

Modern History · GS - I

Assess the main administrative issues and socio-cultural problems in the integration process of Indian Princely States.

EXAM YEAR

2021

PAPER

GS - I

SUBJECT

Modern History

MARKS

10

WORD LIMIT

~150 words

Answer Hint

Political integration, Instrument of Accession, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, V. P. Menon, Hyderabad, Junagadh, Jammu and Kashmir, administrative consolidation, communal tensions, regional identities, national unity.

Model Answer

Introduction

At Independence in 1947, more than 560 princely states had to be integrated into the Indian Union to establish political unity and administrative stability.

Administrative Issues

- **Accession:** Persuading rulers to sign the Instrument of Accession while addressing concerns over sovereignty and privileges.
- **Political resistance:** Hyderabad, Junagadh and Jammu and Kashmir presented complex territorial and security challenges.
- **Administrative consolidation:** Small states had to be merged, civil services integrated and laws, taxation and governance harmonised.
- **Democratic transition:** Autocratic princely administrations needed to be replaced with accountable institutions.

Socio-cultural Problems

- **Diverse identities:** Linguistic, religious and regional differences complicated integration.
- **Communal tensions:** Partition-related violence and competing territorial claims intensified mistrust.
- **Popular aspirations:** People demanded civil liberties, representative government and an end to feudal privileges.

Conclusion

Through diplomacy, constitutional arrangements and, where necessary, coercive measures, Sardar Patel and V. P. Menon facilitated integration. Subsequent reorganisation accommodated regional identities while strengthening national unity.