



NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND SECULARISM

You must have learnt and recited our national anthem, ‘Jana-gana-mana’. You would have also solemnly recited it with others on several occasions, especially while celebrating national events, such as Independence Day and Republic Day. At times there may be a curiosity in you to know what core ideas does the national anthem communicate? And why does it contain so many names of regions, mountains and rivers of the country and also why does it make a reference to the sea? You will agree that while reciting the national anthem we shower our love for the country, pay respect and wish her victory. At the same time while mentioning various regions, mountains and rivers, we respectfully acknowledge the unity of our country in its diversity. You must be coming across news items and articles in newspapers, or discussions on television, focusing on the need to maintain the unity and integrity of our nation. In fact, national unity and integrity, i.e. national integration has been one of the most important priorities of our country. In the course of analyzing the issues related to unity and integrity of the country, Secularism is mentioned as the fundamental characteristic of our nation. It is said that secularism is one of the most essential conditions of national integration. In this lesson, you shall learn various aspects of national integration and secularism.



OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the meaning and the importance of national integration;
- appreciate how national movement against British Rule helped in national integration;
- analyse how the provisions in the Indian Constitution promote national integration;
- identify the challenges to national integration in our country;

- understand the implications of secularism; and
- appreciate the role of a learner as a citizen of India and an agent of change in promoting national integration and secularism in our country.

24.1 NATIONAL INTEGRATION

24.1.1 National Integration: Its Meaning and Importance

Before we begin a discussion on national integration, it will be better to understand its meaning. This term has two words: nation and integration. What do we mean by the term nation? A nation is a country with a unified socio-economic and political structure. It denotes a body of people who have a feeling of oneness, built on the basis of common history, society, culture and values. This feeling of oneness binds the people together in to a nation. In general terms it is this feeling which is known as national integration. National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though the individuals belong to different communities, castes, religions, cultures and regions and speak different languages, all of them recognize the fact that they are one. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation.



Do you know

National integration means “creating a mental outlook which will promote and inspire every person to place loyalty to the country above group loyalties and the welfare of the country above narrow sectarian interests.”

– Dorothy Simpson

As we all know, India is a nation having great diversities. The people who inhabit this nation belong to different races, communities and castes. They reside in different geographical regions and speak different languages. They believe in and practice different religions and have varied life styles. But with all these diversities, they all are Indians and they feel like that. They may have many religious identities such as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, or Zoroastrians. They may also be identified as Punjabis, Tamils, Malayalis, Bengalis, Manipuri, and so on, or South or North or North-East Indians. But their national identity is supreme.



Do you know

Pandit Nehru had once said, “Political integration has already taken place but what I am after is something much deeper than that, an emotional integration of Indian people so that the two may be welded into one strong national unity, maintaining at the same time all our wonderful diversities.”

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National integration is essential for any nation with socio-cultural, religious, linguistic and geographical diversities. And for a country like ours, it is still more necessary. As we know, India is a very large country. We have the second largest population in the world. A unique feature of our country is that all the major religions of the world are practiced here such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism. Can you identify religions from the symbols shown in the illustration below? There are more than one thousand languages that people of India speak. There are also great varieties in costume, food habits, and social customs. Geographically, our land is diverse and there are amazing differences in climate. Despite all these differences India is one political entity. We have to co-exist with each other peacefully, respect the culture and religion of our fellow Indians. This is possible only when national integration is realised in true sense of the term. National integration is necessary also for the security and development of the nation.



Figure 24.1 Symbols of Religions



ACTIVITY 24.1

It is claimed that cricket is like a religion in India. You also must have experienced that almost the whole nation is glued to the TV when the game of cricket is in progress. Our cricket players hail from all parts of India and belong to diverse socio-cultural and economic settings, but they play as a single unit for the country. People of all the regions remain completely engrossed with it. They celebrate every victory of the Indian Team and express their disgust, whenever it is defeated. Can there be a better example of national integration? Based on this experience, collect the views of at least 5 young persons who are easily available such as your classmates or young persons in your neighbourhood on the following questions:

1. Why do Indians behave like the way it is stated above?

2. Why do the people almost worship every great cricketer of India, even though the player does not belong to their own region, state, community, caste, or religion?
3. What are the other occasions when every person thinks and behaves like an Indian and not as a Bihari or Maharashtrian or Telugu or Brahmin or Dalit?
Analyse the responses and appreciate the importance of national integration



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**INTEXT QUESTIONS 24.1**

1. Fill in the blanks:
 - (a) A nation is a country
 - (b) National integration is the awareness of a amongst the citizens of a country.
 - (c) This kind of integration is very important in the building of
 - (d) In India all the major religions of the world such as are practiced.
2. Why is national integration needed?

