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Q5(b)

"The Constitution makers faced the great task of forging a common national identity in the face of unparalleled social and cultural diversity in India." Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · PSIR GS 1 · 10 marks · Making of the Indian Constitution

Making of the Indian Constitution: Legacies of the British rule; different social and political perspectives.

Core demand of the question

- **Answer the following in about 150 words:** "The Constitution makers faced the great task of forging a common national identity in the face of unparalleled social and cultural diversity in India." Comment. (10 marks)

Revision summary

Makers had to create one political people after Partition and across extreme diversity.

- **The method was civic identity:** franchise, single citizenship, and a Union.

Articles 25-30 and linguistic federalism protect plurality inside that identity.

Austin's unity strand and Kothari's later Congress system are the political reading.

Ambedkar warned that caste inequality would fake the common nation.

Introduction

The Assembly had to make one people out of languages, religions, castes, and former princely India. The method was a civic constitutional identity, not a single culture imposed as the nation.

Body**The task**

- Partition had already shown how identity politics could break the territorial map.
- **Diversity was not a footnote:** linguistic provinces, minority religions, tribes, and graded caste were the social facts.
- **Rajni Kothari** later described a Congress system that managed this diversity through accommodation. The Constitution is the legal prior of that politics.
- **Rudolphs** stressed that modernity in India bargains with tradition rather than erasing it.

Constitutional tools

- Single citizenship, adult franchise, and a Union with a strong Centre were the civic frame.
- **Articles 25** to 30, official-language compromise, and later linguistic states (**States Reorganisation, 1956**) recognised plurality inside unity.
- **Ambedkar** insisted that national identity without social democracy would be a hollow Hindu majoritarian or upper-caste default.

- **Granville Austin**'s national-unity strand is this forging: emergency powers and All-India Services beside cultural rights.

Comment

- The makers forged a political nation of "**We, the People**", not a cultural carbon copy.
- The task remains unfinished wherever diversity is recoded as disloyalty.

Flow diagram

Diversity -> Assembly task

Assembly task -> Civic people single citizenship

Assembly task -> Arts 25-30 language federalism

Ambedkar social democracy -> Civic people single citizenship

Conclusion

Common national identity was built as constitutional citizenship plus protected diversity. **Austin**, **Kothari**, and **Ambedkar** name unity, accommodation, and social equality as the three conditions. Unparalleled diversity was not wished away; it was legally organised.

Facts & figures

States Reorganisation, 1956

Linguistic states as a diversity-management sequel to the constitutional compact.

Articles 25-30

Freedom of religion and minority educational and cultural rights.

Kothari

Congress system as a coalitional national identity machine after the founding.

Austin

National unity as one of three strands of the constitutional settlement.

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