

(IAS Academy by IAS Officers)**Polity:** Basics of Constitution**GS2 Syllabus Topic:**

Historical underpinnings & evolution; Features, amendments, significant provisions, basic structure; Comparison of Indian constitutional scheme with other countries'

"Parliament's power to amend the Constitution 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?(15)	2019
What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism?(10)	2019
(COMPARING Constitution) India and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenants on which the two political systems are based.	2018
Under what circumstances can the Financial Emergency be proclaimed by the President of India? What consequences follow when such a declaration remains in force?	2018
Examine the scope of Fundamental Rights in the light of the latest judgement of the Supreme Court on Right to Privacy.	2017
Discuss each adjective attached to the word 'Republic' in the preamble. Are they defensible in the present circumstances stances?	2016
Discuss the possible factors that inhibit India from enacting for its citizens a	2015

uniform civil code as provided for in the Directive Principles of State Policy.	
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.	2015
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 Judgement(s) of the Apex Court in this regard.	2015

Polity: Legislature & Elections

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

- Union and State Legislatures (structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges; issues therein);
- Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.

Individual Parliamentarian's role as the national lawmaker is on a decline, which in turn, has adversely impacted the quality of debates and their outcome. Discuss.(15)	2019
On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the Representation of People Act, 1951? Also mention the remedies available to such person against his disqualification.(15)	2019

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Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of the Estimates Committee.	2018
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?	2018
'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.	2017
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?	2017
The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding 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.	2017

Polity: Separation of Powers

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

- Separation of Powers (between different organs, dispute redressal mechanisms, institutions);
- Judiciary (structure, organisation functioning)

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From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain.(10)	2019
Do you think that the constitution of India does not accept the principle of strict separation of powers rather it is based on the principle of 'checks and balance'? Explain.(10)	2019
Whether the Supreme Court Judgement (July 2018) can settle the political tussle between the Lt. Governor and elected government of Delhi? Examine.	2018
Critically examine the Supreme Court's judgement on 'National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014' with reference to appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India.	2017
What was held in the Coelho case? In this context, can you say that judicial review is of key importance amongst the basic features of the Constitution?	2016
Resorting to ordinances 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?	2015

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Polity: Federalism & Local governance

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

- Functions & responsibilities of the Union and the States; issues and challenges of federal structure;
- Devolution of powers and finances to local levels; challenges therein.

"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.(15)	2019
How is the Finance Commission of India constituted? What do you about the terms of reference of the recently constituted Finance Commission? Discuss.	2018
Assess the importance of Panchayat system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what sources the Panchayats can look out for financing developmental projects.	2018
"The local self-government system in India has not proved to be effective instrument of governance". Critically examine the statement and give your views to improve the situation.	2017
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?	2016

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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.	2016
Did the Government of India Act, 1935 lay down a federal constitution? Discuss.	2016
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.	2015
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.	2015

Polity: Bodies

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

Appointment to various Constitutional posts; Constitutional Bodies (powers, functions and responsibilities); Statutory, Regulatory and Quasi-judicial bodies

"The Central Administration 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.(10)	2019
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"The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India." Discuss.(15)	2019
"The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has a very vital role to play." Explain how this is reflected in the method and terms of his appointment as well as the range of powers he can exercise.	2018
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.	2018
Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer.	2017
Exercise of CAC'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 Government's Policy implementation could amount to overstepping its own (CAG) jurisdiction.	2016
What is a quasi-judicial body? Explain with the help of concrete examples.	2016
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.	2015

“For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institutions remain independent and autonomous.” Discuss in the light of the experiences in recent past.	2015
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Policies for sectors, services

Welfare: Policies & Schemes

GS2 Syllabus Topic: Welfare Schemes (centre, states; performance, mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for protection of vulnerable sections);

Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process – Discuss.(15)	2019
Whether National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSCJ) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions? Examine.	2018
Multiplicity of various commissions for the vulnerable sections or the society leads to problems or overlapping jurisdiction and duplication of functions. Is it better to merge all commissions into an umbrella Human Rights Commission? Argue your case.	2018
Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss	2017

GS2 Syllabus Topic: Poverty and hunger issues

There is a growing divergence in the relationship between poverty and hunger in India. The shrinking of social expenditure by the government is forcing the poor to spend more on Non- Food essential items squeezing their food – budget.- Elucidate.(10)	2019
How far do you agree with the view that the focus on lack or availability of food as the main cause of hunger takes the attention away from ineffective human development policies in India?	2018
Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement.	2017
‘Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India remain mere show pieces until and unless they are backed by political will’. Discuss with reference to the performance of the major poverty alleviation programmes in India.	2017
Though there have been several different estimates of poverty in India, all indicate reduction in poverty levels over time. Do you agree? Critically examine with reference to urban and rural poverty indicators.	2015

Welfare: Social Services: Health, Edu, HRD

GS2 Syllabus Topic: Social Sector & Social Services (health, education, human resources – issues in development, management);

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The need for cooperation among various service sector has been an inherent component of development discourse. Partnership bridges bring the gap among the sectors. It also sets in motion a culture of 'Collaboration' and 'team spirit'. In the light of statements above examine India's Development process.(15)	2019
Despite Consistent experience of High growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive.(10)	2019
Appropriate local community-level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve 'Health for All ' in India. Explain.	2018
'To ensure effective implementation of policies addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs, the identification of beneficiary segments is to be synchronized with the anticipated outcomes' Examine the statement in the context of the WASH scheme.	2017
Examine the main provisions of the National Child Policy and throw light on the status of its implementation.	2016
"Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative." What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable?	2016

