

Q. Critically examine the basic principles of fascism.

## Fascism

### Introduction:

Fascism is a far-right political philosophy. It emerged in the early 20th Century. Benito Mussolini, an Italian prime minister, was the pioneer of Fascism. There are several features which are associated with Fascism. These range from staunch nationalism to violence and warfare. Critically examining these features presents ideas of state protection, swift decision-making process, promotion of peace and order, abuse of human rights, economic downfall, abuse of power and so on. In short, fascism is a political thought having both negative and positive aspects.

# Features of Fascism.

The main features of fascism include:

1. Strong Nationalism:  
It supports staunch nationalism for own nation.

2. Leadership Principle:  
Fascism believes in a single absolute leader for the nation.

3. Militarism  
For Fascism, keeping a strong army is a way to support or protect the nation.

4. Totalitarianism  
It is one of the major principles of Fascism. It means the state is in absolute authority of all matters within its boundary.

## 5. Control over Economic Affairs.

There is an absolute control and regulation of economy in a Fascist state.

## 6. Imperialism

The growth and expansion of the empire is an essential principle of Fascism.

## 7. Opposition to Liberalism

Either political or social, Liberalism is opposed by Fascism in all forms.

## 8. Violence and War

Fascism always supports violence and war to gain political or national goals.

## 9. Disdain for the Recognition of Human Rights.

There are strong limitations over the basic human rights in Fascism.

10- Suppression of labour power,

Fascism either suppress  
or eliminate labour power  
as it could pose it a  
strong threat to fascism.

## Critically Examining the Principles of Fascism

1- It prioritizes the welfare  
of the country.

Fascism clearly works  
for the development of its  
country.

A remarkable drop was  
observed in unemployment  
rate of Germany in the post-  
World War II period. The  
policies of Nazism in Germany  
had worked successfully for  
that development.

2. Promotion of socio-economic  
equality.

As state possesses  
an absolute control over

all national resources. It prevents concentration of wealth among powerful elite. In result, a socio-economic equity is achieved due to Fascism.

"Fascism was a right wing anti-capitalist movement"  
(Shari Berman - professor of political science at Barnard College in New York.)

3- Maintaining peace and order

There is heavy and strict punishment for crimes in Fascism.

It made the criminal justice system so strong to punish the perpetrators of law.

As in an article of Columbia Law Review Association namely, Purging Italian Criminal Justice of Fascism it is quoted that

Fascism made possible imprisonment by administrative action without reference

to courts.

#### 4. Promotion of National Pride.

The basic principle of Fascism is Nationalism. It promotes pride and supremacy of one's own nation.

As there are words of Mussolini, he once said,

"The nation, for us, is more than a physical location; it is also a spiritual being."

#### 5. Swift decision-making process.

As Fascism supports for one-man dictatorship rule, it results in timely decision-making process. On contrary, in a parliamentary democracy, it takes time. The time is required to summon the house and to

establish consensus on vital decisions.

6. It paves the way to the abuse of power. There was abuse of power in the Fascist rule of Italy. The Fascist regime used an absolute power to suppress its citizens.

In an article titled, "Ordinary Violence in Mussolini's Italy", Michael R. Eberle said,

"The Fascist state ruled Italy violently, projecting its coercive power deeply and diffusely into society"

7. Disregard for international law.

The Fascist regimes had no respect and obligation for international law and rules. For them, international law either right or wrong is absolutely respectable.

As it is reported in history that Benito Mussolini in 1935-36 dropped mustard-gas bombs in Ethiopia. Despite Italy being a signatory to the Geneva Protocol, the League of Nations could not stop its use of chemical weapons.

## 8. Targeting Certain Group of People.

In Fascism, there is strong prevalence of abusing specific groups. The groups which are not liked by them often experience hatred and violence against them.

As it happened in Germany. When strong hatred and dislike of the Jews resulted in an extreme violence against them. Hitler, the ruler of Germany, put the Jews into concentration camps and regarded them as 'sub-humans'.