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Q4(c)

Write a note on cultural pluralism in multi-religious society like India.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Religion and Society

Religion and Society: Religious communities in India; Problems of religious minorities.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on cultural pluralism in a multi-religious society like India

Revision summary

Pluralism is recognised cultural difference under a civic roof.

India's many religions make it a test, not a finished model.

Secular law and minority cultural rights are the formal frame.

Assimilation theses and riots strain the arrangement.

Gendered **personal law** is a cost inside group autonomy.

Introduction

Cultural pluralism is the living together of several religious and cultural streams without demanding one church of the nation. India is the classic test: many faiths, one citizenship, unfinished peace.

Body

Meaning

- Pluralism is more than diversity. It is recognised difference plus a shared civic roof.
- Constitutional secularism and Articles on cultural rights are the legal form. Everyday commensal mixing and festival sharing are the social form.

Multi-religious India

- Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Adivasi faiths are not a salad that never fights.
- Ghurye's civilisational Hindu whole pulls toward assimilation. Elwin-type and minority rights pull toward protection of difference.
- **Beteille's disharmony:** equality as creed, ranked religious honour as practice.

Strains

- Communal violence and discrimination, the minority question, show pluralism under fear.
- Personal laws preserve group culture and can freeze gender inequality.
- Urban gated faiths and rural mixed work both exist.

What sustains it

- Federal language policy, pilgrimage economies, and intermarriage in some classes.
- Humanistic secularism as one strand, not the emptying of religion.

Flow diagram

Cultural pluralism -> Equal citizenship
Cultural pluralism -> Recognised faiths
Communal violence -> Cultural pluralism

Conclusion

Cultural pluralism in multi-religious India is a constitutional and everyday project of difference under equal citizenship. It fails when one culture is named the nation and others become suspects.

Facts & figures

Articles 25-30

Faith and minority culture as constitutional goods.

Disharmonic pluralism

Equal civic status beside ranked religious honour.

Personal law

Group culture in family rules, a pluralism with gender costs.

Composite urban work

Everyday mixing that riots can still smash.

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