

Indian Constitution and Governance

The Constitution of India

- The Indian Constitution is the longest written Constitution in the world. It can be changed according to the requirement of the time.
- The principles of the constitution have been mentioned in the preamble.
- It starts with the phrase 'we the people of India' stating that the real power of the constitution lays with the people.
- It is mentioned in the preamble that India is a secular state. This means that no religious beliefs are involved in governance.
- The draft of the constitution was finally adopted by the constituent assembly on 26 November, 1949 and the constitution came into effect on 26 January, 1950.

Fundamental Rights

Our Constitution provides six Fundamental Rights to the citizens of India.

- Right to Equality
- Right to Freedom
- Right Against Exploitation
- Right to Freedom of Religion
- Cultural and Educational Rights
- Right to Constitutional Remedies

Our Constitution also provides 11 fundamental duties to its citizens.

Union Executive

The union executive consists of the president, the vice-president and the council of ministers headed by the prime minister.

The President

- He is the executive head of the state and the first citizen of India.
- The President shall have the power to appoint and remove high authorities like the prime minister, other ministers of the Union, Judges, Governors of states and appoints chief of Army, Navy and Air force.

Vice President

- He is elected by both the Houses of Parliament.
- The Vice President is the Ex-officio **Chairman** of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha).

Council of Ministers

- Constitution states that there shall be a Council of Ministers, with the Prime Minister at its head, to aid and advise the President.
- It is composed of all Union Ministers— the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers.

Prime Minister

- The Prime Minister is the head of the Government and the head of the Council of Ministers.
- The Prime Minister is appointed by the President on the basis of his being the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha.

Union Legislature

- Legislature of the Union is called the Parliament and consists of the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and the President.

Rajya Sabha (Council of States)

- Rajya Sabha is the Upper House of the Parliament and the first sitting of the Rajya Sabha was held on 3rd April, 1952.
- The maximum permissible strength of the Rajya Sabha is 250. Of these, 238 members are elected indirectly from the States and Union Territories, and 12 are nominated by the President for their expertise in art, literature, science and social services.
- Currently, the strength of the Rajya Sabha is 245. Of these, 229 members are elected from States and 4 members represent Union Territories and 12 members are nominated by the President.

Lok Sabha (People's House)

- The Lok Sabha is the Lower House of the Parliament and its first sitting took place on 13th May, 1952. The current Lok Sabha is the 16th constituted Lok Sabha.
- Three Sessions of the Lok Sabha are held every year, namely Budget Session (February to May); Monsoon Session (July to September); and Winter Session (November to December).

Members 530 from States, 20 from Union Territories and 2 nominated by the President, from the Anglo-Indian Community.

The constituent assembly took 2 years, 11 Months and 18 days to complete the Constitution.

Judiciary

The Judiciary interprets law, settles disputes and administers justice. It is independent of the Executive and the Legislature. It consists of three levels of courts i.e. Supreme Court, High courts and Subordinate Courts

Supreme Court

- The supreme court of India was inaugurated on 28th January, 1950 and is located on Tilak Marg, New Delhi.

- Judges of the supreme court are appointed by the President.

High Courts

The Calcutta High Court, established in 1862, is the oldest High Court in India.

Subordinate Courts

- These are the district court of India.
- Judges of the subordinate courts are appointed by the governor in consultation with the chief justice of concerned state.

The Governor

- The Governor is the **Constitutional Head** of the State and the same Governor can act as Governor of more than one State.
- The Governor is appointed by the **President**.

National Symbols

The national flag is a horizontal rectangular tricolour with equally sized strips. These are coloured deep saffron (top), white (middle) and India green (bottom). It has a navy blue wheel with twenty-four spokes in the centre. This is known as the Ashok Chakra.

