marxist feminism are rooted in the tradition of **European socialism and a revolutionary communism**. Radical feminism, on the other hand, developed its own political vocabulary with its roots in the deep criticisms of patriarchy that feminist consciousness had produced in its first and second waves.

(ii) **Fundamental Social Cleavage:** According to **socialist-Marxist feminism** the **class division** is the fundamental social cleavage in society. It locates the issue of women's subordination in the economic system and the class divisions. Accordingly, **women's question is derived** from the fundamental class division. (For example, **Marxist feminist Mariarosa Dalla Costa's** theoretical analysis of housework is essentially an argument about the relation of housework to capital and the place of housework in a capitalist society and not about the relations of men and women as exemplified in housework.)

On the other hand, **Radical feminism** sees **gender** as the **fundamental social cleavage** and has criticized socialist-Marxist feminism for subsuming the gender issue to the larger issue of class.

(iii) **Patriarchy:** For socialist-Marxist feminism, the institution of patriarchy is **not intrinsic** to human society **but** rather the **byproduct** of a **class society**. Whereas Radical feminists believe that **patriarchy predates the class system,** and therefore cannot be seen solely through the prism of class or the capitalist system.

(iv) **Role of state: Both** socialist-Marxist and radical feminism present a **critical account** of **state**, albeit from their **respective point of view**. For the former state is an **instrument in the hands of haves** to exploit the have nots, whereas for the latter, state is a **patriarchal institution.**

(v) **Prescription to end exploitative system: Both** forms of feminism prescribe a **radical means** to end the existing exploitative system but **differ in the nature and form** of the solution. The socialist-Marxist feminism suggests a **socialist revolution,** whereas the radical feminism demands complete **abolition of patriarchy** form all domain of human life.

However, despite the differences, the intersections between the two are noteworthy. Socialist and Marxist feminism laid the groundwork on which radical feminism built some of its ideas. A number of first wave feminists wrote about work and class as key issues for women's liberation, such as socialist-feminist **Charlotte Perkins Gilman**, anarchist **Emma Goldman**, and existentialist, radical feminist and Marxist of sorts **Simone de Beauvoir**.

Many radical feminists maintain that women's work is part of a separate patriarchal mode of reproduction that underlies all economic systems of production and in which men exploit women's reproductive labor. **Dorothy Smith** (*Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique*

of Sociology, 1974), **Mary O'Brien** (*The Politics of Reproduction*, 1981), **Nancy Hartsock** (*Money, Sex and Power*, 1983), **Donna Haraway** and **Sandra Harding** (*The Science Question in Feminism*, 1986) **pioneered in combining** this radical feminist assumption with a perspectival Marxist theory of knowledge to argue that one's relation to the work of production and reproduction gave each gender and each social class a different way of knowing the social totality.

Therefore, socialist and Marxist feminism while staying true to their parent ideologies have also learnt from and contributed towards the development of radical feminist thought.

Q. 4. a) Aurobindo and Gandhi represent two distinct ways of looking at Indian tradition. Analyze in reference with their conceptions of freedom. (20)

Ans : Modern Indian political thought is deeply influenced and indebted to various ideas from ancient Indian ideas including Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The impact of these traditions can be gauged from the political thought of two of the most prominent political thinkers of modern India viz. Aurobindo, and Mahatma Gandhi, albeit manifesting two distinct ways of engaging with India's tradition.

Aurobindo represents a school which sought to **revive the Indian past** in the form of **advait Vedanta**. He wanted to **regenerate** the **'sanatan dharma'** in order to not only free Indian motherland but also let India play her divine role of leading the world spiritual revolution. Aurobindo put forward the idea of **swaraj/freedom** rooted in the spirituality and the philosophy of **Vedanta**. He had a very **profound and deeper conception** of Swaraj, which even though considered **political freedom** to be its **starting point** but **not an end** in itself. At a deeper level, he regarded **Swaraj** as a **spiritual notion**. From *the Vedas* he derived the true meaning of *Swaraj* as *Sva-mahimni* i. e. arousal of the inner Divinity of the individual. He asserted that spirituality is India's only politics; and the **fulfilment of the Sanatana Dharma** its only Swaraj.

Thus, for Aurobindo, Swaraj was **freedom of mind, body, and spirit**. He considered it the Dharma of every human being to be truly free. Swaraj was the fulfilment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions, the **return of the satyayuga** of national greatness, the resumption by her great role of teacher and guide, self-liberation of the people for the final fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics. Therefore, Aurobindo asserted that India needed to be free not only for her own sake but to lead the **world spiritual revolution**.

Whereas, Gandhi, as stated by **W.H. Morris Jones,** blends Indian and Western traditions of thought in a creative manner and hence represents the **creative universalist trend** in modern Indian political thought. Gandhi appreciated Indian tradition but not from the typical traditionalist point of view of praising it uncritically. Nor did he appreciate Western ethos from the typical modernist point of view of blindly imitating it. Thus, Gandhi was **against** any kind of **uncritical acceptance** of either **modernity** or **tradition**.