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Professor Amartya Sen has advocated important reforms in the realms of primary education and primary health care. What are your suggestions to improve their status and performance?	2016
The quality of higher education in India requires major improvements to make it internationally competitive. Do you think that the entry of foreign educational institutions would help improve the quality of higher and technical education in the country? Discuss.	2015
Public health system has limitations in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that the private sector could help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives would you suggest?	2015

Welfare: Sectoral Policies (Economy related)

GS2 Syllabus Topic: Government Policies & Interventions for development of various sectors (issues in their design, implementation)

'In the context of neo-liberal paradigm of development planning, multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost effective and remove many implementation blockages.'-Discuss.(15)	2019
Implementation of information and Communication Technology (ICT) based Projects / Programmes usually suffers in terms of certain vital factors. Identify these factors, and suggest measures for their effective implementation.(10)	2019

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What are the methods used by the Farmers organizations to influence the policy-makers in India and how effective are these methods? (10)	2019
"Policy contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate 'protection and prevention of degradation' to environment." " Comment with relevant illustration.	2018
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 common national market for goods and services'?	2017

Governance & groups

Governance: Accountability & E-Gov

1. **GS2 Syllabus Topic:** Important aspects of governance; Transparency and accountability (institutional and other measures); Citizens Charter;
2. **GS2 Syllabus Topic:** E-Governance (applications, models, successes, limitations, potential)

E-Governance is not only about utilization of the power of new technology, but also much about critical importance of the 'use value' of information Explain.	2018
Citizens' Charter is an ideal instrument of organizational transparency and accountability, but. it has its own limitations. Identify the limitations and suggest measures for greater effectiveness or the Citizens Charter.	2018
Discuss the role of Public Accounts Committee in establishing accountability of the	2017

government to the people.	
“Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people’s participation in the governance system are inter-dependent.” Discuss their relationship with each other in context of India.	2016
In the integrity index of Transparency International, India stands very low. Discuss briefly the legal, political, economic, social and cultural factors that have caused the decline of public morality in India.	2016
In the light of the Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in corporate governance to ensure transparency, accountability.	2015
“If amendment bill to the Whistleblowers Act, 2011 tabled in the Parliament is passed, there may be no one left to protect.” Critically evaluate.	2015

Groups: Civil Services, NGO, SHG, Pressure Groups

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

1. Development Processes & Development industry (role of NGOs, SHGs, groups & associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders)
2. Pressure Groups & Formal, Informal associations (and their role in the polity)
3. Role of Civil Services in a democracy.

	Nothing asked from this topic.	2018
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Civil Services	Initially Civil Services in India were designed to achieve the goals of neutrality and effectiveness, which seems to be lacking in the present context. Do you agree with the view that drastic reforms are required in Civil Services. Comment	2017
NGO-SHG	'The emergence of Self Help Groups(SHG) in contemporary times points to the slow but steady withdrawal of the state from developmental activities'. Examine the role of the SHGs in developmental activities and the measures taken by the Government of India to promote the SHGs.	2017
Pressure Group	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?	2017
NGO-SHG	Examine critically the recent changes in the rules governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976.	2015
NGO-SHG	The Self-Help Group (SHG) Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP), which is India's own innovation, has proved to be one of the most effective poverty alleviation and women empowerment programmes. Elucidate.	2015
NGO-SHG	How can the role of NGOs be strengthened in India for development works relating to protection of the environment? Discuss throwing light on the major constraints.	2015

IR Diplomacy

IR/Diplomacy: Neighbors

GS2 Syllabus Topic: India and its Neighbourhood (relations)

'China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia', In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbor.	2017
"Increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of several member-states by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)." Explain with suitable examples.	2016
Project 'Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of the Indian Government to improve relationship with its neighbors. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss.	2015
Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India-Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchanges could help generate goodwill between the two countries? Discuss with suitable examples.	2015

IR/Diplomacy: Not-Neighbors but affecting interests

GS2 Syllabus Topic: Effect of Policies & Politics of Developed and Developing countries on India (India's interests, diaspora)

In what ways would the ongoing US-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to this situation?	2018
'India's relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back.' Discuss.	2018
The question of India's Energy Security constitutes the most important part of India's economic progress. Analyze India's energy policy cooperation with West Asian Countries.	2017
Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in South-East Asian countries' economy and society. Appraise the role of Indian Diaspora in South- East Asia in this context	2017
Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India's Look East Policy in the context of the post-Cold War international scenario.	2016
Increasing interest of India in Africa has its pros and cons. Critically examine.	2015

IR/Diplomacy:

Institutions, Groupings, Agreements

GS2 Syllabus Topic:

Important International institutions, agencies, for a (structure, mandate); Bilateral, Regional, Global groupings & Agreements (involving and/or affecting India)

“What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India’s National self- esteem and ambitions” Explain with suitable examples.(15)	2019
‘The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole.’ Comment.(10)	2019
‘Too little cash, too much politics, leaves UNESCO fighting for life.’ Discuss the statement in the light of US’ withdrawal and its accusation of the cultural body as being ‘anti-Israel bias’.(10)	2019
“The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised Nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order” Elaborate(15)	2019
A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India’s joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018.	2018
What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of ‘Trade War’, especially keeping in mind the interest of India?	2018

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What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it.	2017
"The broader aims and objectives of WTO are to manage and promote international trade in the era of globalization. But the Doha round of negotiations seem doomed due to differences between the developed and the developing countries." Discuss in the Indian perspective.	2016
What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of the UNESCO? What is India's position on these?	2016
Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UN Security Council.	2015