

# FEDERALISM

## 1. Meaning

Federalism is a **system where power is shared** between a **central government** and **regional units** (states/provinces).

In India, power is divided among the **Centre, States, and Local Governments**, balancing **national unity with regional diversity**.

## 2. General Characteristics of Federalism

### 1. Division of Powers

Clear separation of subjects for the Centre and States → prevents overlap.

### 2. Supremacy of the Constitution

A **written constitution** guarantees powers and checks misuse.

### 3. Independent Judiciary

Courts interpret the Constitution and resolve Centre–State disputes.

### 4. Bicameral Legislature

The Upper House often represents the States (e.g., Rajya Sabha).

### 5. Flexibility

Power-sharing can evolve with changing needs (cooperative federalism).

## 3. Significance of Indian Federalism

### 1. Accommodates Diversity

Allows states to address linguistic, cultural, and geographic needs.

### 2. Ensures Effective Governance

Distributes workload → better policy implementation.

### 3. Deepens Democracy

Power is decentralised → people participate at multiple levels.

#### 4. Protects Rights

States can tailor policies for minorities and vulnerable groups.

## 4. Federal Provisions in the Constitution

Article	Provision
Art. 1	India is a “Union of States”.
Art. 79	Bicameral Parliament (Rajya Sabha represents states).
Art. 131	SC resolves Centre–State disputes.
Art. 246 + 7th Schedule	Union, State, Concurrent lists (subjects division).
Art. 368	Federal provisions need ratification by half of the states.

## 5. Unitary Features of the Constitution

### 1. States Not Indestructible

- **Art. 3:** Parliament can alter state boundaries/names.

### 2. Emergency Provisions

- **Art. 352:** National Emergency.
- **Art. 356:** President’s Rule.

### 3. Strong Union Legislature

- **Art. 248:** Residuary powers with Parliament.
- **Art. 249:** Parliament can legislate on the State List in the national interest.
- **Art. 254:** Union laws override State laws (Concurrent List).

### 4. Strong Union Executive

- **Art. 256:** Centre can direct states.

### 5. Single Citizenship

Uniform rights irrespective of state.

### 6. All-India Services

IAS, IPS, IFS → Centre's administrative influence in States.

## 7. Integrated Judiciary

SC → apex; ensures uniformity of law.

# 6. Why is India called “Quasi-Federal”?

Because India displays **both federal and unitary features**:

- **Federal:** Dual government, divided powers, independent judiciary.
- **Unitary:** Strong Centre, emergency powers, single constitution.

### **Ambedkar:**

“Our Constitution is federal in normal times but unitary in emergencies.”

**Indian federalism is a cooperative, flexible system that balances unity with diversity while giving the Centre enough strength to maintain national integrity.**