Constitution Assembly and Framing of the Constitution

The Constitution of India was drafted by a Constituent Assembly (set up under the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946) between the years 1946 and 1949. Dr. Rajendra Prasad served as the President of this body.

299 members (including 15 women) of the Assembly took less than three years (1946-1949) to draft the Constitution.

The Constituent Assembly members met over 11 sessions between December 1946 and November 1949. On 29 August 1947 the Constituent Assembly set up a Drafting Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to prepare a draft Constitution.

The Constitution of India was adopted on 26 November 1949. It came into effect on 26 January 1950. On that day the assembly ceased to exist transforming itself into the provisional Parliament of India until a new Parliament was constituted in 1952. While deliberating upon the draft Constitution, the Assembly moved, discussed, and disposed of 2473 amendments out of a total of 7635 amendments tabled.

Out of the 299 members, 284 members actually signed the Constitution.

The Constituent Assembly appointed a total of 13 committees to deal with different tasks of constitution-making. Out of these, eight were major committees and the others were minor committees.

Names of 8 major committees of the Constituent Assembly

- Drafting Committee
- Union Power Committee
- Union Constitution Committee
- Provincial Constitution Committee
- Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minority and Tribal and Excluded Areas
- Rules of Procedure Committee
- States Committee
- Steering Committee

The Constituent Assembly adopted the National Flag on 22 July 1947 & the National Anthem and National Song on 24 January 1950.

Sh. Prem Behari Narain Raizada, a maestro of calligraphic art, single-handedly handwrote the Constitution, it took him 6 months to complete the task and charged no money for the job.

Constituent Assembly & its Prominent Members

Members of the Constituent Assembly were chosen through indirect elections by the Provincial Legislative Assemblies, as per recommendation of the Cabinet Mission. The Assembly had 299 members, with 213 representing the provinces and 76 representing states.

Some of the eminent members of the Assembly included:

- Dr. Rajendra Prasad
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- Jawaharlal Nehru
- B.R. Ambedkar
- Gopaldas Daulatram Panalal
- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
- Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan
- Rajkumar Amritlal Kesar
- K.B. Nair
- C.S. Panagia
- Sarat Chandra Bose
- Asaf Ali
- S.P. Bajpai
- Gopinath Bose
- B.B. Dave
- T.R. Gadkari
- Gopal Krishna Gandhi
- Shri P.C. Ghose
- Jawaharlal Nehru
- Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
- K.M. Munshi
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
- Rajendra Prasad
- Madhav Kabra
- Anjali Bhagwan Singh
- B. R. Ambedkar
- Hansraj Ahir
- V.R. Krishna Menon
- J.B. Kripalani
- Ramakrishna Hegde
- K. Rajagopalam
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- C. Rajagopalachari
- Smt. Kasturba Gandhi
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- Shri Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan
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Pledge by the Member of Constituent Assembly

I solemnly swear, that I shall, to the best of my ability, perform the duties of my office, and will do no act to prejudice the Constitution.

(1) Members who are not present on their own account, or are taken as present with such word or clause in the Preamble may preclude the fact from their vote at any session of the Assembly.

Constitution Day & Citizens’ Duties
26th November 2019 - 26th November 2020

The Constitution of India is the foundational law which lays the basic political structure of our country. It establishes a Parliamentary Democracy and a Republic with a federal structure.

The Constitution of India embodies the vision and views of our founding fathers. It represents their thinking - social, political and economic ethos and faith and will.

The Constitution defines the main organs of the Republic of India – the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary – and defines their power and demarcates their responsibilities.

The key features of the Indian Constitution:
- Parliamentary System of Government
- Federal Structure
- Secular State
- Fundamental Rights and Duties
- Directive Principles of State Policy
- Citizenship
- Adult suffrage

Indian Constitution is the lengthiest and the most detailed Constitution in the world, taking inspiration from constitutions of United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Russia, etc.

The Constitution contains 395 Articles, 22 Parts and 12 Schedules.

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Citizens’ & Fundamental Duties
An Essential Feature of Our Constitution

"Right is Duty well performed."
Mahatama Gandhi

The Government of India is reaching out to all Indian citizens to bring greater awareness about our Citizens’ and Fundamental Duties (24 November 2019 to 26 November 2020). Join at #itsmyduty

Key Objectives
- To reiterate to people of India that they are the true custodians of the Constitution and the values and principles contained therein.
- To remind all the citizens about their duties towards fellow citizens, society and the nation.
- To encourage citizens to take pride in the spirit of Naxalism.
- To help in promotion of a sense of discipline and commitment towards the nation and mobilise the energy of citizens in nation-building.

Be Aware of Citizens’ Duties
- Sign the online pledge on 26 November 2019 and get an instant certificate on MyGov.in
- Join to spread awareness amongst school children and college students.
- Download outreach material on Citizens’ & Fundamental Duties available at www.doj.gov.in

"I urge you to take at least one resolution and think about your duties and your obligations towards the nation. Walking on the path of duty, the strength of 130 crore efforts and 130 crore resolutions can do as much for the country."
Narendra Modi
Prime Minister
On Swachh Bharat Diwas 2019

Follow us on @DPI_India and @MyGov
#itsmyduty
See full text of Constitution of India and Fundamental Duties at http://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india

The Eleven Duties enshrined in the Constitution
(Part IV-A, Article 51A)

- Uphold Sovereignty, Unity and Integrity of India
- Promote Harmony and Brotherhood
- Protect and Improve Natural Environment
- Safeguard Public Property and Abjure Violence
- Provide Opportunities for Education
- Abide by the Constitution, National Flag and Anthem
- Cherish the ideals of Freedom Struggle
- Defend the Country and render National Service
- Preserve Rich Heritage of Composite Culture
- Develop Scientific Temper, Humanism etc.
- Strive for Excellence

The key idea behind incorporation of the 11 fundamental duties in our Constitution was to emphasize the obligation of citizens in exchange for the comprehensive rights enjoyed by them.

Fundamental duties focus on key values of Respect, Pride, Tolerance, Peace, Growth and Harmony.

Introduced into the Constitution in 1976 by the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act. Fundamental Duties prescribe the fundamental, moral, and obligatory duties of citizens to the nation.

A committee constituted while recommending insertion of Fundamental Duties opined that steps needed to be taken to ensure that citizens did not overlook their duties while exercising their Fundamental Rights.

The 11th Fundamental Duty regarding education opportunities for children was added to the Constitution by the 86th Amendment Act, 2002.

Inspiration on Fundamental Duties was derived from the Constitutions of USSR, Japan and China.

Our Fundamental Duties are a codification of duties integral to promoting the Indian way of life. They promote a sense of discipline and commitment towards the society.

Fundamental duties are intended to serve as a constant reminder to every citizen that while the Constitution specifically conferred on them certain Fundamental Rights, it also requires citizens to observe certain basic norms of democratic conduct and democratic behaviour because rights and duties are co-relative.

Democracy is not merely a form of Government... It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence for our fellow men.
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Every Indian should now forget that he is a Rajput, a Sikh or a Jat. He must remember that he is an Indian and he has every right in his country but with certain duties.
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

Citizens’ and Fundamental Duties can help us in realising our national goals only through active participation.

In October 1999, a committee headed by Justice Verma submitted a report on ‘Suggestions to teach Fundamental Duties to the Citizens of the Country.’