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INDIAN POLITY

CHAPTER 2

Preamble and Parts of the Constitution

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CHAPTER 2

Preamble and Parts of the Constitution

Structure of the Indian Constitution

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Indian Constitution at a Glance
- Preamble
- Key Words in the Preamble
- Amendment of the Preamble
- Parts and Articles of the Constitution

Indian Constitution at a Glance

- Originally, the Indian Constitution had **22 parts**, **395 articles** and **8 schedules**, along with a **Preamble**.
- The Preamble was **enacted last**, i.e., it was included after the rest of the Constitution was completed.
- **Parts** are like the chapters of a book, **articles** are like definitions within a chapter, and **schedules** are like lists.
- Each article explains a specific provision of the Constitution.

Preamble

- The Indian Constitution **starts with a Preamble**.
- India adopted the concept of the Preamble from the **USA constitution**.
- The **USA was the first nation** to use a Preamble in its constitution.
- It was added to the Constitution **after the whole Constitution was completed**.
- The Preamble is **not enforceable in a court of law**.

THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA — PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a **SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC** and to secure to all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;
LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all
FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

Key Words in the Preamble

Key word	Meaning
Sovereign	India is neither a dependency nor a dominion of any other nation, but an independent state. There is no authority above it.
Socialist	India is a social welfare state whose main priority is the welfare of its people.
Secular	All religions in the country (irrespective of their strength) have the same status and support from the state.
Democratic	Supreme power is possessed by the people.
Republic	India has an elected head, the **President**. In England, the head of state is a monarch, so England is not a republic.
Justice (social, economic, political)	Taken from the **Russian Revolution**.
Liberty, Equality, Fraternity	Taken from the **French Revolution**.

Amendment of the Preamble

- **Amendment** is the procedure by which changes or additions are made to the Constitution. This procedure is defined in the Constitution itself.

- Every amendment has its own number and year, e.g., the **42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976** or the **7th Constitutional Amendment, 1956**.
- **Only the Parliament** of India has the power to amend the Constitution.
- The Preamble has been amended **only once**, in **1976**, by the **42nd Constitutional Amendment Act**.
- It added three new words: **Socialist**, **Secular** and **Integrity**.

EXAM TIP

"Socialist", "Secular" and "Integrity" were **not** in the original Preamble. All three were added by the **42nd Amendment (1976)** — a very common exam question.

Parts and Articles of the Constitution

Part	Subject	Articles
Part I	Union and its Territory	1–4
Part II	Citizenship	5–11
Part III	Fundamental Rights	12–35
Part IV	Directive Principles of State Policy	36–51
Part IV A	Fundamental Duties	51A
Part V	The Union	52–151
Part VI	The States	152–237
Part VII	Repealed by the 7th Amendment Act, 1956	–
Part VIII	The Union Territories	239–242
Part IX	The Panchayats	243–243O
Part IX A	The Municipalities	243P–243ZG
Part IX B	Co-operative Societies	243ZH–243ZT
Part X	Scheduled and Tribal Areas	244–244A
Part XI	Relations between the Union and the States	245–263
Part XII	Finance, Property, Contracts and Suits	264–300A
Part XIII	Trade, Commerce and Intercourse within the territory of India	301–307
Part XIV	Services under the Union and the States	308–323

Part	Subject	Articles
Part XIV A	Tribunals	323A–323B
Part XV	Elections	324–329A
Part XVI	Special Provisions relating to certain classes	330–342
Part XVII	Official Languages	343–351
Part XVIII	Emergency Provisions	352–360
Part XIX	Miscellaneous	361–367
Part XX	Amendment of the Constitution	368
Part XXI	Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions	369–392
Part XXII	Short title, Commencement, Authoritative Text in Hindi and Repeals	393–395

REMEMBER

Learn the **names of all parts** and the **range of articles** in each part carefully. This table is very important from the exam point of view.

QUICK REVISION

1. Original Constitution: **22 parts, 395 articles, 8 schedules** and a Preamble.
2. The Preamble was enacted **last**; its idea came from the **USA**.
3. The Preamble is **not enforceable** in a court of law.
4. Justice (social, economic, political) — from the **Russian Revolution**.
5. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity — from the **French Revolution**.
6. "Republic" means India has an **elected head** (the President).
7. Only **Parliament** can amend the Constitution.
8. Preamble amended **only once** — **42nd Amendment, 1976** — added **Socialist, Secular, Integrity**.
9. Part III = Fundamental Rights (12–35); Part IV = DPSP (36–51); Part IV A = Fundamental Duties (51A).
10. Part XX (Article 368) deals with the amendment of the Constitution.