

Q. 2 Make a précis of the following passage and suggest a suitable title.

(15+5=20)

Just as the most important norms governing the behaviour of individuals are embodied in domestic, or as the lawyers call it 'municipal' law, so some norms governing the behaviour of states are embodied in international law. Even so, the identity of name does not indicate an identity of nature. International law operates in quite a different social context, without the foundations of an overwhelming social consensus and of a central authority which endows its rules with sanction. States differ from individuals in that they are not subject to law; international law is not a law above states but one between them. This is a situation so anomalous for a legal system that some professional lawyers altogether deny the legal character of international law, claiming that it lacks the distinctive characteristic of effective sanctions. Sovereign states and an international legal system of the same type as domestic legal systems are logically incompatible. Either the states are truly sovereign and recognize no superior, in which case there can be no legal rules binding them; or, if such rules exist, then states are not truly sovereign. The contradiction is resolved by the theory of consent which claims that the binding character of international legal norms is founded upon their acceptance by states, explicit or implied. Thus being bound by international law becomes a form of exercising sovereignty. In the classical definition of sovereignty in the Wimbledon case, the World Court emphatically declined '...to see in the conclusion of any Treaty by which a State undertakes to perform or refrain from performing a particular act an abandonment of sovereignty'.

Since international law is based upon such an uneasy compromise, it is not surprising that the evaluation of its significance ranges so widely. Some regard it a sham, while others claim that, if only given a chance by politicians, lawyers would draft a comprehensive code which would ensure peace upon earth. Neither view does full justice to the true nature of international law which tries to reconcile sovereign states and international order and is the expression both of state-sovereignty and of its limitations.

SUITABLE TITLE:-

International law and sovereignty of states

PRECIS:-

Municipal laws govern the social behaviour of individuals while international law governs behaviour of states. These laws are different because international law is not sovereign and there is no central authority and social agreement about it. States are sovereign and international law is a consensus among them. States exercise their sovereignty by accepting global rules which are then applicable to them. Some argue criticize it as abandonment of sovereignty. These are difficult compromises to ensure peace upon earth. Some argue that a proper drafted code of conduct is necessary for peace. However, international law is a delicate equilibrium among states and sovereignty and its limitations and no definition can fully encompass this equilibrium.

(TOTAL WORDS = 350
PRECIS WORDS = 114)