



GENERAL STUDIES IAS MAINS: QUESTIONS TREND ANALYSIS

1995- 2009

INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

BASIC FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. Distinguish between Parliamentary and Presidential forms of Government. Do you think that changing over to Presidential form will be a solution for better governance? Substantiate your answer. (95/40)
2. What do you understand by the term 'Rule of Law'? How does the Constitution of India seek to establish it? (96/40)
3. Bring out the aberrations of the parliamentary system of government in India. (01/30)
4. What is a Constitution? What are the main sources of the Indian Constitution? (07/30)
5. Examine corruption as a serious development challenge in Indian Polity. (09, 15)

PREAMBLE

1. The Preamble to the Constitution is aimed to embody the fundamental values and the philosophy on which the Constitution is based. Elucidate. (97/10)
2. What is the significance of a preamble to a constitution? Bring out the philosophy of the Indian polity as enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution. (04/30)

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

1. What are the constitutional rights of the citizens of India. What do you think about the demand of the NRI's for dual citizenship? (95/20)
2. What is the present status of the right to property as a Fundamental Right? (95/3)
3. Why is Article 32 considered as the cornerstone of the Constitution? (95/3)
4. The Writ of Mandamus cannot be granted against certain persons. Who are they? (96/3)
5. What are the provisions regarding the protection of Linguistic minorities in the Constitution? (97/10)
6. What is Social Justice? How can reservation of seats for women in Parliament contribute to the establishment of a socially just society in India ? (97/40)
7. What, according to the Supreme Court, constituted The Basic Features' which is upheld in case known as
(i) Keshavanand Bharati v/s. State of Kerala (1990)
(ii) Minerva Mills v/s. Union of India (1990) (97/20)
8. What specific provisions exist in the Constitution of India about child labour ?(97/3)

9. What were the circumstances leading to the promulgation of Prasar Bharti Ordinance in August 1998? (98/6)
10. State the amplitude of Article 21 of the Constitution. (98/3)
11. On what grounds does Article 15 of the Indian Constitution prohibit discrimination? Indicate the way the concept of 'Special protection' has qualified this prohibition, and contributed to social change. (99/40)
12. What is the status of the Right to Property in the Indian Constitution? (99/3)
13. Discuss the constitutional provisions regarding the rights of children. (01/15)
14. Discuss how the Constitution of India provides equal rights. (04/30)
15. What is Habeas Corpus ? (04/2)
16. What is the special facility provided to the linguistic minorities under Article 350 A? (04/10)
17. Give your views on the right to freedom of religion as enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Do they make India a secular State? (05/30)
18. What are the constitutional limitations on the free movements of Indians throughout the country? (05/15)
19. What is meant by 'double jeopardy'? (05/2)
20. What is right to life and personal liberty? How have the courts expanded its meaning in recent years? (06/30)
21. Bring out the differences between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy. Discuss some of the measures taken by the Union and State Governments for the implementation of the Directive Principles of State Policy. (07/30)
22. What is the importance of Right to Constitutional Remedies (07/2)

DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY

1. What have been the observations of the Supreme Court in a recent judgment in respect of a Uniform Civil Code? (95/6)
2. Briefly state the stages through which the present position of the Directive Principles vis-a-vis the Fundamental Rights has emerged. (98/40)
3. What is the importance of Directive Principles of State Policy? Mention which Directive Principles of State Policy have got primacy over the Fundamental Rights. (99/20)
4. What is the constitutional position of Directive Principles of State Policy? How has it been interpreted by the judiciary after the emergency in 1975-77 ? (01/30)
5. Discuss the constitutional provisions relating to the non-justifiable directives binding upon the states. (02/15)

FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

1. Write any four fundamental duties prescribed in the Constitution of India. (97/3)
2. Identify the major Fundamental Duties. (03/15)
3. Enumerate the Fundamental Duties incorporated in the Constitution after the 42nd Amendment. (08/15)

