

# Understanding Secularism

**Q1. List the different types of religious practice that you find in your neighborhood. This could be different forms of prayer, worship of different gods, sacred sites, different kinds of religious music and singing etc. Does this indicate freedom of religious practice?**

**Answer:** Different types of religious practices that we can observe in our neighborhood are as follows:

1. A Sikh person worships Guru Nanak at the Gurdwara using the Guru Granth Sahib
2. Muslims worship in a mosque and their holy book is the Quran. His religious music of Muslims are Sufis.
3. A Christian worships Jesus Christ in a church and his religious book is the Holy Bible.
4. A Hindu temple worships idols of deities.

This shows that people in India have the freedom to practice and live the religion of their choice. Together in peace and harmony.

**Q2. Will the government intervene if some religious group says that their religion allows them to practice infanticide? Give reasons for your answer.**

**Answer:** Yes, the government can intervene if some religious groups say that their religion allows them practice infants. This is because the Indian Constitution clearly states that the government has the right to intervene when there is a threat to social harmony. Also, killing an infant is a crime and the judiciary is the only authority that can sentence a person to death and no other person or other person can committing the crime of killing someone

**Q3. Complete the following table:**

Objective	Why is it important	Example of a violation of this objective
One religious community does not dominate another		
The state does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals		
That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community		

**Answer:**

Objective	Why is it important	Example of a violation of this objective
One religious community does not dominate another	This is important because the constitution empowers Religious freedom to all and if it is not granted, there may be a possibility riots and disturbances of harmony in the country.	Stop people of special religion to celebrate their festiva
The state does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals	This is important so that every person in a country has the right to follow religion of their choice. This is what makes the nation secular country.	India is a country where people of different castes and religions reside. However, Pakistan has declared itself as an Islamic nation
That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community	Religion cannot be divided on the basis of wealth or creed. Therefore it is important that no member dominates other members of the same religion. It is the right of every person to follow their religion.	Distinction between upper class Hindus and Dalits

**Q4. Look up the annual calendar of holidays of your school. How many of them pertain to different religions? What does this indicate?**

**Answer:** Many holidays on a school's annual calendar are related to different religions. For example, schools do not usually open on holidays such as Buddha Purnima, Holi, Eid-al-Fitr, Diwali etc. This indicates that India is a secular country where religious freedom is given to its citizens and all religions are equally respected.

**Q5. Find out some examples of different views within the same religion.**

**Answer:** Some examples of different views within the same religion are as follows:

1. Hindus worship different idols of deities.
2. There are Shias and Sunnis in the Muslim community.
3. Jains follows of Lord Mahavir
4. In Buddhism, there are Hinaya and Mahavansh.

**Q6. The Indian State both keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea can be quite confusing. Discuss this once again in class using examples from the chapter as well as those that you might have come up with.**

**Answer:** The Indian state abstains from religion and is not governed by a religious group nor does it support any one religion. At the same time, the Indian Constitution empowers religious communities to set up their own schools and colleges. All religions are given equal respect. To prevent domination by a particular community, the state may intervene in religion through coercion or support. The state can intervene in religion to ensure that all religions are treated equally. Sometimes, the state may have to intervene in religion based on the 'personal laws' of communities to ensure that laws relating to common heritage are protected. Similarly, the state also intervenes to ban unwanted religious practices such as practices like untouchability and child slaughter. The state also uses non-interventionist tactics. This means that in order to honor the sentiments of all religions and not interfere in religious practices, the state makes some exceptions for particular religious communities. For example, Sikh motorists are not allowed to wear helmets while driving two-wheelers.