Gandhi rejected Western modernity's atomistic individualism, utilitarian ethics and negative idea of freedom as a morally decadent system. On the other hand, while declaring himself to be an ardent Hindu, he sought to remould or modify many of the traditional values and practices. This approach is duly reflected in his idea of freedom. Rather than emulating the western concept of freedom, Gandhi put forth a conception of **freedom** i.e. **Swaraj**, **deeply rooted in Indian tradition.** He used the term Swaraj not only as **self-rule** or **political**

freedom from the British but also as **'rule over the self'** i.e. the process whereby an individual is prepared to be self-responsible and responsible to his surroundings. Moreover, his idea of freedom was **rooted** in the **prevailing socio-economic reality**, which entailed **social reform**. This included the **abolition of untouchability,** building **inter-faith unity**, and the wellbeing of **women**. Moreover, being aware of the economic inequalities in society, Gandhi advocated the **rejuvenation of village economy**.

b) In what way Dr B.R. Ambedkar's analysis of caste system in India is foundational to his political thought? Discuss in special reference with his views on justice and democracy. (15)

Ans : Dr B.R. Ambedkar's ideas of social justice and social democracy are intrinsically rooted in his analysis of caste system in India.

Dr. Ambedkar, unlike his contemporary academicians and social reformers, offered a **comprehensive, in-depth, multilayered** and **counter-hegemonic analysis** of the caste system in India. In his '***Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development'* (1916), he** explained how, "***the superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste.*"** Besides, in the '**Annihilation of Caste' (1936),** Ambedkar, **rejected the defence of caste on the basis of division of labour** and argued that it was **not merely a division of labour** but **a division of labourers.** He illustrated how the **caste system** represented a **'graded inequality'** and **prevented** the **rise of general discontent against inequality** and **unity among the depressed classes** against their exploitation.

Ambedkar's perspective of **social justice** was based on the concept of social democracy, which consisted of **a balance** between liberty, equality and fraternity. Ambedkar asserted that in India, **one could not talk of liberty without addressing the age-old issue of caste discrimination**. In a caste ridden society like India, Dr Ambedkar conceptualized **justice in the wider social framework** and linked it with society **instead of limiting it to the state**. By adopting a **society-centric approach** to justice, he **linked** justice **with 'the basic needs'** comprising **both material and mental** needs of Dalits for their self-actualization as human beings. Hence, Ambedkar also asserted that **more than the state,** it was **the Hindu society,** which needed to be **proactive** in order to shed its discriminatory practices and provide equal treatment to the Dalits.

Similarly, Dr. Ambedkar's conception of **social democracy** is grounded in his analysis of caste system. He staunchly believed that **democracy** was 'a form and a method of government capable of effecting **revolutionary changes without bloodshed.'** However, being aware and a witness to the inhuman and exploitative caste system in India, he underscored the need to have **democracy in social domain as well.** He believed that **injustices** of the **caste** system could be addressed only through the establishment of **substantive democracy**, which demanded the **trinity of values-liberty, equality and fraternity.** For him the three ideals were **synonymous** with democracy.

Dr Ambedkar, therefore, sought refuge in **Buddha's Dhamma**, viewing it as an **ancient form of democracy** in India from which modern India could derive essential lessons. Thus, he **went beyond** the frame of **liberal democracy** and prescribed the *context specific notion of* **social democracy.**

c) Explicate Kautilya's organic theory of state as a distinct branch in the ancient Indian tradition of political thinking. (15)

Ans : Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' represents the **tradition of Danda,** which is known for the **systematic study of political life *as niti*.** His **organic theory of state** deals with the statecraft and exercise of power i.e. **the organization and mechanics of danda.**

The **Dharmasutras and the Dharmasastras** based on them deal extensively with Rajdharma. **Manu**, an ardent supporter of the '**divine right theory'** of the origin of state, considers the state to be a creation of God. The **King is duty bound to uphold** varna **order. According to Manu, Dandaniti is Dharmaniti.** Thus, the **King**, an **incidental institution,** happens to be one of the many elements of human life and bound by the cause of dharma, hence leaves no space for violation of Rajdharma.

Unlike the dharmashastra tradition, **Kautilya's Saptanga theory**, sought to explain the **structural** and **organizational** elements of the state. He provided an **elaborate theory of statecraft** for the **preservation of internal and external security** of state from a sort of Hobbesian state of nature.

Kautilya divided the state into **seven elements**, with each element constituting a **limb** or an integral part of the state**. Kautilya** underscores **the following** seven elements- (i) Swami (King), (ii) Amatya (Minister), (iii) Durga (forts/fortified capital), (iv) Janapada (territory with population), (v) Kosha (treasury), (vi) Danda (force/military), and (vii) Mitra (Allies).

T**he Saptanga theory** viewed the state as **an organic whole.** This **organic conception of the state** was a way for Kautilya to lay down the importance of different elements of the state, how each was **dependent** on the other and played an integral role in statecraft.

Rajdharma in **Arthashastra** tradition, unlike the Dharmashastra tradition, expands to, the material well-being of people and **acquires significant material overtones.** Kautilya **subordinated religious traditions,** the priestly class and the merchant class t**o the authority of the state** and created a **powerful bureaucracy**. As a result, the **King** acquires **substantial amount of power, autonomy** and does **not** seem to be just an **incidental** institution for the cause of dharma.

Similarly, Kautilya propounded **Mandala theory** to manage affairs with other kingdoms, where he emphasized the use of **legitimate and illegitimate methods** to secure one's interests.

Thus, the saptanga theory touches upon all essential elements of the state and hence represent a distinct current in political thinking in ancient India.

Q. 5. Answer the following questions in about 150 words. (10x5=50)

a) The impact of peasant movements on Indian national movement.