24.1.2 National Movement and National Integration

You may recollect occasions when you read or you were told that India existed even in ancient times. Yes, India which we see today has been there since ancient times. But then it had been only a geographical entity, because it was divided into a large number of princely states. There were cultural similarities in those states, but it was not one united and integrated nation like it is today. It was for the first time during the British rule that India became administratively united. The British rulers annexed several princely states and established indirect rule on others. India became one geographical entity, but the feeling and sentiments of nationhood was not present among the people. The major strategy of the British rulers was based on 'divide and rule'. They promoted communal division, especially among Hindus and Muslims. Their neglect of economic development of the people created many divides in the country.

It was during the national freedom movement that the feelings and sentiments of nationhood emerged and the need for national integration was realized. During that movement people belonging to different regions, religions, cultures, communities, castes and creeds joined hands to drive out the British power from the soil of India. Especially under the banner of the Indian National Congress, established in 1885 people from all the sections came together and compelled the British rulers to quit India. Since the British rulers had adopted the policy of 'divide and rule', the freedom movement was focused on forging unity in the people of the country. The leadership

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of the movement laid emphasis on equality, liberty, secularism, socio-economic development. When India became independent all these formed the main objectives of the new nation.



ACTIVITY 24.2

As you may be aware, people of every part of India participated in the freedom struggle and many of them sacrificed their lives. Many of those freedom fighters must be from the State to which you belong. Prepare a **list of freedom fighters** who belonged to your State. You may consult the elders in your family, neighbourhood, teachers and others.

24.1.3 National Integration and the Indian Constitution

But when India got independence on 15 August 1947, the country was faced with many problems. The national integration faced great challenges. You must be aware that the partition of the country created two nations, India and Pakistan. The partition caused the worst kind of communal violence. A large number of people who were living in an area for generations had to move to the other area as refugees. You may have watched such scenes in some films and documentaries and serials on the television. Besides, the Indian political leaders were faced with complex issues related to integration of Princely States. There were other factors also that had the potential to generate problems for the unity of the country.



Do you know

On the eve of independence, India was divided into two sets of territories - the first was the territory known as the **British India**, on which the British rulers had direct control, and the second being 562 independent **Princely States**, having indirect control of the British government. When independence was declared, Princely States were given the option to join either of the two nations, India or Pakistan. A few Princely States joined Pakistan, but the rest merged with India. However, there were exceptions like Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, and Junagadh, who wished to remain independent. There were problems with States of Manipur and Tripura also.

In the above stated background, the Constitution of India lays great emphasis on national integration. Its Preamble includes unity and integrity of the nation as a major objective. It also stipulates that every citizen has the fundamental duty to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India. The Constitution reflects respect for diversity of the country, but it tries to ensure that the unity and integrity is maintained. Which is why, it has made provisions for a centralized federation and

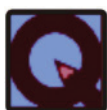
opted for a strong central government. You may have noticed this while studying the Lessons on Central government and State governments.

**Do you know**

Many provisions under Fundamental Duties reinforce national integration. The following are important:

It shall be the duty of every citizen of India –

- to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and respect religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities;
- to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- to value and preserve the rich heritage of our culture;
- to safeguard public property and to reject violence;
- to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of achievement.

**Notes****INTEXT QUESTIONS 24.2**

1. Fill in the blanks:
 - (a) During the British rule India became geographically united, but it was not a and nation.
 - (b) It was during the freedom movement that the feelings and sentiments of emerged.
 - (c) During the freedom struggle people belonging to different joined hands to drive out the British power from India.
 - (d) The Indian National Congress was formed in
2. Do you think that the Constitution of India lays great emphasis on national integration? How?

