

## **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT : FEATURES, MERITS AND DEMERITS**

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The federal government on the other hand is 'a political contrivance intended to reconcile national unity with maintenance of state rights. It is a system of government in which a part of authority and power is vested in local area , while another part is vested in a central institution deliberately constituted by an association of the areas". Both the central and state governments autonomy and independence in their spheres of jurisdiction. The powers are clearly mentioned in the fundamental law I the country , i.e., the constitution.

A federation is usually formed when some economically backward of military weak states voluntarily agree to unite . Under this arrangement a state is created to which the state surrender this sovereignty . The federation of U.S.A was formed in this manner . Sometimes the administrative units of a unitary government press the center to bestow autonomy upon them and thus create a federation . The federation of Canada was formed through this method.

### **Features of federal government . A federal system has following features:**

1. In the first place under federal system there is supremacy of the constitution . The powers of the duties of the central as well as sate government are detailed out in the constitution . The supremacy of constitution is also warranted to ensure that both the central and sates governments carry out their terms of agreement . The government as the center as in the sate is carried on in accordance with the provision of the constitution , which cannot easily changed by the by the central of the government single handedly .
2. Secondly , federal government implies government divisions of power between the center and the units . Generally subjects of national importance such as , defence , currency, foreign affairs etc are vested in the central government and subjects of local or regional importance such as agriculture, health, police etc
3. Thirdly , federal government presupposes the existence of an independents judiciary which resolves the conflicts between the center and the units and well as the units themselves. In the U.S.A as well as India an independent supreme court has been provided , which is independent of the central as well as regional governments and tries to ensure that the two operate within the limitation set by the constitution . mlf the actions their either conflict with the provisions of the constitution , the supreme court can declare them as ultravires.
4. Fourthly , federal government implies the existence of bicameral legislature . Generally the members of the lower house are elected by the people and various units are accorded representation on the basis of population . On the other hand the upper house represents the units as such . In certain countries like U.S.A , Switzerland and USSR the units are given equal representation irrespective their size and population . On the other hand in Indian and Canadian federation and units have not been provided equal representation .

5. Finally , generally in a federation a citizen enjoys double citizenship viz., the citizenship of the federation and respective state to which he belongs. In Switzerland as well as U.S.A citizens enjoys double citizenship. However , in India all the citizens have been granted single citizenship viz., the citizenship of India.

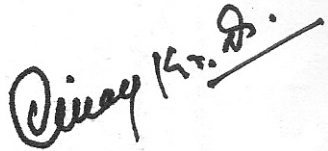
**Merits of federal government** . The main merits of federal government are as follows:

1. Firstly , a federal government reconciles national unity with local diversity and autonomy . Under this system small and militarily weak states can join hands to creat a central government and also retain their independence and autonomy .
2. Secondly , the federal system of government is based on divisions of powers between which leads to administrative efficiency. Generally the local matters are tackled by the state governments and central governments concentrate only on problems of national importance . This imparts efficiency to administration .
3. Thirdly , under federal government due to existence of dual polity and division of power there is very little chance for the central government to become despotic. In other words the federal system there is no danger of despotism .
4. Fourthly , federal government is most suitable of countries with vast territories and inhabited by people of different races , cultures etc. It enables these groups to retain their individual entity along with national unity.
5. Fifthly , federal government is also economy beneficial . Under this system small independent states can pool their resources and achieve rapid development . The elimination of inter- state tariff barriers amongst the state also contributes towards the property of the state increasing their trade personalities. In the foreign spheres the federal government leads to greater economy because there are saved from the burden of maintaining separate representatives and embassies.
6. Sixthly , federal government can also serve as a model for world government . It is admitted at al hands that though the idea of a world-state does not seem to be realizable in the near future of a world state were ever to emerge it would certainly be the pattern of federal system.
7. Federal system imparts greater political education to the people by affording them an opportunity to participate with governmental activities at the central as well as state levels.
8. Finally, the federal government enables the state governments to experiment with different methods of administration and laws in the listed spheres thereby minimizing the risk of damage. Once these experiments prove successful they can be easily adopted at the national level.

### **DEMERITS OF FEDERATION**

1. In the first place the federal government is a weak government because it is based on division of powers. Further there is also the problem of constantly balancing one state of federation against another.
2. Secondly, in the foreign sphere also the federal government is a rather weak. The state government can pose obstruction in the way the central government with

- regard implementation of treaties. It is well known that the government of West Bengal strongly opposed the transfer of Bera Bori to Pakistan even after the conclusion of agreement by the government of India with Pakistan.
3. Thirdly, under federal system there is always scope for conflicts between the national and local interest. While the states tend to their local interest, the central government adopts policy which is national interest. As a result, there are bound to be conflicts between the two sets of policies.
  4. Fourthly, federal government is more expensive because it demands double set of government. Apart from financial burden the double set of government leads to delays and causes unnecessary irritation.
  5. Fifthly, the federal government is not able to change according to the requirements of the time due to presence of a written and rigid constitution. No doubt there is always provision for amendment of the constitution, but under federal system it is always possible that different political parties may be in the power at the center and the units and it may not be easy to affecting necessary amendment in the constitution. This rigidity stands in the way of progress.
  6. Sixthly, federal system due to division in the law making power between the center and the states there is always the possibility of a variety of laws on the same matter.



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11.05.2020