Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Describe the various ways to prevent religious domination by the Indian constitution.

Ans. The various ways to prevent religious domination by the Indian constitution are:

(i) It uses a strategy of distancing itself from religion. The Indian state is not ruled by a religious group, nor does it support any one religion.

(ii) Indian secularism works to prevent the domination of religion through a strategy of non interference. This means that in order to respect the sentiments of all religions and not interfere with religions practices the State makes certain exceptions for particular religious communities.

(iii) The third way in which Indian secularism works to prevent the domination of religion is through a strategy of intervention for example; 'Untouchability'. In this case, the members of the same religion, i.e., upper caste Hindus dominate the lower caste within it. In order to prevent this religion based exclusion and discrimination of lower castes the Indian constitution bans untouchability.

Q. 2. Why is it important to separate religion from the state?

Ans. It is important to separate religion from the State to aid the country to function democratically. Most of the countries have more than one religious groups living in them. Within these religious groups, there will most likely be one group that is in a majority. If this majority religious group has access to State power, then it could quite easily use this power and financial resources to discriminate against and persecute persons of other religions. This tyranny of the majority could result in the discrimination, coercion. This would violate Fundamental Rights.

Another reason is to protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion, embrace another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

Example: Untouchability in Hindu religious practice. If state power lies in the hands of Hindus, who believe in untouchability might misue the power against disadvantaged and it would be a difficult task to abolish this practice.