UNION EXECUTIVE

1. Explain the status of the Ministers known as 'Ministers of State'. (95//3)
2. What constitutional provisions make the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India independent? (96/3)
3. How are the President and the Vice President of India elected? What are the constitutional issues involved in their election? (97/40)
4. Explain the concept of 'Prime Ministerial Government' and accounts for its decline in recent times in India. (98/40)
5. How is the vice-President of India elected? (99//3)
6. Do you justify the Prime Minister's entry into Parliament through the Rajya Sabha ? (00/2)
7. Comment on the nature of Ordinance-making power of the President of India. What safeguards are there against possible misuse? (01/15)
8. What is the composition of the Electoral College for the election of the President of the Indian Republic? How is the value of votes cast counted? (02/30)
9. Discuss the question of death sentence and Presidential clemency. (03/30)
10. State the difference between Council of Ministers and the Cabinet. (03/2)
11. How is the Vice President of India elected? (03/2)
12. In what ways can the President of India ascertain the views of the Supreme Court on a particular bill? (05/2)
13. To what extent can the President withhold his assent to a Bill already passed by the Parliament? (06/2)
14. What are the exceptions when the President of India is not bound by the aid. and advice of the Council of Ministers ? (07/15)
15. How is the President of India elected? (07/2)
16. What is the difference between Council of Ministers and Cabinet? (07/2)
17. Distinguish between the auditing and accounting functions of the CAG of India.(08/2)

UNION PARLIAMENT

1. What is delegated legislation and which are the factors responsible for its increase? (96/20)
2. What are the Consolidated and Contingency Funds of India? How are the two operated? (96/20)
3. The Writ of Mandamus cannot be granted against certain persons. Who are they? (96/3)
4. Present your views for and against the creation of an All India Judicial Service. (97/20)
5. Examine the reasons for the non-introduction of Women's Reservation Bill in the Lok Sabha. (98/35)
6. What is meant by 'Protem Speaker'? (98//3)

7. Which of the cases regarding disqualifications for Membership of either House of Parliament are decided by the President? (98/3)
8. Differentiate between Parliamentary Secretary and Lok Sabha Secretary. (98/3)
9. Who presides over the Joint-Session of the two Houses of the Indian Parliament over a non-money bill? (99/3)
10. What is the maximum gap between two sessions of the Indian Parliament? (99/3)
11. How does Parliament control the Union Executive? How effective is its control? (00/30)
12. What is Contempt of Parliament ? (00/2)
13. Explain the Local Area Development Scheme of the Members of Parliament.(01//2)
14. When is the device of joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament not available? (01/3)
15. "The issue of a hung Parliament adversely affects the stability of Indian Government." Discuss the statement and point out how far changing over to the Presidential form of government will be a solution to this problem. (02/30)
16. What is the role of the protem speaker? (02/2)
17. What is meant by the 'lame-duck session' of the legislature? (02/2)
18. Discuss Parliamentary Control over the Executive. (03/30)
19. Identify the major obstacles in the smooth functioning of Parliamentary democracy in India. (03, 30)
20. Define Money-bill. Discuss how it is passed in the Parliament. (04/15)
21. Who and what does the Indian Parliament consist of ? (05/2)
22. On what grounds can a member be disqualified from either House of Parliament? (06/30)
23. Explain the following terms:
 - (i) Dissolution of the House
 - (ii) Prorogation of the House
 - (iii) Adjournment of the business of the House (06/2)
24. What is Consolidated Fund of India? (06/2)
25. What is pro term Speaker? (07/15)
26. Under what circumstances, Parliament may legislate on State subjects? (07/15)
27. What is Casting Vote? (07//2)
28. What is consolidated fund? (07/2)

LOK SABHA

1. Explain the scope of Article 331. (95/3)
2. What is Ethics Committee of Lok Sabha? (01/2)

RAJYA SABHA

1. Describe the non-federal features of the Council of States. (95/20)
2. In what ways is the Rajya Sabha expected to play a special role in today's changing political scenario? (99/40)
3. Explain the relevance of Rajya Sabha as a second chamber in the federal set up of Indian Parliamentary System. (03/15)

