

Constitution of India & Polity

Polity is an important subject of competitive examination, especially in civil service. It plays a crucial role in the three stages of UPSC civil service examination-Prelims, Mains as well as Interview.

You should build your concepts with respect to the following organs of the state, ie Executive, Legislature and Judiciary are given below.

The Preamble of the Constitution, Union and its Territory, Citizenship, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy, Fundamental Duties, President, Vice-president, Prime Minister, CoM and Attorney General, Parliament, Supreme Court, Governor and constitutional amendments.

Compared to previous year, Polity is moving towards governance and public administration type questions eg- Chief Secretary, Gram Nyayalayas.

Areas of Focus in Indian Polity and Constitution

	✓	Recent issues
		Citizenship
	✓	Basic idea about Article 5-11
	✓	PIO, NRI, OCI and Pravasi Bharathiya Divas
	✓	Privileges available for Indian citizens and foreigners
	✓	Citizenship Amendment Act 2016
	✓	New policies, schemes and recent changes in voting.
		Fundamental Rights (FR)
	✓	Basic idea about Article 12-35
	✓	A thorough understanding about Articles 14- 30 and Art. 32
	✓	Rights and privileges available to citizens of India only and both to citizens and foreigners
	✓	44th amendment act
	✓	Different types of Writs
	✓	Enforcement and Exceptional cases with regard to FR's
	✓	RTE and recent issues related to FR
Preamble		
Features of preamble		
42nd Amendment		
Swaran Singh committee		
Schedules		
Basic idea about 12 schedules		
Constitution of India		
✓ Basic idea about All articles		
✓ Historical Background		
✓ Drafting committee and making of the Constitution		
✓ Influence of other constitutions		
✓ Its salient features		
✓ Union and its Territory		
✓ Basic idea about Article 1-4		
✓ State reorganization and different Commissions		
✓ Federal nature		

- Fundamental Duties(FD)**
- √ Article 51A
 - √ Difference between FR and FD
 - √ Significance and Criticism
 - √ Enforcement of FD's
 - √ Recent issues about FD
- Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)**
- √ Basic idea about Article and Article 36-51 and Article 368
 - √ Sources and key features of DPSP
 - √ Classification of DPSP
 - √ Comparison/ conflicts between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles
 - √ Keshavananda Bharathi, Minerva Mills, Golaknath Case, Maneka Gandhi case.
 - √ Important Amendments- 42nd Amendment, 44th Amendment, and 97th amendment
- Union**
- √ Basic idea about Article 52-73
 - √ Qualification and Election
 - √ Function and Powers- (Executive, Legislative, Financial, Judicial, Diplomatic, Military and Emergency Powers)
 - √ Resignation and impeachment
 - √ Role and responsibilities and relationship with Prime minister, Council of Minister, Cabinet ministers.
 - √ Prime minister and council of minister- Basic idea about Article 74-75
 - √ Powers and Functions
 - √ Council of ministers
 - √ Resignation and Removal
 - √ Attorney general
- Parliament**
- √ Basic idea about Article related
 - √ Role and functions of the Parliament
 - √ Sessions, Motions, Parliamentary procedure - Summoning, Prorogation, Joint sitting
- √ Parliamentary proceedings like Question Hour, Zero Hour, and Adjournment Motion etc.
 - √ Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha,
 - √ Special powers of Rajya Sabha
 - √ Anti defection law and 10th schedule
 - √ Parliamentary Privileges
 - √ Bill and law making procedure
 - √ Budget, funds and its summary
 - √ Parliamentary Committees
- Judiciary**
- √ Basic idea about Article related to the judiciary.
 - √ Powers of Supreme court and high court
 - √ Qualification and appointment
 - √ Removal procedure
 - √ Recent controversy, verdicts, and constitutional provisions.
 - √ State Government- State Executive
 - √ Governor- appointment, removal and special powers.
 - √ Executive, Legislative, Financial, Judicial powers and discretionary of governor
 - √ 7th constitutional amendment
 - √ Chief minister and council of ministers
 - √ Power of chief minister
- State Legislature**
- √ State legislature compared to the Parliament with regard to composition, powers, and functions.
 - √ Bicameral legislatures
 - √ Creation and abolition of the Legislative councils
- Administration of Union Territories (UT)**
- √ Special provision for Delhi
 - √ Administration and jurisdiction in UT's
- Administration of Special Areas**
- √ Basic idea about 5th Schedule 6th Schedule
 - √ Recent issues related to Administration of Special Areas

