

INDIAN POLITY
GENERAL STUDIES-II
MAINS - SYLLABUS AND PREVIOUS YEARS QUESTIONS

1. **Indian Constitution** – historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.
2. Functions and responsibilities of the **Union and the States**, issues and challenges pertaining to the **federal structure**, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.
3. **Separation of powers** between various organs, **dispute redressal mechanisms** and institutions.
4. **Comparison** of the Indian constitutional scheme with that of other countries.
5. **Parliament and State legislatures** – structure, functioning, conduct of business, power and privileges and issues arising out of these.
6. Structure, organization and functioning of the **Executive** and the **Judiciary** -Ministries and Departments of the Government; **pressure groups** and **formal/informal associations** and their role in the Polity.
7. Salient features of the **Representation of the People Act**.
8. Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies.
9. **Statutory, regulatory** and various **quasi-judicial bodies**.

PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

2019

1. Do you think Constitution of India does not accept principle of strict separation of powers rather it is based on the principle of 'checks and balance'? Explain. (150 words) **10**
2. "The Central Administrative Tribunal which was established for redressal of grievances and complaints by or against central government employees, nowadays is exercising its powers as an independent judicial authority." Explain. (150 words) **10**
3. What are the methods used by the farmers' organisations to influence the policy-makers in India and how effective are these methods? (150 words) **10**
4. From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain. (150 words) **10**
5. What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism? (150 words) **10**
6. On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the Representation of peoples Act, 1951? Also mention the remedies available to such person against his disqualification. (250 words) **15**

7. "Parliament's power to amend the Constitutions is a limited power and it cannot be enlarged into absolute power." In the light of this statement explain whether Parliament under Article 368 of the Constitution can destroy the Basic Structure of the Constitution by expanding its amending power? (250 words) **15**
8. "The reservation of seats for women in the institutions of local self-government has had a limited impact on the patriarchal character of the Indian Political Process." Comment. (250 words) **15**
9. "The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India." Discuss. (250 words) **15**
10. Individual Parliamentarian's role as the national law maker is on a decline, which in turn, has adversely impacted the quality of debates and their outcome. Discuss. (250 words) **15**

2018

1. In the light of recent controversy regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), what are the challenges before the Election Commission of India to ensure the trustworthiness of elections in India? (150 words) **10**
2. Whether National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions? Examine. (150 words) **10**
3. Under what circumstances can the Financial Emergency be proclaimed by the President of India? What consequences follow when such a declaration remains in force? (150 words) **10**
4. Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of Estimates Committee. (150 words) **10**
5. "The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has a very vital role to play." Explain how this is reflected in the method and term of his appointment as well as the range of powers he can exercise. (150 words) **10**
6. Whether the Supreme Court Judgment (July 2018) can settle the political tussle between the Lt. Governor and elected government of Delhi? Examine. (250 words) **15**
7. How far do you agree with the view that tribunals curtail the jurisdiction of ordinary courts? In view of the above, discuss the constitutional validity and competency of the tribunals in India. (250 words) **15**
8. India and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenets on which the two political systems are based. (250 words) **15**
9. How is the Finance Commission of India constituted? What do you know about the terms of reference of the recently constituted Finance Commission? Discuss. (250 words) **15**
10. Assess the importance of the Panchayat system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what sources the Panchayats can look out for financing development projects? (250 words) **15**

2017

1. Critically examine the Supreme Court's judgement on 'National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014' with reference to the appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India. (150 words) **(10)**
2. 'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people' Discuss. (150 words) **(10)**
3. How do pressure groups influence Indian political process? Do you agree with this view that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful than formal pressure groups in recent years? (150 words) **(10)**
4. Discuss the role of Public Accounts Committee in establishing accountability of the government to the people. (150 words) **(10)**
5. Explain the salient features of the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016. Do you think it is efficacious enough 'to remove cascading effect of taxes and provide for a common national market for goods and services'? (250 words) **(15)**
6. Examine the scope of Fundamental Rights in the light of the latest judgement of the Supreme Court on Right to Privacy. (250 words) **(15)**
7. The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding a joint session of the two houses of the Parliament. Enumerate the occasions when this would normally happen and also the occasions when it cannot, with reasons thereof. (250 words) **(15)**
8. To enhance the quality of democracy in India the Election Commission of India has proposed electoral reforms in 2016. What are the suggested reforms and how far are they significant to make democracy successful? (250 words) **(15)**

2016

1. Discuss the essentials of the 69th Constitutional Amendment Act and anomalies, if any that have led to recent reported conflicts between the elected representatives and the institution of the Lieutenant Governor in the administration of Delhi. Do you think that this will give rise to a new trend in the functioning of the Indian federal politics? **(12.5)**
2. To what extent is Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, bearing marginal note "Temporary provision with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir", temporary? Discuss the future prospects of this provision in the context of Indian polity. **(12.5)**
3. "The Indian party system is passing through a phase of transaction which looks to be full of contradictions and paradoxes." Discuss. **(12.5)**
4. Exercise of CAG's powers in relation to the accounts of the Union and the States is derived from Article 149 of the Indian Constitution. Discuss whether audit of the Governments policy implementation could amount to overstepping its own (CAG) jurisdiction. **(12.5)**
5. Discuss each adjective attached to the word 'Republic' in the Preamble'. Are they defensible in the present circumstances? **(12.5)**
6. What was held in the Coelho case? In this context, can you say that judicial review is of key important amongst the basic features of the Constitution? **(12.5)**
7. Did the Government of India Act, 1935 lay down a federal constitution? Discuss. **(12.5)**

