

The Union Executive

Time To Learn

I. Fill in the blanks:

1. A person to be appointed a **minister** must be a member of either House of Parliament.
2. The Prime Minister **decides** the business to be carried on by the Cabinet.
3. The Vice President is elected for a period of **five years**.
4. The Prime Minister distributes portfolios among the ministers.
5. The public servants constitute the **permanent executives**.

II. Match the contents of Column A with that of Column B : Column A

Column A

1. The Prime Minister
2. The President
3. The Cabinet
4. The Council of Minister
5. A Department

Column B

- (a) takes all important decisions.
- (b) consisted of all the Ministers.
- (c) under the control of a Minister is called portfolio.
- (d) appoints the Prime Ministers.
- (e) heads the Coucil of Ministers.

Answer:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. The Prime Minister | (e) heads the Coucil of Ministers. |
| 2. The President | (d) appoints the Prime Minister |
| 3. The Cabinet | (a) takes all important decisions. |
| 4. The Council of Ministers | (b) consisted of all the Ministers. |
| 5. A Department | (c) under the control of a Minister is called portfolio. |

III. Tick mark (✓) the correct statements and cross mark (X) the wrong ones :

1. The Prime Minister is the vital link between the President and the Cabinet.
✓
2. The Prime Minister acts on the advice of the President.
X
3. A money bill cannot be introduced without the President's authority.
✓
4. The President can appoint anyone as the Prime Minister.
X
5. Most of the Civil Servants at the Centre are selected by the Union Public Service Commission.
✓

IV. Answer the following:

Question 1.

Who is the Chief Executive of the Indian Union? Who votes for him?

Answer:

The Chief Executive of the Indian Union is the President. The elected members of both the Houses of Parliament and the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies elect the President.

Question 2.

State two executive and two judicial powers of the President. Under what circumstances can the President proclaim a state of emergency?

Answer:

Two Executive powers of the President are:

1. He appoints the Prime Minister and Union Minister.
2. He appoints state Governors, the Judges of the Supreme Court and High Court, the Comptroller and Auditor-General, the Attorney General and members of the Union Public service Commission.

Two Judicial powers of the President are:

1. He can pardon, remit or suspend a sentence of punishment given by a court martial or death sentence passed by the court.
2. He is not answerable to any law court for the exercise of his powers, except in case of impeachment in Parliament.

The President can declare emergency if:

1. Security of India is threatened.
2. There is a break down of the constitutional machinery in a state.
3. The financial stability of the country is threatened.

Question 3.

What are the two main functions of the Cabinet?

Answer:

The two main functions of the Cabinet are:

1. All important decisions are taken by the cabinet ministers.
2. Cabinet formulates the policies and programmes of the government.

Question 4.

Name the three categories of the union ministers.

Answer:

The three categories of Ministers are:

1. Cabinet Ministers
2. Minister of State
3. Deputy Ministers

Question 5.

What is the position of the Prime Minister? Mention his powers.

Answer:

Leader of the political party or parties securing absolute majority in the Lok Sabha.

1. Leader of the Lok Sabha.
2. Manages the affairs of the country both internal as well as external.
3. He is the chief spokesperson of the Government.
4. Selects other ministers.
5. Distributes portfolios.
6. Can demand the resignation of any minister.
7. Advises the President on various appointments to important posts.
8. Presides over cabinet meetings.

Question 6.

Do you think the President of India should be directly elected by the people? Why/why not?

Answer:

We have a system of government in which the Prime Minister is the most important person in the government of the country, the President is only a nominal Head. If the President was to be elected then he too would be equally important and powerful. Then there would be a clash of powers. So, in my opinion it is preferable that the President should not be directly elected by the people.

V. Explain the following statements:

Question 1.

"The President is a nominal head."

Answer:

It means that in our system of government, it is the Prime Minister who runs the government under a parliamentary form of government. The President is a constitutional head of the Indian Union. He is only a nominal head. The government is run by the Prime Minister and his council of Ministers. The real executive power vests in the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.

