

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

UPSC 2019 · 10 marks

Unity and integrity of India was perhaps the single uppermost factor in the minds of the Constitution makers. Comment.

• FLOW SNAPSHOT — how the answer moves

Intro routes

R1 Partition + communal violence + 540 princely states → fears of secession / Balkanization → holding the country together = framers' first concern **R2** a subcontinent fractured by Partition → Constitution designed above all to hold a diverse polity together → unity as the organising anxiety of the makers

Body flow

centralising design: Art 1 (Union of States, not a compact) → Arts 2-3 (Parliament creates/alters states) → strong Union List + single citizenship + integrated judiciary + emergency 352/365 (Centre armed against fragmentation) → but unity through accommodation, not force: cultural rights 29-30, Fifth/Sixth Schedules, Art 371, linguistic reorganization → **Manor**: internal heterogeneity strengthens unity → holding-together federation

Counter-view

unity not the sole aim → **Austin**: Constitution first and foremost a social document, equally devoted to justice and fraternity

Conclusion routes

R1 on balance, threat of disintegration kept unity foremost → secured through accommodation, not coercion **R2** claim holds, with one qualification → unity uppermost as the immediate priority, but pursued as plural, holding-together unity, not coercive uniformity

Framed after Partition, communal violence and uncertainty over 540 princely states, the Constitution was born amid real fears of secession and Balkanization. Holding the country together became the framers' first concern.

Article 1 calls India a Union of States, not a compact of sovereign units, and Articles 2 and 3 let parliament create and alter states. A strong Union list, single citizenship, an integrated judiciary and the emergency powers of Articles 352 and 365 aim the Centre against fragmentation.

But unity was sought through accommodation, not force. Cultural rights under Articles 29-30, the Fifth and Sixth schedules, Article 371 and linguistic reorganisation let regional & tribal identities survive within the whole.

According to James Manar, heterogeneity within regions strengthens national unity rather than weakening it, making Indian federalism a holding-together arrangement.

Unity was not the only aim, though: according to Granville Austin, the constitution was first and foremost a social document, equally devoted to justice and fraternity.

On balance, the danger of disintegration kept unity the framers' foremost concern, even as they secured it through accommodation rather than coercion.