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Q55

With reference to Indian history, which of the following is/are the essential element/elements of the feudal system? 1. A very strong centralized political authority and a very weak provincial or local political authority 2. Emergence of administrative structure based on control and possession of land 3. Creation of lord-vassal relationship between the feudal lord and his overlord Select the correct answer using the code given below (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3 Official key: B.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2015 · General Studies · 2 marks · History (Ancient, Medieval, Modern)

Ancient, medieval and modern Indian history - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation**(a)**

This pairing keeps statement 1, which describes a very strong Centre and weak localities. That is the opposite of feudal fragmentation, so statement 1 is not an essential feudal element. With 1 false, 1 and 2 only cannot be the key.

(b) Official key

- **Statement 2 is correct:** feudal order is built on control and possession of land as the basis of administration and surplus. Statement 3 is correct: a lord-vassal bond between a lord and his overlord is a defining personal-political tie. Statement 1 is the reverse of feudalism. Hence 2 and 3 only is the official key.

(c)

Statement 3 alone would omit the land-based administrative structure, which is equally essential. Feudalism is not only a personal bond; it is also a land-control system. This option is therefore incomplete and not the key.

(d)

All three would require statement 1 to be true. A very strong centralised authority contradicts feudal dispersal of power. This option is not the key.

Summary

Official key is (b) 2 and 3 only. Feudalism rests on land as the source of power and on hierarchical lord-vassal ties. A strong centralised state with weak provinces is a bureaucratic or imperial pattern, not feudal. Statement 1 is therefore out. Options that include 1 or that drop 2 fail the definition used in the question.

Related possible facts

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Vassalage

Personal loyalty and military service owed to a superior lord

Indian debate

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Contrast

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