Ans : Peasant movements in the 19th and 20th century were critical in laying the **foundations** of a **pan-India nationalist movement**. The impact of these movements can be discussed as below:

(i) **Formation of ant-imperialist consciousness and bridging the urban-rural divide:** In **Maharashtra** the **Poona Sarvajanik Sabha** led by **Justice Ranade** extended support to the **peasants' cause,** spearheaded a successful campaign against the **land revenue settlement** of 1867. The urban intellectuals such as **R.C. Dutt, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Surendranath Banerjea** learnt first-hand through these movements the exploitative **nature of the colonial rule.**

(ii) **Unity within the national movement:** The **Indigo Revolt** of Bengal witnessed complete **unity** between **Hindu** and **Muslim** planters.

(iii) **Mobilization of masses:** The **Champaran** agitation of **1917** and the **Kheda** movement of **1918** are seen as examples of a **convergence between peasant and national movement**.

(iv) **Inspiration for Gandhi: Mridula Mukherjee** has illustrated how Gandhi understood the relevance of mass participation and the need for reviving rural economy through these movements.

(v) **Invigorating leftist forces:** It provided an opportunity for the **left forces** to **apply** and **integrate** their ideas of **social justice** and **class struggle** with the larger nationalist movement.

b) Indian Constitution as a "colonial document".

Ans : After independence, several of the basic features of the colonial regime were accommodated in the constitutional design and administrative machinery. This is seen in the structure and the legal framework adopted by constitution, illustrated below:

(i) **Arghya Sen Gupta** in his '**The Colonial Constitution'** (2023) has argued that while during freedom struggle, the **Government of India Act 1935** had been reviled as a '**charter of slavery'**. Now that **a third of the Constitution** was directly **borrowed form that** hated **law**.

(ii) While many members of the Constituent Assembly had personally experienced the brutality of **preventive detention** and the law against **sedition**, the Assembly **didn't outlaw** either.

(iii) While **Gandhiji** had talked about keeping **sovereign power close to the people** through gram panchayats, the Constitution gave Indians a **powerful Union Government** that **towered over the people like an imperial lord.**

(iv) Though citizens had some important **fundamental rights,** the government could **suspend these rights** at will using its wide **emergency powers.**

(v) The **hierarchy** and **organization** of the police and civil services is largely similar to that which existed in the colonial era.

(vi) The **legal framework** for administration (the Police Act of 1861, the Evidence Act of 1872 etc.) comprises a large chunk of colonial laws, is still functional.

(vii) Administration of civil matters by personal laws is also a British era legacy.

However, it should be noted that the Indian Constitution adopted these provisions due to the need to permit a **smooth transition** and a degree of **continuity** in government; f**amiliarity** of the with the British system; the priority given to **unity and integrity** of the nation in the context of partition.

c) Differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar on the question of untouchability.

Ans : The basic issue lying at the core of the Gandhi-Ambedkar intellectual acrimony was the fundamental differences between their perspective regarding the nature and the probable solution to the problems of untouchability and the other vices of caste system.

While **Gandhi** continued to view the problem of **untouchability** as a **social issue**, **Ambedkar** saw it as a more than a social issue. He got convinced of the validity of a **multipronged strategy** for the emancipation of the depressed classes in which winning **political rights** turned out to be the main objective. Whereas, **Dr Ambedkar** demanded political **representation** for depressed classes, during 1920s and 1930s **Gandhi** continued to see untouchability from a **socio-humanist approach**.

Moreover, Ambedkar **situated** the **caste system and untouchability** in the whole system of **Hindu view of life**. Ambedkar argued that **Hindu Shastras were responsible** for the practice of untouchability, hence, abolition of the practice required radical reforms in Hindu scriptures. Whereas, for **Gandhi**, untouchability could be annihilated by remaining within the fold of Hinduism. For him **untouchability** could be **abolished without compromising the basic tenets** of **Hinduism**.

Thus, **Gandhi's** approach to the problem of untouchability rested on its eradication through **self-enlightenment** of the people, which was in sharp contrast to **Dr Ambedkar's** approach at waging **struggle** for the same. Finally, as **Ramchandra Guha** encapsulated, Gandhi wished to save Hinduism by abolishing untouchability, whereas Ambedkar saw a solution for his people outside the fold of the dominant religion of Indian people.

d) Comment on the liberal perspective of Indian national movement.

Ans : The liberal school inherits the legacy of early moderates as championed by **M.G. Ranade, G.K. Gokhale**, **Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjea.** It believed Indian nationalism had to be regenerated in a context in which the British were a paramount power. It attached a significant position to India's British connection. **Srinivas Shashtri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru** represented the liberal outlook of Indian national movement.

(i) The liberals believed that the **British rule was providential** and it alone had the capacity to materially benefit India. Moreover, it was alone through introduction of modern governmental practices had the potential to equip Indians with the capacity to self-govern.

(ii) The liberal perspective had a **critical outlook of Indian society** and advocated social and religious reforms with the aim of modernizing the traditional Indian society.

(iii) The liberal school advocated the **strategy of petitioning** the colonial government instead of demanding swaraj. Instead, it demanded greater representation and participation of Indians in the legislative and administrative and

(iv) It believed that it was **earlier to visualize of India as a nation**. The liberals stood for attainment of self-government through gradual reforms.

However, the liberal school failed to understand the exploitative character of the colonial rule. It overlooked the internal contradictions of the British policies. Moreover, this view could not comprehend the racist nature of the British colonialism.