Question 2.

"All the ministers, including the Prime Minister, swim or sink together."

Answer:

The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers are directly responsible to the Lok Sabha. If a vote of no confidence is passed against one minister, the whole Council of ministers including the Prime Minister has to resign.

Additional Questions

EXERCISES

A. Fill in the blanks:

1. The President can be removed from office by a procedure known as **Impeachment**.
2. The President appoints the judges of the **Supreme** Court and the **High** Court.
3. The President can call a **joint** session of the Parliament if there is a deadlock regarding a bill.
4. The Cabinet is the **inner core** of the Council of Ministers. The Cabinet Ministers hold important **portfolios**.
5. The Prime Minister is the link between the **President**, the people and the **Parliament**.

B. Name the following:

1. The current Prime Minister of India
Ans. Narendra Modi
2. The current Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha –
Ans. Mohammad Hamid Ansari
3. The current Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces
Ans. Pranab Mukherjee
4. The current ministers in charge of (a) Defence (b) External Affairs (c) Finance (d) Health
Ans.
(a) Defence Minister – Manohar Parrikar
(b) External Affairs – Sushma Swaraj
(c) Finance Minister – Arun Jaitley
(d) Health Minister – Jagat Prakash Nadda

C. Choose the correct answer:

1. The President/Prime Minister/Vice President is the nominal head of the government of India.
Ans. The President is the nominal head of the government of India.
2. The President is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Administrative Service/Defense Forces/Indian Foreign Service.
Ans. The President is the Supreme Commander of the Defense Forces.
3. The Vice-President is the Chairperson of the Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha/Vidhan Sabha.
Ans. The Vice-President is the Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha.
4. After the elections, the President appoints the leader of the majority party as the Vice President/Speaker/Prime Minister.
Ans. After the elections, the President appoints the leader of the majority party as the Prime Minister.
5. The Council of Ministers is the real executive but the administration is carried on in the name of the Prime Minister/President/Vice-President. "
Ans. The Council of Ministers is the real executive but the administration is carried on in the name of the Prime Minister.

D. State whether the following are true or false:

1. The President is elected for a term of 4 years.
False.
Correct : The President is elected for a term of 5 years.
2. The President can pardon a death sentence.
True.
3. The President can declare war or conclude peace.
True.
4. The Prime Minister choose the Cabinet Ministers.
True.
5. Civil servants belong to the majority party in Parliament.
False.
Correct : Civil servants belong to the minority party in Parliament.

E. Answer the following questions in one or two words/ sentences:

Question 1.

Who is the real executive head in a parliamentary form of government?

Answer:

The parliamentary system of government makes the Prime Minister the real head of the Indian government.

Question 2.

Name the body that elects the President of India.

Answer:

An Electoral College elects the President.

Question 3.

Name any two officials appointed by the President?

Answer:

The President appoints the State Governors, the Comptroller Auditor General, the Attorney General and Chief Commissioners of the Union Territories.

Question 4.

What is an ordinance?

Answer:

Ordinances are executive orders which are issued when the Parliament is not in session.

Question 5.

What can the President do when the security of the country is threatened by external aggression or armed rebellion?

Answer:

If the security of the country is threatened by external aggression or armed rebellion, National Emergency is declared.

Question 6.

Whose advice is the President bound to follow in carrying out his/her functions?

Answer:

Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers advise the President in the exercise of his/her functions. He/she is bound to follow this advice.

Question 7.

Who is the head of the Council of Ministers?

Answer:

The Prime Minister is the head of the Council of Ministers.

Question 8.

When two or more political parties form the government, what is it called?

Answer:

When two or more parties usually agree to work together and form the government. This is known as a Coalition Government.

Question 9.

What is meant by allotment of portfolios?

Answer:

The Prime Minister allots each minister in the Council a separate department or portfolio to handle. This is called allotment of portfolios. Hence, we have a Minister of Communication, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, etc.

Question 10.