8. What is a quasi-judicial body? Explain with the help of concrete examples. (12.5)

2015

1. Discuss the possible factors that inhibit India from enacting for its citizens a uniform civil code as provided for in the Directive Principles of State Policy. (12.5)
2. The concept of cooperative federalism has been increasingly emphasized in recent years. Highlight the drawbacks in the existing structure and the extent to which cooperative federalism would answer the shortcomings. (12.5)
3. In absence of a well-educated and organized local level government system, 'Panchayats' and 'Samitis' have remained mainly political institutions and not effective instruments of governance. Critically discuss. (12.5)
4. Khap Panchayats have been in the news for functioning as extra-constitutional authorities, often delivering pronouncements amounting to human rights violations. Discuss critically the actions taken by the legislative, executive and the judiciary to set the things right in this regard. (12.5)
5. Resorting to ordinance has always raised concern on violation of the spirit of separation of powers doctrine. While noting the rationales justifying the power to promulgate ordinances, analyze whether the decisions of the Supreme Court on the issue have further facilitated resorting to this power. Should the power to promulgate ordinances be repealed? (12.5)
6. What are the major changes brought in the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 through the recent Ordinance promulgated by the President? How far will it improve India's dispute resolution mechanism? Discuss. (12.5)
7. Does the right to clean environment entail legal regulations on burning crackers during Diwali? Discuss in the light of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution and Judgment(s) of the Apex Court in this regard. (12.5)
8. "For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institutions remain independent and autonomous". Discuss in the light of experience in the recent past. (12.5)

2014

1. Starting from inventing the "basic structure doctrine", the judiciary has played a highly proactive role in ensuring that India develops into a thriving democracy. In light of the statement, evaluate the role played by judicial activism in achieving the ideals of democracy. (12.5)
2. Though the federal principle is dominant in our Constitution and that principle is one of its basic features, but it is equally true that federalism under the Indian Constitution leans in favour of a strong Centre, a feature that militates against the concept of strong federalism. Discuss. (12.5)
3. The "Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and its Members" as envisaged in Article 105 of the Constitution leave room for a large number of uncodified and un-enumerated privileges to continue. Assess the reasons for the absence of legal codification of the "parliamentary privileges." How can this problem be addressed? (12.5)
4. What do you understand by the concept "freedom of speech and expression"? Does it cover hate speech also? Why do the films in India stand on a slightly different plane from other forms of expression? Discuss. (12.5)

5. Instances of President's delay in commuting death sentences have come under public debate as denial of justice. Should there be a time limit specified for the President to accept/reject such petitions? Analyse. **(12.5)**
6. The size of the cabinet should be as big as governmental work justifies and as big as the Prime Minister can manage as a team. How far the efficacy of a government then is inversely related to the size of the cabinet? Discuss. **(12.5)**
7. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in India can be most effective when its tasks are adequately supported by other mechanisms that ensure the accountability of a government. In light of the above observation, assess the role of NHRC as an effective complement to the judiciary and other institutions in promoting and protecting human rights standards. **(12.5)**

2013

1. The role of individual MPs (Members of Parliament) has diminished over the years and as a result healthy constructive debates on policy issues are not usually witnessed. How far can this be attributed to the anti-defection law which was legislated, but with a different intention? **(10)**
2. Discuss Section 66A of IT Act, with reference to its alleged violation of Article 19 of the Constitution. **(10)**
3. Recent directives from Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas are perceived by the 'Nagas' as a threat to override the exceptional status enjoyed by the State. Discuss in light of Article 371- A of the Indian Constitution. **(10)**
4. "The Supreme Court of India keeps a check on arbitrary power of the Parliament in amending the Constitution." Discuss critically. **(10)**
5. Many State Governments further bifurcate geographical administrative areas like Districts and Taluk as for better governance. In light of the above, can it also be justified that more number of smaller States would bring in effective governance at State level? Discuss. **(10)**
6. Constitutional mechanisms to resolve the inter-state water disputes have failed to address and solve the problems. Is the failure due to structural or process inadequacy or both? Discuss. **(10)**
7. Discuss the recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission which have been a departure from the previous Commissions for strengthening the local government finances. **(10)**
8. The product diversification of financial institutions and insurance companies, resulting in overlapping of products and services strengthens the case for the merger of the two regulatory agencies, namely SEBI and IRDA. Justify. **(10)**
9. Pressure group politics is sometimes seen as the informal face of politics. With regard to the above, assess the structure and functioning of pressure groups in India. **(10)**