Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the constitutional balance between national symbols, freedom of religion and freedom of expression in India. What role can the judiciary play in resolving related disputes?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 27/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

National identity; Vande Mataram; Article 25; Article 19; constitutional morality; religious diversity; judicial review; secularism and fraternity

Model Answer

Introduction

National symbols can foster patriotism and collective identity in a diverse society. However, disputes concerning their use may raise questions about religious freedom, freedom of expression and constitutional values.

Constitutional dimensions

1. National symbols and identity: ‘Vande Mataram’, composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is India’s National Song. Its historical and cultural significance must be understood alongside India’s pluralistic traditions.

2. Freedom of religion: Article 25 protects freedom of conscience and religious practice, subject to constitutional limitations. Article 19(1)(a) protects freedom of speech and expression, subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2).

3. Secularism and fraternity: Constitutional secularism requires the State to respect religious diversity and avoid unjustified discrimination. Public institutions must balance national unity with individual liberties.

Role of the judiciary

The judiciary can examine constitutional challenges, interpret fundamental rights and assess whether government measures satisfy constitutional requirements. It must consider the specific facts, applicable law and competing rights rather than assume that either national sentiment or an individual objection automatically settles the issue.

Conclusion

A constitutional democracy protects both collective identity and individual liberty. Dialogue, legal clarity and impartial judicial review can help resolve disputes while strengthening fraternity and democratic trust.

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