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24.1.4 Challenges to National Integration

As we noticed in the above paragraphs, just after independence India faced a number of challenges to national integration. Although various efforts have been made to solve those problems, the challenges are continuing. The most important challenges are as follows:

A. Communalism

Communalism has been one of the most complex problems that India has been facing. This is generated when individuals belonging to one religion develop excessive affinity to their religion and hatred towards other religions. This kind of feeling promotes religious fundamentalism and fanaticism and proves to be dangerous for the unity and integrity of the country. It is more so for a country like India where people practise all the major religions of the world. But India has been suffering from communalism since independence. As we know, we faced worst kind of communal riots on the eve of independence, and even after. There have been many communal riots in various parts of the country, inflicting immense sufferings on the people.



ACTIVITY 24.3

Identify at least three major communal riots that took place in India after independence. Try to gather the details of those riots through books, magazines or internet.

Have you watched a movie or heard the name of a movie that is based on the communal riot occurred in India? If not, some of your elders or friends must have seen such a movie. Try to gather the details of that movie through those who saw it. You may also get such information through internet.

Prepare a brief write-up on each of the above, explaining what do you think about communal riots.

B. Regionalism

Regionalism is another obstacle in the way of national integration. On many occasions it encourages people to promote regional interests even at the cost of national priorities. One may think that raising the problems of a particular region is needed to attract the attention of the decision makers and to compel them to fulfill justified regional demands. This thinking is reasonable, because such demands may be based on genuine grievances of the regions and States that have been denied fair shares of projects and industries in the overall structure of development. Those may also be related to the continued neglect of a particular region.



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In spite of over six decades of planned development, all regions in our country have not been developed in the desired manner. Along with other factors, the lack of expected socio-economic development results in demands for creation of new States. Do you know how many times in India various States have been reorganized because of the agitations based on regional aspirations? But when regionalism ignores national interests or encourages people to have negative feelings towards the interests of other regions, it becomes harmful. On many occasions regional protests and demonstrations are based on political considerations. Aggressive regionalism is still more dangerous, as it leads to separatism. We have been experiencing such feelings in certain parts of States of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.



Figure 24.2 Darjeeling Movement



ACTIVITY 24.4

Regional movements have resulted in the creation of new States by dividing the existing States. A major reorganization occurred through the States Reorganisation Act 1956. Since then many new States have been created, the latest being the States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand. Each of these three States has been created by dividing the existing States. Currently, agitation is going on for creation of a new State by dividing Andhra Pradesh. Based on this information you have to do the following:

- Identify the three States by dividing which the States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand have been created.
- Identify the name of the proposed State for the creation of which the agitation is on in Andhra Pradesh.

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C. Linguism

All of us know that India is a multilingual country. People of India speak nearly 2000 languages and dialects. This plurality has been negatively used on many occasions, particularly in the early decades after independence. Every country needs to have a common official language, but it has not been an easy task for India. When a recommendation was made in the Constituent Assembly to recognise Hindi as the official language of India, it was opposed by representatives of almost all the non-Hindi speaking areas. A compromise had to be made there. While the Constituent Assembly declared Hindi as the official language, it was provided that English would continue to be used for official purposes of the Union government for a period of 15 years.

When the Official Language Commission set up in 1955 recommended in favour of replacing English by Hindi as official language, there were wide-spread protests in all the non-Hindi speaking regions. Such protests and demonstrations were seen once again in 1963, when the Official Language Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha. As a compromise the Act of 1963 allowed the continued use of English for official purposes without any time limit.



Do you know

During those conflicting years in order to satisfy various language groups and to promote national integration, a Three Language Formula was evolved. *The formula includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably a South Indian language, in addition to Hindi and English in Hindi speaking States and of Hindi in addition to the regional language and English in the non-Hindi speaking areas.* Although efforts have been made to assimilate it in the school curriculum of the country, it is yet to be fully implemented.

Although the demand for language based States was met comprehensively when the States were reorganized on linguistic basis in 1956, fresh movements are going on in some parts of the country. Such movements generate many challenges for national integration

D. Extremism

The extremist movements going on in different parts of the country are yet another challenge to national integration. You must have heard about Naxalite movement or Maoist movement. These movements quite often use violence, create fear in public life, cause loss of lives of government personnel and people and destroy public property. Mostly the youth participate in such movements. The basic reason for taking up arms by the youth is the continuing state of socio-economic deprivations. Moreover, the day-to-day humiliation, denial of justice, human rights violations,

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various kinds of exploitation and political marginalization prompt them to join the Naxalite movement. But the extremist activities have been threat to law and order and peaceful living of the people residing in the affected areas.



