Ancient History · GS - I

The political and administrative reorganization of states and territories has been a continuous ongoing process since the mid-nineteenth century. Discuss with examples.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - I	Ancient History

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

India’s territorial reorganisation reflects changing administrative requirements, linguistic identities, regional aspirations and political integration. From colonial administrative restructuring to post-independence linguistic state formation and the creation of new states and Union Territories, the process has sought to improve governance while preserving national unity.

Model Answer

Introduction

The political and administrative reorganisation of Indian states and territories has evolved continuously since the mid-nineteenth century, shaped by colonial interests, national integration, linguistic demands and administrative efficiency.

Body

Colonial Period

The British reorganised territories primarily for administrative convenience and political control. The transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911, the separation of Burma from British India in 1937 and the creation of new provinces reflected changing administrative priorities. The partition of Bengal in 1905 and its reversal in 1911 demonstrated the influence of political considerations.

Post-Independence Reorganisation

Following independence, princely states were integrated into the Indian Union. The States Reorganisation Commission (1953) recommended restructuring states largely on linguistic lines. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956, reorganised state boundaries and established a more systematic administrative framework.

Subsequently, linguistic and regional aspirations led to further changes. Maharashtra and Gujarat were created in 1960; Haryana emerged in 1966; and northeastern states such as Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura attained statehood in 1972.

The formation of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand in 2000 reflected demands for regional development and administrative responsiveness. Telangana became a separate state in 2014.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, created the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Earlier, territorial integration had also expanded India's administrative framework.

Significance

Reorganisation accommodates regional identities, improves governance and provides political representation. However, it may also generate disputes over boundaries, water resources, capitals and resource distribution.

Conclusion

India's reorganisation has been a dynamic process balancing national unity with regional aspirations. Transparent decision-making, cooperative federalism and equitable development remain essential for successful territorial administration.

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