What happens when a vote of no-confidence is passed against any one Cabinet Minister?

Answer:

If a vote of no-confidence is passed against any one Cabinet Minister, the whole Council of Ministers has to resign immediately.

F. Answer the following questions briefly:

Question 1.

In the context of the President of India, answer the following questions:

- (a) Mention the qualifications required for the post of the President.
- (b) How is the President elected ?
- (c) How can the services of the President be terminated ?

Answer:

(a) Qualifications for the post of the President are:

1. They must be citizens of India.
2. They must be at least 35 years of age.
3. They must have all the qualifications necessary to be a member of the Lok Sabha.
4. They should not hold an office of profit under the Central, the state or the local government

(b) The President is elected indirectly. An electoral college elects the President. The electoral college consists of the following members:

1. The elected members of both Houses of Parliament.
2. The elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies.

(c) The President can be impeached by the Parliament. Impeachment is a procedure by which the Parliament can remove the President if he/she is found guilty of violating the Constitution, of treason or of corruption.

Question 2.

With reference to the powers of the President, discuss:

(a) Any four executive powers

(b) Military powers

(c) Any four legislative powers

Answer:

(a) Executive powers: The President appoints the Prime Minister who is the leader of the Majority party or coalition parties or single largest party in the Lok Sabha. The President appoints the Union Ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister.

(b) Military powers: The President is the Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces. He or she can declare war or conclude peace. All important treaties and contracts are made in the President's name.

(c) Legislative powers:

1. The President can summon or prorogue the Parliament. He/she addresses the opening session of the Parliament every year. The President's address is a statement of the government's policy.
2. The President can also dissolve the Lok Sabha and order fresh elections.
3. He/she can call a joint session of both Houses of Parliament if there is a deadlock regarding a bill.
4. Each bill passed by the Parliament has to receive the President's assent in order to become a law. The President may send the bill back to the Parliament if he/she does not approve, but if it is passed a second time, he/she is obliged to sign it and give his/her assent.
5. The President nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha and two Anglo-Indian members to the Lok Sabha.
6. When the Parliament is not in session, the President can issue ordinances. Ordinances are like laws and are valid for only 6 weeks after the Parliament meets again.

Question 3.

The President is an integral part of the Parliament. In this context explain the following:

(a) The financial powers of the President

(b) The judicial powers of the President

(c) The emergency powers of the President.

Answer:

(a) The financial powers of the President:

1. The Budget is presented to the Parliament in the name of the President.
2. All money bills are introduced in the Parliament with the President's permission.

(b) The judicial powers of the President:

1. The President has the power to grant pardon, to remit, reduce or suspend the sentence of a person convicted of any offence. He can also pardon a death sentence.
2. He/she is not answerable to any court of law for his/ her actions, except if he/she is impeached by the Parliament.

(c) The emergency powers of the President:

1. The President can declare Emergency if the security of the country is threatened by external aggression or armed rebellion.
2. If the administrative machinery of a state breaks down, Presidential Rule is imposed in that state.
3. If the financial stability of the country is threatened, a Financial Emergency can be declared by him.

Question 4.

With reference to the functions of the Parliament, explain the following:

(a) Law-making functions

(b) Control over the executive

(c) Judicial functions

Answer

(a) Law making functions of the Parliament:

1. The Parliament can frame new laws or modify existing ones on any subject in the Union or Concurrent List.
2. In some cases the Parliament can also pass laws on subjects under the State List.
3. Only the Parliament can initiate a Bill to amend the Constitution.

(b) Control over the Council of Ministers:

1. The Parliament keeps a watch over the government. The Council of Ministers is directly responsible and answerable to the Lok Sabha for its policies and actions.
2. The Council of Ministers has to resign immediately if a vote of no-confidence is passed against it by the Lok Sabha.
3. The Members of Parliament can discuss government policies and question the ministers. Hence, they can exercise a check on the working of the government.
4. The Parliament can move an adjournment motion to discuss and focus on any matter of public importance which requires immediate and urgent attention from the government, for

instance, natural disasters such as earthquakes and unforeseen situations such as police firing or terrorist attacks, etc.