Nonetheless, the liberals eventually realized the true nature of the colonial rule. The

economic critique developed by Dadabhai Naoroji constituted a significant contribution, which put the national movement on solid basis. Finally, it needs to noted that the liberal perspective presented a critical insight into the understanding of Indian society and set a stage for transforming it into a modern nation.

e) Examine the role of national commission for backward classes

Ans : The National Commission for Backward Classes, initially established as a **statutory body** in **1993** and now a constitutional body (the **102nd Constitutional Amendment Act2018)** has been given the important role of monitoring the constitutional safeguards and other governmental initiatives for the OBCs. The NCBC has been empowered with the **powers of a civil court** to facilitate **investigation of cases** pertaining to backward classes. It can therefore **summon any person, ask for a document or public record,** and **receive evidence on affidavits**.

The **functions** of the NCBC include:

1. To **investigate** and **monitor** all matters relating to the **safeguards** provided for the backward classes under the Constitution or under any other law and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;
2. To **inquire** into specific **complaints** with respect to the **deprivation of rights** and safeguards of the socially and educationally backward classes.
3. To present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, **reports** upon the working of those safeguards;
4. To make in such reports the **recommendations** as to the **measures** that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective **implementation** of the safeguards and other measures.
5. To handle **complaints** and **grievances** relating to Other Backward Classes (OBCs);

However, there remain **lacunae in the rules** governing the powers and functions of the new NCBC, making it difficult for it to carry out its Constitutional obligations in an effective manner.

i. The **recommendations** of the NCBC are **not binding** on the government.

ii. The Commission has **no responsibility to define backwardness**.

iii. The **Executive** does the **appointments of the members of the commission**, **leaving it vulnerable to political influence.**

iv. Except for the Chairperson, all other members may be **removed** by the President on ambiguous conditions such as "**refusing to act**" or "**abusing her/his position**". This opens up the possibility of removal of the Commission members at the whim of the Executive, making it **difficult** for them to **speak truth to power**.

Therefore, the NCBC needs to be empowered by imparting it a meaningful functional autonomy.

Q. 6. a) 'The doctrine of basic structure has established supremacy of the Supreme Court of India over other branches of government'. Examine and present your argument. (20)

Ans : There has been a **serious debate** on whether the Basic Structure Doctrine has led to investing unbridled powers in the hands of the Judiciary, as against the Legislature, thus amounting to Judicial Supremacy. The Supreme Court put forth the Doctrine of Basic Structure in the famous ***Kesavananda Bharati Judgment of 1973***. *It put* ***restrictions on the amending powers*** *of the Parliament by stating that the* ***Constitution's "Basic Structure" cannot be altered*** *through the powers given to the legislature* ***under Article 368***. The composition or definition of the Basic Structure is mentioned nowhere in the Indian Constitution; it has been determined by the judiciary through **its successive judgements** since ***Kesavananda*** *verdict***.**

Critics of the doctrine point out:

i) The doctrine attempts to infuse India's constitutional scheme with **judicial supremacy for the** judiciary has given itself the **ultimate authority** to **determine** the **Basic Structure** of the Constitution. Hence, **Raju Ramchandran** puts it, "the unelected judges have **assumed vast political power** not given to them by the Constitution".

ii) Judiciary has **usurped** the **authority not just to interpret** constitution **but to define Constitution**, which was **not conferred** on it **by** the original **constitutional** scheme. **T**he nature of judicial review has become more **interpretative**, which has given court a lot of discretionary powers. **Madhav Khosla** states that this is **distinct from** the task of **constitutional interpretation**.

iii) The doctrine has permitted the courts to put forth the **Constitutional vision** while checking the validity of a provision. It has given the courts an opportunity to **scrutinize state action** based **on** the **larger ideological vision** of the Constitution.

iv) **Pratap Bhanu Mehta** observed that the Supreme Court has **failed** to adopt a "**principled approach"** to the task of identifying the basic features.

v) **S.P. Sathe and Sudhir Krishnaswamy** point out that the doctrine has also been applied to review **ordinary legislations** and **executive actions** and has **expanded the scope of judicial review**, by giving it a broader cause for judging the validity of the actions of the other two branches.

vi) It is **an illegitimate infringement on majority rule** as it allows the judiciary to invalidate the acts of legislature and government, which enjoy majority support.

However, it would be wrong to assume that the Doctrine allows the judiciary to exercise power whimsically and without limits. They argue:

i) A closer scrutiny reveals that the Court has **applied** this doctrine **only for the most egregious violations**, hence, in extreme cases.

ii) The Doctrine has served as the purpose of **reminding Parliament** of the fact that there lay an important **difference** between a **constitutional amendment** and a **revolutionary change** in Constitution.

iii) Under the Doctrine, the court has been able to **generate a public debate about the basic features** and the ensuing dialogue between the institutions of government, thus has deepened our constitutional culture.

iv) There are chances that a popular representative government can turn majoritarian, thus trampling on the rights of minorities and may try to play with the spirit of the Constitution on the basis of its brute majority. The Doctrine provides a **robust safeguard against such majoritarian tendencies**.