- The National Emblem is an adaptation of the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath. The motto on it says 'Satyameva Jayate'.
- The National Anthem starts with 'Jana Gana Mana'. It was composed by Rabindranath Tagore.
- The National Song is the first two verses of Vande Mataram. It was written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

Other national symbols are

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|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • National river | – The Ganga |
| • National fruit | – Mango |
| • National flower | – Lotus |
| • National tree | – Indian Banyan |
| • National animal | – Royal Bengal Tiger |
| • National aquatic animal | – Gangetic Dolphin |
| • National bird | – Indian Peacock |
| • National currency | – The Indian rupee (₹) |

Practice Exercise

1. Which Constitution is the longest written Constitution of the World.
(a) Indian Constitution
(b) American Constitution
(c) British Constitution
(d) Irish Constitution
2. Indian Constitution provides for Fundamental Rights which are
(a) 6 in number
(b) 7 in number
(c) 10 in number
(d) 9 in number
3. Which among the following is not a Fundamental Right?
(a) Right to Equality
(b) Right to Freedom of religion
(c) Right to Property
(d) Right to Constitutional Remedies
4. How many Fundamental Duties are there in our Indian Constitution?
(a) 10
(b) 11
(c) 12
(d) 9
5. Council of Ministers is headed by the
(a) President
(b) Prime Minister
(c) Governor
(d) Chief Minister
6. Which branch of government makes laws?
(a) Parliament
(b) Executive
(c) Judiciary
(d) Local bodies
7. Indian legislature consists of
(a) Lok Sabha
(b) Rajya Sabha
(c) President
(d) All of these
8. The President of India is elected by the elected members of
(a) Lok Sabha
(b) Rajya Sabha
(c) State Legislature
(d) Both (a) and (b)
9. The Lok Sabha can have maximum of
(a) 552 members
(b) 550 members
(c) 250 members
(d) 565 members
10. Who nominates the members of the Lok Sabha?
(a) President
(b) Prime Minister
(c) Governor
(d) Speaker
11. Who among the following is known as the Head of the state?
(a) Governor
(b) President
(c) Prime Minister
(d) Attorney General
12. The Rajya Sabha is chaired by
(a) Speaker
(b) Vice-President
(c) President
(d) Prime Minister
13. How many members can be nominated by President to the House of Rajya Sabha?
(a) 10
(b) 11
(c) 12
(d) 2
14. Bills passed by the Parliament are approved by
(a) President
(b) Governor
(c) Speaker
(d) Chairman
15. Who interprets laws made by the legislature?
(a) Judiciary
(b) Executive
(c) Comptroller and Auditor General
(d) Advocate General
16. Which among the following is the highest level judiciary in India?
(a) Supreme court
(b) High Court
(c) Administrative Tribunal
(d) Lok Adalats
17. The seat of Supreme Court is at
(a) Bombay
(b) New Delhi
(c) Madras
(d) Calcutta
18. Indian Judicial system consists of how many levels of courts.
(a) 4
(b) 5
(c) 3
(d) 2
19. No religious beliefs are involved in governance because India is a
(a) secular state
(b) socialist state
(c) Monarchy
(d) communist state

- 20.** Under the 'Universal Adult Franchise' what is the minimum age prescribed for voting in elections.
 (a) 30 years
 (b) 25 years
 (c) 18 years
 (d) 21 years
- 21.** How many spokes are there in our national flag.
 (a) 24 (b) 21
 (c) 20 (d) 25
- 22.** Wheel in the centre of our flag is known as the
 (a) Ashoka chakra
 (b) Kirti Chakra
 (c) Vir Chakra
 (d) All of these
- 23.** The national emblem is taken from the lion capital of Ashoka at
 (a) Lauriya Nandangarh
 (b) Sarnath
 (c) Sanchi
 (d) Amravati
- 24.** Which motto is inscribed on our national emblem?
 (a) Jai Jawan Jai Kisan
 (b) Satyamev jayate
 (c) Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam
 (d) None of the above
- 25.** 'Jana Gana Mana' was composed by
 (a) Rabindranath Tagore
 (b) Aurobindo Ghose
 (c) Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
 (d) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
- 26.** Which among the following was composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee?
 (a) Amar Sonar Bangla (b) Vande Mataram
 (c) Vaishnava Janato (d) All of these
- 27.** Which is the national aquatic animal of India?
 (a) Gharial (b) Gangetic Dolphin
 (c) Crocodile (d) Oliver ridley turtles
- 28.** Which is the national animal of India?
 (a) Monkey (b) Dear
 (c) Lion (d) Tiger

Answers

1	(a)	2	(a)	3	(c)	4	(b)	5	(b)	6	(a)	7	(d)	8	(d)	9	(a)	10	(a)
11	(b)	12	(b)	13	(c)	14	(a)	15	(a)	16	(a)	17	(b)	18	(c)	19	(a)	20	(c)
21	(a)	22	(a)	23	(b)	24	(b)	25	(a)	26	(b)	27	(b)	28	(d)				