

Chapter – 02 Civics

Understanding Secularism

- **Secularism Refers to Separation of Religion:**

- (i) The Indian Constitution allows individuals the freedom to live by their religious beliefs and practices.
- (ii) Indian adopted a strategy of separating the power of religion and the power of the state.

- **Why is it important to Separate Religion from the State:**

- (i) It prohibits the domination of one religion over another.
- (ii) To protect the freedom of individuals to exit from their religion, embrace another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings differently.

- **What is Indian Secularism:**

- (i) The Indian Constitution mandates that the Indian state be secular state.
- (ii) One religious community does not dominate another in a secular state.
- (iii) In a secular state, some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community.
- (iv) The state does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals.
- (v) The government schools can not promote any one religion.
- (vi) In order to respect the sentiments of all religions and not interfere with religious practices, the state makes certain exceptions for particular religious communities.
- (vii) The Indian secularism works to prevent the domination.
- (viii) In order to prevent this religion based exclusion and discrimination of lower castes, the Indian Constitution bans untouchability.
- (ix) To ensure that laws relating to equal inheritance rights are respected, the state may have to intervene in the religion based 'personal laws' of communities.
- (x) The intervention of the state can be in the form of support.
- (xi) The first amendment of the US constitution prohibits the legislature from making laws "respecting an establishment of religion" or that prohibits the free exercise of religion.
- (xii) The Indian state is secular and works in various ways to prevent religious domination.