However, it cannot be denied that the judiciary has acquired a power to review the constitutionality of even the constitutional law. And as the only institution to decide the constitution of the basic doctrine, it has tilted the balance of powers towards judiciary.

b) Even though women participated in Indian national movement, they never had agency during the struggle and were always subordinated to the national cause. Analyze. (15)

Ans : Women played an important role in the freedom struggle, especially since the entry of Gandhi as the leader of the independence movement. Gandhi's insistence on non-violence as a revolutionary weapon contributed to creating favorable conditions for mass participation especially of women. *(mention a few prominent examples)*

However, some historians and feminists have criticized the Gandhian approach towards participation of women in the freedom struggle on the following grounds:

i) As **Madhu Kishwar** points out, the participation of women in the freedom movement was limited, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

ii) Active involvement in Congress activities was confined to a few outstanding women such as **Sarojini Naidu, Kamaladevi and Hansa Mehta**. The debates within the National Congress and the different points of view of different groups were not reflected in the discussions of the women's associations.

iii) While analyzing the issue of Gandhi and women in a **critical** manner, **Ishita Banerjee-Dube,** underscored that **Gandhi** was not in favour of women who could intervene forcefully to protect their own interests; **nor did he encourage women to organize as a political force in their own right** around their own issues.

iv) In NCM and CDM they were encouraged to lead pickets, marches and demonstrations since their inclination toward non-violence and self-control was highly valued; but women were hardly ever allowed to take important political decisions. The role of the women in the national movement, thus, remained auxiliary and supportive.

v) Hence**, Sekhar Bandyopadhay** observed that in most cases, **women** who joined the nationalist movement came from families where men were already involved in **Gandhian movements**. So, in their case their **public role** was an **extension of their domestic roles** as wives, mothers, sisters or daughters. Their politicization therefore did not lead to any significant change in their domestic or family relations.

vi) One of the primary reasons for women remaining "law-breakers rather than law-makers" was that Gandhi saw the home as the main sphere of activity for women. Women were expected to be satisfied with the degree of participation they were being offered in protests and demonstrations, which resonated with the cultural image of self-sacrificing women. Such "**strong traditionalist moorings**", argues **Tanika Sarkar**, explains why this politicization was possible and why it failed to promote, to any significant extent, social emancipation of women in lndia.

It was this failure to include women at par with men that made a frustrated **Sarala Devi Chaudhurani** lament that **Congress wanted them to be "law-breakers only and not law-makers."**

c) Examine the trends that have shaped the working of Indian federalism after 1990. (15)

Ans : The Indian federal system has shown a **high degree of flexibility** to evolve with the changing nature of polity. The deepening of democracy, changes in the party system, new economic policy and democratic decentralization etc., are the prominent developments after 1991 that have shaped the trajectory of federalism.

(1) Changes in the Party System

(i) The party system in India witnessed sea changes that have had a deep post-liberalisation era is also accompanied by an era of **coalition politics** and the rise of **regional parties on the national political stage**. With the states gaining more bargaining power, the misuse of centre's strong position eroded gradually.

(ii) The increasing **regionalization** of Indian polity has further **consolidated** the **regional identities,** which have had a **counterproductive** effect on the **resolution of inter-state border** and **water sharing disputes.**

(iii) The **resurgence of one-party rule** in the form of BJP from 2014 has brought back the centralising tendencies in the working of federalism. The rising instances of union-state conflicts stand testimony to the hampering effect of one party rule on federalism.

(2) The new basis of demanding state

(i) The basis of **demand for new states** has undergone a change and the **developmental aspirations** along with regional cultural identities are taking precedence over other concerns.

(ii) Moreover, the **creation of new states** in contemporary times **entails wide range of political negotiations with all important regional players**.

(iii) Such an ability to **negotiate with sub-groups and sub-regions** also results in **extra-constitutional measures** of **accommodation**, such as the recently concluded peace accord between the Union government and the NSCN.

(3) The adoption of LPG

(i) The new economic policy has shaped **eroded the financial grip** of centre over the states. As a result, the **States have gained autonomy to raise their finances** independently from foreign sources through policies like Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

(ii) **Kripa Sridharan** and **Mohit Bhattacharya** have noted that the new policy has promoted **competitive federalism**, for in order to **attract FDI** and other **private investments,** the **state** governments need to **tweak the laws and rules** under their jurisdiction.

(iii) The centralized planning has given way to **decentralized and indicative nature of planning** and the Planning Commission is replaced by the **Niti Aayog** in the spirit of '**Co-operative federalism**'.

(iv) There has been an **emergence of Independent Regulatory Institutions** in sectors like Telecom, Energy, Insurance, Share market etc.

(4) Third layer to the Federal Polity

(i) One of the major milestones was the **vertical expansion** of the Indian federal system, brought about by the **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments** of 1992-93 that institutionalised local self-governance.

(ii) The **major cities** today are **altering their governance structures** in order to attract private investment for faster development. The **Special Purpose Vehicles** set up by several **Smart Cities** are an example of such an innovation that permits a degree of autonomy and professionalism in the management of finances of the municipalities.

(5) Judicial Intervention:

The **Supreme Court (S.R. Bommai, 1994)** initiated an important trend in the working of federalism by bringing the article 356 in the ambit of judicial review. The court included federalism in the doctrine of basic structure and rendered it difficult for the union government to misuse its dominant position.

Thus, the Indian federal system has shown a **high degree of flexibility** to evolve with the changing nature of demands made by the Indian state and its people. This malleability is the main reason behind the ability of Indian federalism to rise up to the challenges thrown by the changing socio-economic processes.

