NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 11th



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Class : 11th

Subject : Political science

Chapter : 8

Chapter Name : Secularism

Q1 Which of the following do you feel are compatible with the idea of secularism? Give reasons.

(a) Absence of domination of one religious group by another.
(b) Recognition of a state religion.
(c) Equal state support to all religions.
(d) Mandatory prayers in schools.
(e) Allowing separate educational institutions for any minority community.
(f) Appointment of temple management bodies by the government.
(g) Intervention of state to ensure entry of Dalits in temples.

Answer.

a. Absence of domination of one religious group by another is compatible with the idea of secularism as secularism opposes all forms of inter-religious domination.
b. Recognition of a state religion is not in compliance with secularism since secularism opposes the idea of a state being associated with a religion (theocratic state).
c. Equal state support to all religions is compatible with secularism as the state is not being biased and is showing equal interest in the preservation of all religions.
d. Mandatory prayers in schools is not compatible with secularism as secularism does not support the worship of a particular god and people should not be forced to practice/ pray/ worship a particular religion.
e. Allowing separate educational institutions for any minority community is compatible with secularism as it supports the preservation of all religions especially the minority religions and secure their cultural identity.
f. Appointment of temple management bodies by the government is not compatible with secularism since a secular state should not interfere with the affairs and functions of a religious denomination.
g. Intervention of state to ensure entry of Dalits in temples is compatible with the idea of secularism since it supports allowing religious reforms for the well being and development of a down-trodden group so that they get social justice and are treated without any discrimination.

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Q2 Some of the key characteristics of western and Indian model of secularism have got mixed up. Separate them and make a new table.

Western Secularism	Indian Secularism
Strict non-interference of religion and state in each other's affairs	State supported religious reforms allowed
Equality between different religious groups is a key concern	Equality between different sects of a religion is emphasised
Attention to minority rights	Less attention to community based rights
Individual and his rights at the centre	Rights of both individual and religious community protected.

Answer.

Western Secularism	Indian Secularism
Strict non-interference of religion and state in each other's affairs	State supported religious reforms allowed
Equality between different sects of a religion is emphasised	Equality between different religious groups is a key concern
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Q3 What do you understand by secularism? Can it be equated with religious tolerance?

Answer. Secularism is an ideology that is based upon the principles of tolerance and plurality. It is based upon the idea that one religion is not dominative in its basic character over another even if it has the support of enormous social capital. Secularism aims towards the proper

conservation and protection of minority religious rights. The basic idea of secularism is divided into:
Positive and Negative Secularism, which is based upon the ideas of interference of the state institutions within the domain of religion.

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Q4 Do you agree with the following statements? Give reasons for supporting or opposing any of them.
(a) Secularism does not allow us to have a religious identity.
(b) Secularism is against inequality within a religious group or between different religious groups.
(c) Secularism has a western-Christian origin. It is not suitable for India.

Answer.

a. Secularism allows us to have a religious identity, it does not allow the state to mandate a particular religion and aim all the decision towards them.
b. This statement is true as secularism supports equality between the religions and rejects the idea of one religious hegemonization.
c. This statement is not valid as the idea of secularism is suitable in Indian context also even if it has euro-centric inclinations because the constitution of India mandates it.

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Q5 Indian secularism focuses on more than the religion-state separation. Explain.

Answer. Indian secularism aims at the qualified interference of the state institutions within the domain of religion. Indian secularism also demands the state autonomy in terms of conflictual situations and conditions turning volatile. The issues of Babri Masjid, saw the state and judicial interference to minimise the tensions on the communal lines while on the other hand, the state uses religion as an instrument to gain more political support in elections.

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Q6 Explain the concept of principled distance?

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Answer. The concept of principled distance means that the institutions empowered by the state machinery have to maintain the qualified distance from the religious avenues. It aims at the establishment of such a society where the capitalisation of the religious beliefs could not be done for the maximisation of political and electoral benefit.

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