(c) Judicial functions of the Parliament: The Parliament can impeach or remove the President, the Vice-President and judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts if any of them violate the Constitution or misuse their authority.

Question 5.

Discuss the powers and position of the Prime Minister with reference to his relationship with the following:

- (a) Parliament
- (b) the President
- (c) the Council of Ministers.

Answer:

(a) The parliamentary system of government makes the Prime Minister the real head of the Indian government. It is the Prime Minister who actually exercises all the powers vested in the President. This is because of the following reasons:

The Prime Minister is the elected head of the country. The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party or the largest coalition in the Parliament.

(b) The Prime Minister advises the President in the discharge of his/her functions and informs him/her about the decisions taken by the Cabinet. The advice of the Prime Minister is binding on the President.

The Council of Ministers:

1. The Prime Minister selects the members of the Council of Ministers.
2. He/she distributes portfolios among the ministers and presides over Cabinet meetings.
3. He/she coordinates the working of the different departments and is the vital link between the President and the Cabinet.
4. He/she can expand the Cabinet and also demand the resignation of any minister.

Question 6.

In the context of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, explain the following:

- (a) Appointment of the Prime Minister
- (b) Formation of the Council of Ministers
- (c) The Cabinet

Answer:

(a) According to the constitution, The Prime Minister is appointed by the President of India. In actual practice, however, the choice of the President in the appointment of Prime Minister is limited. He appoints only that person as Prime Minister who is the leader of the party or coalition of

parties having an absolute majority in House of the people.

In case no party has an absolute majority in house of the people, the president can appoint any person as Prime Minister who, in his opinion, is able to form a stable government. The person to be appointed as Prime Minister must be a member of either house of parliament.

(b) The Prime Minister selects a number of ministers according to his/her preference and submits a list to the President. When the President approves and appoints the Ministers on the list, the Council of Ministers is formed. The Council of Ministers has three ranks within it

1. Cabinet Ministers,
2. Ministers of State and
3. Deputy Ministers.

(c) All ministers of the Council have to be members of either House of Parliament. In case a non-member is selected, he/ she has to be elected to either House within 6 months from the date of appointment. The Cabinet is the inner core of the council of Ministers. The Cabinet Ministers hold the most important portfolios and make the most important decisions and policies. The Cabinet Ministers hold the highest ranks and have the greatest responsibility. They hold the real executive power of the Indian government and are collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. The Cabinet can remain in office as long as it enjoys the confidence of a majority in the Lok Sabha. If a vote of no-confidence is passed against any one Cabinet Minister, the whole Council of Ministers has to resign immediately. The entire Council has to answer for the shortcomings or failure on the part of any one minister.

G Picture study:

Until 1950, the building in the picture was known as 'Viceroy's House', and served as the residence of the Governor General of India.



1. Identify the building. Whose official residence is it now?

Ans. Rashtrapati Bhavan, President of India.

2. How is he or she elected?

Ans. The President is elected indirectly by the elected members of the Legislature as he or she is a nominal (de jure) and not the de facto head. An Electoral college elects the President.

- The Electoral College elects the President. The Electoral College consists of the following members:
- The elected members of both Houses of Parliament.
- The elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies

3. What is his/her term of office?

Ans. The President is elected for a period of 5 years. He or she can be re-elected after his or her term.

4. Mention two powers each held by this person of with reference to the following:

(a) Financial power (b) Judicial Power

Answer:

(a) Financial power:

- The Budget is presented to the Parliament in the name of the President.
- All money bills are introduced in the Parliament with the President's permission.

(b) Judicial Power:

- The President has the power to grant pardon, to remit, reduce or suspend the sentence of a person convicted of any offence. He can also pardon a death sentence.
- He/she is not answerable to any court of law for his/ her actions, except if he/she is impeached by the Parliament.