JUDICIARY

1. What is the position of the Supreme Court under the Constitution of India? Discuss its role as a guardian of the Constitution. (95/40)
2. What is meant by 'Judicial Activism'? Evaluate its role in reducing corruption in public life. (96/10)
3. Evaluate the significance of Supreme Court judgment on the Income Tax Returns of political parties. (96/6)
4. Present your views for and against the creation of an All India Judicial Service. (97/20)
5. Bring out the issues involved in the appointments and transfer of judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts in India. (98/6)
6. What constitutes the doctrine of 'basic features' as introduced into the Constitution of India by the Judiciary? (00/30)
7. Explain Public Interest Litigation. Who can file it and on what basis can it be rejected by the Court of Law? (00/10)
8. What is the position of the Supreme Court under the Constitution of India? How far does it play its role as the guardian of the Constitution? (02/30)
9. How can a judge of the Supreme Court be removed? (04/2)
10. Is it possible to distinguish between judicial review and judicial activism in India? Does the recent behavior of the Indian judiciary partake more of judicial activism? Argue with suitable examples. (05/30)
11. What are the common points between Articles 14 and 226 of the Indian Constitution? (05/2)
12. Is the High Courts' power to issue 'writs' wider than that of the Supreme Court of India? (06/15)
13. Write notes on the Lokpal bill. (07/10)
14. What is meant by 'Judicial Activism'? Evaluate its role in the context of the functioning of Indian polity. (08/30)
15. Do you think there is a need for a review of the Indian Constitution? Justify your view. (08/30)
16. Write about Supreme Court on Ragging. (08/2)

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

1. Explain the functions of the Estimates Committee. (95/20)
2. Assess the importance of the role played by the Public Accounts Committee. (99/20)
3. Examine the role of Estimates Committee. (00/15)
4. Explain the role of the Public Accounts Committee. (02/15)

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

1. What is a Cut Motion? Discuss its significance. (96/20)
2. What do Rule 184 and 193 in Parliamentary Procedure signify? (97//3)
3. What is a Privilege Motion? (98//3)
4. In case of any dispute whether a bill is a money bill or not, whose decision is final? (99/3)
5. What is vote on account? (20 words) (00/2)
6. What is a Privilege Motion? (20 words) (00/2)
7. What is Call Attention Motion? (01/3)
8. What is a point of order? When can it be raised? (03/2)
9. What is a Privilege Motion? (03/2)
10. What is meant by 'Sine die' adjournment? (03/2)
11. What is a Censure Motion? (08//2)
12. Distinguish between a starred question and an unstarred one asked in the Parliament. (08/2)
13. What is contempt of Parliament? (08/2)

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

1. Highlight the significance of the Twenty Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of India? (99/20)
2. What are the main differences between the passage of a Constitution Amendment Bill and other Legislative Bills? (01/30)
3. What is the importance of the 84th Amendment of the Indian Constitution? (02/2)
4. How is the Constitution of India amended? Do you think that the procedure for amendment makes the Constitution a play-thing in the hands of the Centre? (02/30)
5. Highlight the significance of Forty Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of India. (03/15)
6. How would you differentiate between the passage of a Constitution Amendment Bill and of an Ordinary Legislative Bill? (06/15)

EMERGENCY PROVISIONS

1. Define Financial Emergency. How many times has this been proclaimed so far? (95//2)
2. What is Article 356 in the Indian Constitution? Comment. (97/3)
3. What do you know about the following: Article 356 (98/2)
4. Discuss the meaning of "breakdown of constitutional machinery". What are its effects? (04/30)

STATES AUTONOMY/CREATION/MOVEMENT

1. Examine whether the grant of greater autonomy to the States would be in the interest of strengthening the integrity and promoting the economic development of the country, especially in the light of recent happenings in our Country. (91/40)
2. How are the new States formed in India? Why have the demands of separate states like those of Vidarbha, Telangana etc. not been considered by the Government recently? (98/20)
3. Examine the demand for greater State-autonomy and also its impact on the smooth functioning of the Indian polity. (00/30)

CIVIL SERVICES IN INDIA

1. How does the Indian Constitution seek to maintain independence of the Public Service Commission? (04/30)

INTER-STATE WATER DISPUTES

1. What role can the Union Government play in settling inter-state water disputes? (96/2)
2. What solution has been arrived at recently in the Cauvery water dispute? 98/6)
3. Under what Article of the Constitution can the Union Government play its role in settling inter-state water disputes? (02/2)
4. The Inter-State river water dispute has once again assumed centre-stage after the Punjab Assembly's Bill terminating all previous accords on river waters. Discuss. (04/30)
5. How does the Inter-State Council establish co-ordination between States? (06/15)

STATE EXECUTIVE

1. Is there any provision to impeach the Governor of a State? (99/3)
2. What were the two major considerations to have the Governor appointed and not elected? (08/2)

