

Paramountcy

Federalist law

The doctrine of **paramountcy** is the legal principle that reconciles contradicting or conflicting laws in a federalist state, where both the central government, and the provincial or state governments, have the power to create laws in relation to the same matters. In a case where both central and state law exist, central laws will be given priority over state laws through the doctrine supremacy. This is usually applied in cases of post-colonial indirect rule.

Historical systems

In feudalism, paramountcy is a matter of Suzerainty, generally vested in a sovereign Monarch, as the summit of a vassallic pyramid of subject entities.

Thus the Mughal badshah (emperor) was the overlord, directly or indirectly, of many native princely states in pre-colonial India.

In the colonial age and system, paramountcy could similarly be vested in (the crown) of the colonizing imperial power, insofar as it practices indirect rule over native rulers, but could also be delegated to chartered company.

Thus the British paramountcy in British India over its princely states (first by the chartered British East India Company, later by the Colonial Office of the British imperial government) replaced or imitated the Mughal overlordship over a similar, growing list of native states, while some would be annexed. Similarly, the Dutch (first the VOIC, later the government) assumed suzerain paramountcy over the native rulers in the Dutch East Indies

See also

- Paramountcy (Canada)
- Paramount chief
- Implied repeal
- Federal preemption

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