Q. 7. a) The opposition in India is important not only from the procedural point of view but from a substantive view as well. In this context, assess the role of opposition in Indian democracy. (20)

Ans : In a democracy, a constructive opposition can play a major role in building public opinion against erroneous policies and programmes of the incumbent government.

Importance from procedural point of view:

1. **Parliamentary and Public Engagement:** The opposition actively **questions** and **scrutinizes** the government daily in Parliament, committees, media, and public forums by utilizing various parliamentary devices.
2. **Powers of Leader of Opposition**: LoP is a **member of the selection committees** of Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), Central Information Commission, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Lokpal. Thus, the LoP serves the purpose of counterbalancing appointments of the important public functionaries and ensure that the public offices are recruited always in a non-partisan, transparent and accountable manner.

Importance from Substantive point of view:

1. **Maintain Democratic Character: Jennings** stated that if there is no opposition, there is no democracy for the opposition keep in **check the autocratic/despotic tendencies** of the government and e**nsure accountability** through consistent scrutiny and policy deliberations.
2. **Uphold Constitutional Principles** by ensuring that the government's actions are aligned with constitutional principles.
3. **Offer an Alternative Vision** by representing diverse ideologies, interests, and perspectives

to that of ruling party. This allows the public **to have a choice and a voice** in the political process and ensure that the government is responsive to the needs and concerns of the people.

4. **Press for an Inclusive Government,** which would respect and honour the rights of underprivileged sections and minorities

Assessment of the role of opposition in India:

Indian parliamentary democracy since independence has witnessed both one party dominance rule and coalition governments.

a. **Procedurally,** the opposition has time and again used the constitutional provisions to question the policies and schemes of government and demanded answers from the ministers over the years. However, dominant ruling governments have often limited its power by allowing less time to speak, passing bills without deliberations, not forming parliamentary committees to scrutinize bills and even suspending Members of Parliament. Further, even the opposition have sometimes taken the route of walking out of the Houses in protest without continuing the debates and deliberations.

b. **Substantive role**: The opposition parties in India have played a pro-people role and have actively fought against despotic/authoritarian tendencies. For instance, they supported the socio-political movements all over India on issues such as land reforms, food-grains and their distribution, ethnic demands and language rights in the 1960s. They vigorously fought against the excesses of emergency declared by PM Indira Gandhi and brought her government down through democratic means.

More recently, the opposition has played an important role by criticizing the economic as well as social policies of the BJP government, who enjoyed a huge majority for two consecutive terms in the Lok Sabha.

However, as scholars have pointed out there are multiple flaws in the opposition in India.

(i) **A fragmented body: Rajani Kothari** claimed that the opposition in India has been fragmented, and poorly organized.

(ii) **Difficulty in maintaining Unity**: There is absence of power-sharing incentives to maintain unity among opposition parties. Thus, the opposition continues to be a **divided force**, remains **short-lived** and shows a **lack of sustained and purposive institution building**.

(iii) **Ideological Diversity: Internal rivalries and lack of cohesion** among opposition leaders can undermine their collective effectiveness. Indian opposition parties are grappled with **diverse ideologies, regional interests, and agendas** which can lead to difficulty in presenting a **cohesive narrative** against the government.

(iv) **Opportunistic politics:** The opposition unity also gets disturbed by the opportunistic politics of some of the parties, which choose to align with the party in power, disregarding their ideological affinity.

The mandate in 2024 general election in India, however, has resulted in a stronger and more influential opposition than previous Lok Sabha. Thus, by actively challenging and scrutinizing government actions, opposition can play a crucial role in upholding democratic principles and promoting accountable and effective governance.

b) The regional parties have failed in evolving a joint voice and constituency for consolidating the cause of federalism in India. Examine. (15)

Ans : The regional parties **grew and consolidated power** especially after the **breakdown of the "Congress System".** The **regional parties** have played an important role in **strengthening India's federal structure**. Parties based on a regionalist agenda are **important in setting the political discourse within states**, thereby **forcing the national parties to consider regional issues** and concerns. Moreover, the regional parties have been instrumental in **channeling regional aspirations and grievances**. Also, the regional parties have played an important role in **protecting against the hegemony** of the nationalist project.

However, the regional parties have had a very **limiting** impact on consolidating the federalizing voices in India as discussed below:

(i) Regional parties, just like their national counterparts, are captured either by **dynastic politics** or are **dominated by personalities rather than ideologies**. This capture of regional parties by elites coupled with **ideological apathy often leads to disillusionment** among the masses, and runs the **danger of giving way to militant or insurgent movements**.

(ii) Regional parties, whenever in power at the union as part of a coalition, **leverage their position at the Centre to strengthen patronage politics** in their respective states. As a result, the regional parties on its own do not consolidate the federalizing tendencies.

(iii) As a result, these parties have **failed in pressing the Indian Union to decentralize more powers to the states** even though they were part of coalition government at the union.

(iv) Similarly, the regional parties, especially those in power, have **not** demonstrated enough resolve and conviction to **decentralize power from state to local-self bodies.**

(v) Regional parties have been accused of **failing to offer an alternative development model** than the dominant neo-liberal one adopted by successive Central governments. In fact, it is these **neo-liberal policies** that have **accentuated regional disparities** and adversely affected the lives of the most vulnerable sections.

(vi) Regional parties thrive on **regional and parochial identities**, which more often prove **counter-productive in resolving interstate disputes**.

