Polity & Governance · GS - II

"While the national political parties in India favour centralisation, the regional parties are in favour of State autonomy." Comment.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

National parties often favour central coordination to maintain policy uniformity and national integration, while regional parties frequently demand greater state autonomy to protect regional identities and interests. However, these tendencies are not absolute, as party ideology, electoral incentives and political circumstances shape their positions on federalism.

Model Answer

Introduction

India’s federal system distributes powers between the Union and the states. Political parties influence this balance through their approaches to centralisation, regional autonomy and cooperative federalism.

Body

Why National Parties May Favour Centralisation

National parties often advocate uniform national policies, central coordination and stronger Union institutions to address security, economic development and inter-state challenges. Their nationwide electoral interests may encourage common programmes and standards. However, their positions vary according to ideology and political circumstances.

Why Regional Parties Emphasise State Autonomy

Regional parties often represent distinct linguistic, cultural and economic interests. They may demand greater control over state finances, centrally sponsored schemes, natural resources and administrative decisions. Parties

such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam have historically emphasised state rights and federal decentralisation.

Limitations of the Generalisation

The distinction is not absolute. National parties may support decentralisation when it suits their political interests, while regional parties may favour central intervention when they participate in Union governments or seek central assistance. Coalition politics has also enabled regional parties to influence national policymaking.

Way Forward

Cooperative federalism through the Inter-State Council, the GST Council, transparent fiscal transfers and meaningful consultation can reconcile national priorities with regional aspirations.

Conclusion

Although national parties often prioritise central coordination and regional parties frequently advocate state autonomy, neither position is universal. A balanced federal structure requires constitutional restraint, intergovernmental dialogue and respect for regional diversity.

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