STATE LEGISLATURE

1. What is a bicameral legislature? Mention the states that have a bicameral legislature in our country. (95/3)
2. On what grounds the Legislative Councils are justified? How is it created or abolished in a State? (98/20)
3. Why is it said that the centre has absolute veto over State Legislature? (01/20)

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

1. Highlight the significance of the Seventy-Third Amendment to the Constitution of India? (98/20)
2. What is meant by the 'fringe areas' in the sphere of local government in India? (02/2)
3. Discuss how state governments can exercise control over panchayats. (04/15)
4. Would you say that the implementation of the Panchayati System in the last ten years has led to a real restructuring of the Indian polity? (05/30)

ELECTION / ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA / ANTI DEFECTION

1. Describe the salient features of Anti-Defection Law. (95/20)
2. The recent elections in India seem to necessitate a change in the style of governance. Explain. (96/6)
3. How are electoral constituencies delimited for Parliamentary elections in India? (96/20)
4. What is the major recommendation of Dinesh Goswami Committee? (96/3)
5. Differentiate and state the significance of general election, mid-term election and by-election. (98/20)
6. Identify the major electoral reforms which are necessary in the Indian Political System. (00/15)
7. Describe the methods of delimiting constituencies for parliamentary elections in India. (02/15)
8. How is the Election Commission of India constituted? (04//2)
9. What are the steps that the Election Commission may take if a recalcitrant State Government wants to put off Assembly Elections? (05/15)
10. What are the main determinants of voting behavior in India? (07/30)
11. What is criminalization of politics ? (07/2)
12. What is value-based politics? (07/10)
13. Are the traditional determinants of voting behavior in India changing? Examine in the context of last General Elections. (09 ,15)

PARTY SYSTEM IN INDIA / PRESSURE GROUPS

1. Examine the role of caste in Indian politics. (08/15)
2. Examine the impact of Regional Political Parties in Indian politics. (08/15)

INSTITUTIONS/COMMITTEES/ COMMISSIONS

1. Discuss the composition and functions of the National Security Council. (99/20)
2. What is a Finance Commission? Discuss the main functions of the State Finance Commission. (04/15)
3. Discuss the composition and functions of the Union Public Service Commission. (08/15)
4. Write about M. M. Punchi Commission. (08/2)

FEDERALISM / UNION-STATE RELATIONS

1. Discuss the major extra-constitutional factors influencing the working of federal polity in India. (00/15)
2. Discuss the administrative relations between the centre and the states in the light of recent controversies. (01/30)
3. What are the constitutional restrictions imposed upon the power of borrowing of the state governments? (04/2)
4. Comment on the financial relations between the Union and the States in India, Has post-1991 liberalization in any way affected it? (05/30)
5. Discuss the major extra-constitutional factors influencing the federal polity in India. (08/30)
6. Examine the demand for greater state autonomy and its impact on the smooth functioning of Indian polity. (08/15)

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Why does the Constitution of India contain different forms of Oath for the President, the Ministers, the Legislators and the members of the Judiciary? Discuss their significance. (96/40)
2. Discuss the factors responsible for the rise of regionalism in India. How does it influence the political system? (97/20)
3. Give a brief account of C.M.P. (Common Minimum Programme) of the United Front Government at the Centre. (97/3)
4. What are the significant features of Lokpal Bill recently introduced in the Lok Sabha? (98/6)
5. Point out the constitution and functions of the Central Vigilance Commission. (98/3)
6. Examine the need for the review of the Indian Constitution. (00/30)
7. What is Caretaker Government? (00/2)
8. Distinguish between Cabinet Secretariat and Prime Minister's Secretariat. Which of these is more important? (01/15)
9. Why does the Constitution of India provide different forms of Oaths for the President, the Ministers, the legislators and the members of the judiciary? Discuss their significance. (02/30)
10. What are the preconditions for the growth of Civil Society? Is Indian democracy conducive to it? (03/10)
11. What are the protections afforded to Scheduled Tribes in the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution? (05/2)
12. Discuss economic backwardness as a major challenge of Indian democracy. Can democracy and development go together smoothly? (06/30)
13. What are your views on the features and impact of Domestic Violence Act, 2005? (09, 15)
14. In the changing context of governance in the country, what should be the role of the UPSC? (09, 15)

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