Thus, the role played by regional parties in shaping India's **federalism** has been **complex**. Nonetheless, it remains **critical in fulfilling the vision of a plural** and **inclusive federal** India.

c) 'The policy of reservation in India has lost its original intent and has fallen prey to the brute democratic majorities'. Present your argument. (15)

Ans : The reservations for SCs and STs have been provided for in the Indian Constitution as an instrument to promote **substantive equality and social justice**. Indian Constitution through provisions tried to strike a **balance between formal equality, social justice as well as administrative efficiency.** Thus, as rightly pointed out by **Dipankar Gupta** reservations are **not aimed at poverty reduction** but to **instill self-confidence and courage among those** who had been **historically dis-privileged**.

However, there seems to be a shift in this logic behind reservations with implementation of **Mandal Commission** recommendations in the 1990s. It recommended reservations to OBCs (other than SCs and STs) at the Centre in education and employment, on the basis of social, educational and economic backwardness. According to **Vinay Sitapati**, the logic of equality and social justice seems to have been altered with OBC reservations due to the following reasons.

(i) Caste, even though the primary social reality in India defining social inequality, there are many such **other realities reflecting inequality** (such as **gender, rural-urban divide** etc.) This reservation policy does not take into account those.

(ii) **OBCs** are **not homogeneous** in class terms, as there exist different classes – even some politically and economically powerful ones- among the OBCs, which makes extension of reservation to them as **going against the underlying principle of social justice and equality.**

(iii) **Absence of any official data** on the issue of backwardness of OBCs makes their claim to reservation all the more vague from the point of view of equality.

(iv) Reservation for OBCs seems to have largely driven by **political considerations** rather than extensive data-based policy debates founded on a robust philosophy of **social justice.**

(v) Therefore, even though OBC reservations may have been termed as 'a step towards social justice and a culmination of Shudra democratic upsurge', the policy seems to be guided more by the compulsions of **democratic majoritarianism** rather than principles of social justice and equality.

(vi) This trend, started with mandalization, has become all the more glaring since last few years, when even **dominant castes such as Jats, Patels, Marathas** are claiming to be backwards (economically) and hence demanding reservation. These castes, on the whole, are not only numerically strong but also economically/politically/socially powerful and hence, in no way can claim reservations through the logic of equality or social justice. There is no doubt that these castes are internally stratified and there exists a sizeable section within them, which is deprived/ disadvantaged due to various other factors such as agrarian crisis, globalization, costly and inaccessible higher education etc., the earlier logic of extending reservation as a remedy to correct social discrimination and deprivation cannot be applied to these groups.

Even, Marc Galanter has argued that the **Mandal framework** led to **'egregious consequences'** because it identified Other Backward Classes in terms of caste.

Thus, this amply demonstrates the fact that the policy of reservations in India has lost its original constitutional purpose and now acquired a form of a tool in the hands of majorities to force state to include them in the ambit of the policy.

Q. 8. a) Dalit movement in India, once a prominent voice for egalitarian society, fizzled out and subsequently got limited to justifying the interests of Dalit middle class alone. Evaluate. (20)

Ans : Dalit movement has been in crisis quite for some time, because it has failed to go beyond temporary political successes and achieve the goal of social justice as envisioned by Dr. Ambedkar. The crisis is evident from the fact that the **agitational politics** has almost eclipsed and has reduced down to safeguarding policy of reservation for Dalits and winning miniscule favours. The nature of the crisis can be accounted for in the following way.

1. **Numerical minority and dispersed status** of the Dalit castes is a hindrance in pan-Indian success of Dalit movement. As a result, the Dalit agitations have remained a regional or local phenomenon.
2. The **awakening among the first generation** of Dalit community found its vibrant manifestation in **cultural revolt** against the Brahminical hegemony and shaped Dalit consciousness in **1960s and 1970s**. However, it could not transform the momentum into material issues and ultimately remained a cultural revolt.
3. **Focus on identity politics takes away agenda of substantive/transformational politics**: **Ghanshyam Shah** says, it leads to the neglect of and inability to implement policies such as land reforms, or ensure that atrocities are punished and reservation filled etc. This **lack of a coherent transformative agenda,** according to **Omvedt**, is the primary cause of crisis of Dalit mobilization.
4. **Ghanasyam Shah also** points out that the **Dalit movement has been reduced to pressure group**, with its revolutionary edge getting blunted-its strategies, tactics, alliances and even goals seem to be in dispute.
5. **Hugo Gorringe** says, the fundamental problem is that the Dalit movement, almost throughout India, has **shifted from successful social mobilization to political institutionalization** in the form of parties, which has blunted the edge of the movement.
6. **Rightward shift of Dalits:** As has become evident from participation of Dalits in communal riots against Muslims in UP, or the victory of BJP in UP assembly, as well as its performance in 2019 elections, in which Dalits played a significant part, demonstrate that there is a major rightward shift among Dalits. As pointed out by **Ajay Gudavarthy**, Dalits seem to have come a full circle from the agenda of "annihilation of caste" to "secularisation of caste," and conversion from Hinduism to actively claiming the Hindu identity.
7. **Role of urban Dalit middle class:** The rising **Dalit middle class,** which has been benefitted from the reservation policies, has developed **stakes in the established system** and hence it supports capitalism and its neoliberal variant. They reject the Left parties and their anti-globalization stand.
8. **General trend of Decline:** India has been a witness to a general trend of decline of social movements since 1991. The erosion of ideological space, prevalence of identity politics, fragmentation of polity and society, rising isolationist tendencies in society etc., have all led to erosion of popular mobilizations including the Dalit masses in India.

b) Defections have been a recurring problem in Indian political system, however, off late it has gained unprecedented momentum. Account for this? (15)

Ans : Political defection has been a persistent feature of the Indian party system. The **52nd Constitutional Amendment Act** (1985) added the **Tenth Schedule** comprising of the **anti-defection law**. Yet, the phenomenon of defection, which had started as a **process of legitimate and natural polarization of socio-political ideas and interests**, has gradually turned into a method of changing political affiliations for **power and financial gains**. The phenomenon has increased exponentially in recent years, which can be accounted for in following way.