- √ Special provision for Jammu and Kashmir-Article 370
- √ Difference between constitutional provisions related to Jammu and Kashmir
- Emergency Provisions**
- √ National emergency- Article 352
- √ President's rule or State emergency- Article 356
- √ Financial emergency- Article 360
- √ 44th amendment act
- √ Effects and implications of emergency
- √ Role of President in emergency time
- √ The State of FR, Lok sabha, and Rajya sabha
- √ Revoking emergency
- State- centre and interstate relations**
- √ Basic idea about Articles 262 and 263
- √ Composition and functions of Interstate council and Zonal council
- √ Inter-State trade and Commerce
- √ Recent disputes between states, controversies etc
- √ New policies or schemes which impact interstate relations
- Panchayati raj and municipalities**
- √ Elections, auditing, powers and authority of panchayats
- √ 3 tier structure
- √ 73rd Amendment Act and 74th Amendment Act
- √ Relation with FR and DPSP
- √ Schemes introduced
- √ Metropolitan planning committee and urban development
- √ Reservation
- Constitution Bodies**
- √ Election Commission
- √ UPSC
- √ SPSC
- √ JPSC
- √ Finance Commission
- √ National Commission for SCs and ST's,
- √ Composition, Powers and functions, Removal of the Constitutional bodies
- Non-Constitutional Bodies**
- √ Basic idea about Composition, Functions, Working of the Non-Constitutional bodies such as National Human Rights Commission, Central Information Commission, Central Vigilance Commission, Central Bureau of Investigation, State Human Rights Commission, State Information Commission etc
- Tribunals**
- √ Basic idea about Article 323A and tribunals under Article 323B
- √ Recent controversial issues related to tribunals
- √ Different tribunals and importance
- Special Provisions for SC's, ST's, Backward Classes, Minorities and Anglo-Indians**
- √ Privileges and right issued to SC's, ST's, Backward Classes, Minorities and Anglo-Indians
- √ Issues related to vulnerable sections like women, child, SC's, ST's, Backward Classes, Minorities and Anglo-Indians
- Current issues related to Polity**
- √ Recent issues related to above-mentioned categories
- √ Important schemes, programs, missions, laws, and policies launched by the government.
- √ Recent Government Bills and Governance- actions

Introduction

The Constitution of India is the supreme law of India. It lays down the framework defining fundamental political principles, establishes the structure, procedures, powers, and duties of government institutions, and sets out fundamental rights, directive principles, and the duties of citizens.

- It is the longest written constitution of any sovereign country in the world, containing 448 articles in 25 parts, 12 schedules, 5 appendices and 98 amendments (out of 120 Constitution Amendment Bills). Besides the English version, there is an official Hindi translation. Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar is widely regarded as the father of the Indian Constitution.
- The Constitution follows parliamentary system of government and the executive is directly accountable to legislature.
- Article 74 provides that there shall be a Prime Minister of India as the head of government. It also states that there shall be a President of India and a Vice-President of India under Articles 52 and 63. Unlike the Prime Minister, the President largely performs ceremonial roles.
- The Constitution of India is federal in nature. Each State and each Union territory of India have their own government. Analogues to President and Prime Minister, the Governor in case of States, Lieutenant Governor for Union territories and the Chief Minister.
- The 73rd and 74th Amendment Act also introduced the system of Panchayati Raj in rural areas and Municipality in urban areas. Also, Article 370 of the Constitution gives special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The Constitution was adopted by the India Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949, and came into effect on 26 January 1950.
- The date of 26 January was chosen to commemorate the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence of 1930. With its adoption, the Union of India officially became the modern and contemporary Republic of India and it replaced the Government of India Act 1935 as the country's fundamental governing document.
- To ensure constitutional autochthony, the framers of constitution inserted Article 395 in the constitution and by this Article the Indian Independence Act, 1947 was repealed.
- The Constitution declares India to be a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens of justice, equality, and liberty, and endeavors to promote fraternity among them.
- The words "socialist" and "secular" were added to the definition in 1976 by constitutional amendment (mini constitution).
- India celebrates the adoption of the constitution on 26 January each year as Republic Day.

Historical Developments

- The Constitution of Indian is drawn from many sources. Keeping in mind the needs and conditions of India the framers of the Constitution of India borrowed different features freely from previous legislation.

Government of India Act 1858

- First Revolution of India, 1857 urged British Government to pass this Act. To calm down the after effects of 1857 revolt, the Act of 1858 was introduced. This act abolished East India Company and transferred powers towards the British crown to establish direct rule. The Provisions of the bill are :
- Provision for the creation of an Indian Civil Service under the control of the Secretary of State.
- The Crown was empowered to appoint a Governor-General and the Governors of the Presidencies.
- The Company's territories in India were to be vested in the Queen, the Company ceasing to exercise its power and control over these territories. India was to be governed in the Queen's name.
- All the property of the East India Company was transferred to the Crown. The Crown also assumed the responsibilities of the Company as they related to treaties, contracts, and so forth.
- The Queen's Principal Secretary of State received the powers and duties of the Company's Court