Figure 24.3 *Naxalites in Jungle*

24.1.5 Factors Promoting National Integration

Although the above stated challenges do exist, there are certain important factors that provide sound base for national integration. These are:

A. Constitutional Provisions

As we have seen, the Indian Constitution has made provisions for promoting and ensuring national integration. It has accepted socialism, secularism, democracy, liberty, equality, justice and fraternity as the goals of Indian political system. Citizens have been empowered with fundamental rights and their fundamental duties have also been prescribed. The Directive Principles of State Policy directs the State to promote equitable economic development, eliminate social discrimination, and promotion of international peace and security. And above all, the provisions related to various institutions and processes have been geared towards national integration.

B. Governmental Initiatives

The governments have also been making efforts to promote national integration. A National Integration Council has been set up to consider issues related to national integration and recommend suitable measures to be taken. A Single Planning Commission prepares plans for economic development of the entire country and one Election Commission conducts elections.

C. National Festivals and Symbols

National festivals also act as an important unifying force. Independence Day, Republic Day, and Gandhi Jayanti are festivals that are celebrated by all Indians and in all parts of the country, regardless of language, religion or culture. We also observe the National Integration Day on 19 November every year and take a pledge. This day is also known as “Qaumi Ekta Divas”. Moreover, our National Symbols like the

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National Flag, the National Anthem, and the National Emblem also help to remind us that we all have one identity. For this reason we stress on the importance of showing proper respect to these symbols. These act as strong unifying forces both in times of celebration and adversity. They remind us of our common nationality.



Do you know

The Text of the **National Integration Pledge**: “I solemnly pledge to work with dedication to preserve and strengthen the freedom and integrity of the nation. I further affirm that I shall never resort to violence and that all differences and disputes related to religion, language, region or other political or economic grievances should be settled by peaceful and constitutional means”.

D. All India Services and Other Factors

Moreover, the All India Services (IAS, IFS, IPS and others), unified judicial system, postal and communications networks, including radio and television, and the internet promote the unity and integrity of the Indian nation. You may be aware that the members of the All India Services are recruited centrally, but they work in States. Many of them, after having long experiences at the state level come to work in the Central government and be a part of policy decision-making for the entire country. Postal and communication network definitely binds the nation. You also may have listened to radio broadcasting national events or watched those events on television. Is it not true that people of all parts of the country do so?



ACTIVITY 24.5

Certain events like Kalpana Chawla going into space along with other space scientists or Indian Teams winning world cup bind the entire nation together. There are some sportspersons who are national heroes. Similarly there are some personalities who are respected throughout India. You have to collect views of at least 5 persons, may be your friends, classmates, members of your family, teachers or others, on the following:

1. Who is the Indian personality the people throughout India respect the most?
2. Who is the sportsperson whom the most young people of the whole country consider their role model?
3. Which are the national events that are watched on television by people of the entire country or about which people listen to on radio?
4. Names of at least two food items that are liked by people of all parts of India.

Analyse the collected information and about how the feeling of unity can be promoted among the people of India.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 24.3**

1. What is communalism?
2. Do you agree that regionalism may be justified? State reasons.
3. Why do non-Hindi speaking States oppose Hindi as the Official language?
4. Why is extremism a threat to national integration?

**Notes****24.2 SECULARISM**

Communalism has been one of the most disturbing problems. It has continued to be a threat to national integration. It is true that traditionally, the Indian society has been non-communal. Since centuries it has been absorbing and assimilating many religions and cultures. But it was during the British rule that communalism was used as a tool to divide Indians. The colonial rulers created situations to convince Indians that primarily they were members of different religious communities and they must think and act differently. The Constitution makers had sensed the negative potential of communalism. That is why, the Constitution declares India to be a secular State. Although the original Constitution had many provisions to promote secularism, the continued reappearance of communalism demanded reassertion. Consequentially, it was made one of the basic pillars of Indian democracy and the word 'secular' was inserted into the Preamble of the Constitution by the Forty-Second Amendment in 1976.