(i) The **degeneration of politics,** which lacks values, has led to frequent defections. Thus, as **Gopal Guru** notes, **politics tends to lose its moral essence**, although such practices may be **supported by institutional procedures**.

(ii) A sharp **erosion in the ideological orientation** of political parties has led to the **dwindling credibility of the elected representatives** and resulted in "**Political nomadism**", **undermining democratic verdicts.**

(iii) **Acquiring political power** in various states has, as if, emerged as the **only agenda** without any consideration of the means adopted to achieve the goal. As a result, the state governments legitimately formed after winning an electoral majority in **Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh and Maharashtra** were removed from power because of **floor-crossing** by elected representatives.

(iv) The **frequent use of the term "horse trading"** has been **normalized** as an innate part of India's party system. The **normalization** is evident in the fact that defection **rarely impacts the winnability of a politician**, as they continue to be elected from their traditional bastions in spite of defecting to an ideologically polar opposite party.

(v) Beyond mere **political opportunism**, another important cause of defections is the **structural problems within India's party system**. This is an issue most **prominent among post-colonial states**, where the **party system is not yet fully developed** and **institutionalized**, unlike their counterparts in Western liberal democracies. In this context, **Pradeep Chhibber** explains that where parties that are **less organized** experience **greater instances of defections** due to **lack of clear rules** governing party structure and the future prospects of its members. Such parties are often **plagued by nepotism** and **lateral entry from other parties**, which **alienates** its members.

(vi) Furthermore, **Chakshu Roy** reasons that defections have persisted even after three decades of the anti-defection law because a **legalistic approach** has been taken to address the problem of defection, but "**political issues require political solutions**." The legal framework focuses solely on imposing **punitive measures on the defectors** for changing parties, **but leaves aside the political parties** who should be made **responsible** for defection as they are the **main drivers of engineering defections** and destabilising elected governments ruled by their opponents.

In this context, therefore, instead of "**constitutionalization of party unity**" there should be a push for **reforms within India's party system**.

c) Developmental process in India is marred in multiple anomalies since the launch of full-scale liberalization in 1991. Explain. (15)

Ans : Development has emerged as a **contentious topic** in contemporary India, with **debates**, **disagreements** and **differences** emerging over the **nature** and **form** of development that ought to be pursued by the state. Most sections remain **dissatisfied with the process and outcomes** of development due to multiple anomalies in the process of development.

(i) Unlike most other developed and developing nations, India has had to work with a **high degree of diversity** in terms of **culture** as well as **ideology**. While the state has managed to do this with aplomb, especially when compared with other post-colonial states, **seamless development has suffered inadvertently**.

(ii) One of the primary reasons for the emergence of this crisis has been the inability to evolve **mechanisms** that can help in **building consensus** on difficult questions of development. For example, the formulation of a **fair and inclusive land acquisition law** by the Centre as well as the State governments has led to delays in infrastructure development, at the same time creating space for crony capitalists to acquire land from largely uninformed sections who get dispossessed due to lack of sufficient safeguards in the law.

(iii) **Environmental concerns** and the **denial of rights to the indigenous people** have also added to the anomaly, especially since most of the **rich resources** of the nation lie in the Scheduled and Tribal areas. **Forceful eviction** of people from their ancestral land has been one of the major reasons behind their **alienation**, making some of these areas a **fertile ground for the Maoist movement** to breed.

(iv) While the state since the last two decades has explicitly characterized the model of development as "**inclusive and sustainable**", it has not been able to do much to guarantee this, due to its **gradual withdrawal** from several developmental activities in the neo-liberal age as well as its **poor capacity**. Therefore, while the **GDP growth** of the country has been among the highest in the world, yet there has been **low level of employment generation**, leading to **concentration of wealth** in the hands of a few. The **distributive dimension** of **development** has been **utterly dissatisfied** if evaluated on the **axis of caste, gender and region.**

(v) **Lopsided development** has also been due to the **lack of equal political participation** to all social groups. For example, farmers in India hardly have any say in the framing of agricultural policies or in the design of water and land utilization programs. This leads to an obvious **mismatch** between the development **schemes** originating from the top and the **needs** at the bottom.

(vi) Additionally, **bureaucratic hurdles, corruption, resource crunch, out-dated laws, and lack of sufficient regulatory mechanisms** slow down the development process. This has affected the rate of **poverty alleviation** and instead created what **Amartya Sen** and **Jean Dreze** call "...***islands of California in a sea of sub-Saharan Africa***".

There is a need, therefore, to explore **alternative models** of development that can help in **reconciliation of ideological differences** and find ways to balance the **demands** from every section, especially the **vulnerable, voiceless and unorganized** groups.