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Q8

"Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India." Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · GS I · 10 marks · Social Empowerment, Communalism and Secularism
Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism and secularism.

Core demand of the question

- "Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India." Comment
- **Take both parts:** new forms, and whether eradication is therefore impossible
- Keep the explanation within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Caste now lives in associations, parties, certificates, and diaspora marriage, not only in village occupation.

Mandal-era politics and reservation lists give caste a modern public face.

New forms show adaptation, not that caste is immortal.

Law against untouchability and social mixing have already reduced some hierarchy.

The fair comment is to fight disability and atrocity while identities slowly thin.

Flow diagram

Caste -> Village endogamy

Caste -> Sabhas parties certificates

Sabhas parties certificates -> New identity

Article 17 education mixing -> Hierarchy can shrink

New identity -> Not the same as eternal system

Conclusion

- Keep law against atrocity and discrimination, widen education and mixed housing, and do not treat a vote bank as destiny.
- Distinguish caste as a surviving identity from caste as an unchangeable system; the first can shrink while the second is already cracked.

Caste has taken new associational and political forms, so it has not vanished. That is not proof that it cannot be eroded; law, mixing, and equality still work against hierarchy even when surnames remain.

Facts & figures

Article 17

Constitutional abolition of untouchability and its practice in any form.

PoA Act

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against caste violence and humiliation.

Mandal moment

Implementation of OBC reservation that recast caste as a national political association.

Endogamy

Marriage inside the jati, still a strong carrier of caste in towns and online matrimony.

Caste associations

Modern sabhas and networks that organise welfare, votes, and status for a jati.

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