24.2.1 Meaning of Secularism

What does secularism mean? You may come across with the some people who will say, "I am secular, because I do not believe in any religion". You may also find some politicians who say that what is reflected in the Constitution is not true but "pseudo-secularism". Pseudo-secularism means false secularism. However, it is necessary to understand that secularism does not mean being irreligious or anti-religious. The term pseudo-secularism is used only for political purposes. In fact, secularism implies equality of all religions and religious tolerance. It may be appreciated in two contexts: state context and individual context. In the state context it means that India does not have an official state religion. The government must not favour or discriminate against any religion. It must treat all religions with equal respect. All citizens, irrespective of their religious beliefs are equal in the eyes of law. No religious instruction is imparted in government or government-aided schools. But the general information about all established world religions may be imparted, without giving any importance to any one religion or the others. In the individual context, it means *sarva dharma samabhava*, equal respect for all religions. Every person has the right to preach, practice and propagate any religion they choose. Every citizen must treat all religions

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with the same respect as he/she has for his/her religion. No religion permits individuals to ignore or hate others.



Figure 24.4 *Freedom to choose religion*

24.2.2 Secularism in the Constitution

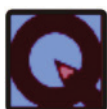
As we have seen above, various provisions of the Constitution ensure India to be a secular State. The Indian constitution through its Preamble and particularly through its chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles has created a secular state based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination. Along with the principles of social and economic democracy, secularism has been held to be one of the 'Basic Structures' of Indian Constitution. It has been reflected in the Constitution primarily as a value in the sense that it extends support to our plural society. Secularism aims at promoting cohesion among different communities living in India.

24.2.3 Secularism: Its Significance

Despite the constitutional provisions and safeguards it is unfortunate that all Indians are yet to be truly secular. We have to experience communal riots at regular intervals. Even a very insignificant reason leads to communal tension and violence. But secularism is essential not simply for maintaining communal harmony and peace, but for the very existence of our nation. If you look around yourself, you may find that your friends, classmates, neighbours or nearby residents believe and practice religions that are different from your religion. They belong to various castes. How can you interact with them and be a good friend, classmate or neighbour, if you do not respect their religion and they do not do the same. We all know that India has a plural society. It is therefore essential that all the people develop respect towards one another and practice peaceful co-existence.

**Do you know**

India is a land of the great diversities and infinite varieties. It is a country with at least 18 major languages and over 400 important dialects. It is a land that has given rise to four of the world's major religions. It is home to the world's second largest Muslim population. It welcomed Christianity long before Europe embraced it. India has always offered refuge to people fleeing from religious persecution. It is a society with over 4,000 ethnic communities or castes or endogamous groups. India is thus a multi-religious, multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic and multi-regional civilization without a parallel. Therefore, secularism is the only way out where every religion and religious community will get the needed space to survive and respect each other.

**Notes****INTEXT QUESTIONS 24.4**

1. What is the meaning of secularism?
2. What are the provisions in the Constitution that are focused on secularism?
3. What is the role of a citizen in strengthening India as a secular state?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT?**

- A nation is a country with a unified socio-economic and political structure. It denotes a body of people who have a feeling of oneness, built on the basis of common history, society, culture and values. This feeling of oneness binds the people together in to a nation.
- India is a nation having great diversities. The people who inhabit this nation belong to different races, communities and castes. They reside in different geographical regions and speak different languages. They believe in and practice different religions and have varied life styles. But with all these diversities, they all are Indians and they feel like that.
- National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though the individuals belong to different communities, castes, religions, cultures and regions and speak different languages, all of them recognize the fact that they are one. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation.
- It was during the national freedom movement that the feelings and sentiments of nationhood emerged and the need for national integration was realized. During

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that movement people belonging to different regions, religions, cultures, communities, castes and creeds joined hands to drive out the British power from the soil of India. Simultaneously they laid emphasis on equality, liberty, secularism, socio-economic development, that formed the main objectives of the new independent nation that emerged after independence.

- The Constitution of India lays great emphasis on national integration. Its Preamble includes unity and integrity of the nation as a major objective. It also stipulates that every citizen has the fundamental duty to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.
- India has been facing many challenges in its efforts to maintain and strengthen national integration. The most critical among those are: communalism, regionalism, linguism and extremism.
- However, there are many factors that promote national integration. The Indian Constitution has made provisions for ensuring and promoting national integration. The governments have also been making efforts to promote national integration. A National Integration Council has been set up to consider issues related to national integration and recommend suitable measures to be taken. One Planning Commission prepares plans for economic development of the entire country and one Election Commission conducts elections. National festivals also act as an important unifying force. National Symbols like the National Flag, the National Anthem, and the National Emblem also help to remind us that we are all one identity.
- Secularism implies equality of all religions and religious tolerance. It means that India does not have an official state religion. Every person has the right to preach, practice and propagate any religion they choose. The government must not favour or discriminate against any religion. It must treat all religions with equal respect. And every citizen must practice the principle of “sarva dharma samabhava” (Equal respect for all religions)
- The Indian Constitution through its Preamble and particularly through its chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles has created a secular state based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination.
- Secularism is essential not simply for maintaining communal harmony and peace, but for the very existence of the nation.



TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Define national integration and discuss the contribution made by the national freedom movement to the emergence of national integration.
2. How does the Indian Constitution reflect and promotes national integration?
3. What are the major challenges to national integration in India?



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4. What are the factors that promote and strengthen national integration?
5. Define secularism and analyse its importance for the Indian political system.
6. Given below are two statements of renowned freedom fighters:

Mahatma Gandhi once said: “I am a Hindu and swear by my religion, I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it. The State would look after your secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody’s personal concern!!”

Maulana Azad, one of the closest colleague of Mahatma Gandhi had said, “I am a Muslim and profoundly conscious of the fact that I have inherited Islam’s glorious traditions of the last thirteen hundred years. I am not prepared to lose even a small part of that legacy.... I am equally proud of the fact that I am an Indian, an essential part of the indivisible unity of Indian nationhood, a vital factor in its total make-up without which its noble edifice will remain incomplete.”

In the light of the above two statements, explain the role of Indian citizens for strengthening secularism and national integration in India?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

24.1

1. (a) with a unified socio-economic and political structure
(b) a common identity
(c) a strong and prosperous nation
(d) Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism
2. National integration is essential for any nation with socio-cultural, religious, linguistic and geographical diversities. And for a country like India, it is still more necessary. India is a very large country. A unique feature of our country is that all the major religions of the world are practiced here. There are more than one thousand languages. Despite all these differences India is one political entity. We have to co-exist with each other peacefully. This is possible only when national integration is realised in true sense of the term.

24.2

1. (a) united integrated
(b) nationhood

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(c) regions, religions, cultures, communities

(d) 1885

2. Constitution of India lays great emphasis on national integration. Its Preamble includes unity and integrity of the nation as a major objective. It also states that every citizen has the fundamental duty to uphold and protect the unity and integrity of India. It has made provisions for a centralized federation and opted for a strong central government.

24.3

1. Communalism is generated when individuals belonging to one religion develop excessive affinity to their religion and hatred towards other religions. This kind of feeling promotes religious fundamentalism and fanaticism and proves to be dangerous for the unity and integrity of the country.
2. Regionalism may be reasonable if the demands are based on genuine grievances of the regions that have been denied fair shares of projects and industries in the overall structure of development. Those may also be related to the continued neglect of a particular region. In spite of over six decades of planned development, all regions in our country have not been developed in the desired manner.
3. Because most of the people do not know Hindi. However, there are non-Hindi speaking States where Hindi is being promoted. It is necessary that Hindi-speaking States also promote non-Hindi languages like Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya or Bengali or Assamese in their respective areas.
4. Because these movements use violence, create fear in public life, cause loss of lives of government personnel and people and destroy public property. Mostly the youth participate in such movements. The basic reason for taking up arms by the youth is the continuing state of socio-economic deprivations and exploitation. But the extremist activities have been threat to law and order and peaceful living of the people residing in the affected areas.

24.4

1. Secularism implies equality of all religions and religious tolerance. In the state context it means that India does not have an official state religion. The government must not favour or discriminate against any religion. It must treat all religions with equal respect. In the individual context, it means *sarva dharma samabhava*, equal respect for all religions. Every person has the right to preach, practice and propagate any religion they choose.
2. The Indian Constitution through its Preamble and particularly through its chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles has created a secular state based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination.

3. Every citizen must treat all religions with the same respect as he/she has for his/her religion. No religion permits individuals to ignore or hate others. If citizens look around themselves, they may find that their friends, classmates, neighbours or nearby residents believe and practice religions that are different from their religion. They belong to various castes. How can they interact with them and be a good friend, classmate or neighbour, if they do not respect their religion and they do not do the same. It is, therefore, essential that all the people develop respect towards one another and practice peaceful co-existence.

MODULE - 4

Contemporary India: Issues
and Goals

**Notes**