

Revision Notes for Class 8 Social Science (Social and Political Life)

Civics Chapter 1 – The Indian Constitution

Why Does a Country Need a Constitution?

1. INC in 1934 i.e Indian National Congress raised a demand for Constituent Assembly which gained momentum during the Second World War and thus formed in December 1946 and then this assembly was created from 1946 to 1949, the Constitution of India, which was adopted finally on Jan 26, 1950.
2. Unity was there amongst all the members and all the provisions and articles and important points were discussed first to reach the final conclusion.
3. All democracies of the world are likely to have a Constitution, but not all countries that have a Constitution are necessarily a democracy.
4. A Constitution serves as a set of rules and regulations that every citizen of a country should agree upon, the basis of how they wish to be governed.
5. The Constitution of a country states the fundamental nature of its society.
6. In a democratic country or society, the Constitution lays down the rules and regulations that safeguard us against the political leaders' abuse of authority and power.
7. The constitution makes sure that no dominant group uses its power against minority communities or its less powerful citizens.
8. The constitution protects us against harmful decisions that can hurt the broader principles the country believes in.
9. It reflects our political system.
10. In a democracy, the leaders or representatives are chosen by the citizens who exercise their powers to run the government on their behalf.
11. No law of the country can change the basic structure of the Constitution.

12. Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as well as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Father of the Constitution) were also part of the constitution-making body i.e Constituent Assembly.

The Indian Constitution: Key Features

Civics in Social Science Class 8 Chapter 1 presents an overview of our country's constitution. Every culture has its own set of norms that set it apart from the rest. Certain special norms are required in a big group or culture, such as a country. The rules keep the country's discipline. These constitutive norms are available in writing form in modern nations. Our country's constitution is written in this style. India has a constitution with several fundamental aspects that must be obeyed. The major aspects of the Indian constitution Class 8 are briefly addressed below.

1. Federalism

- It infers the presence of more than one level of government i.e. in the centre and the states in a country.
- In India, we have a central government, state-level governments, and Panchayati Raj in every village.
- The three-tier division helps people in enjoying the autonomy in exercising powers on various issues.
- The Constitution provides a list of subjects for all the tiers that specify the law-making authority of each tier.
- The Constitution specifies the source of revenue for each tier of the government.
- The Constitution guides and provides authority to function to the states.
- Indian citizens are governed by the laws and regulations made by these levels of government.

2. Parliamentary Form of Government

- It refers to the presence of Parliament in the country which makes law and according to which the Prime Minister is considered as the Head of the Government.
- The Constitution of India guarantees Universal Adult Suffrage to all its citizens with respect to their roles in electing their representatives.
- Besides this, every citizen also has the right to contest elections.

3. Separation of Powers

There are three main organs of the government:

- **Legislature:** It refers to the elected representatives by the people. The legislature is entitled to make laws.
- **Executive:** The executive is that branch of government which exercises its authority in the implementation of the laws enacted by the legislature.
- **Judiciary:** The judiciary is responsible for keeping a check on the equitable and proper implementation of the laws. The Supreme Court (highest Judicial body) of India is considered as the final authority to interpret the provisions of the Constitution.

4. Fundamental Rights

Fundamental Rights are basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution to its people. This protects the people from the misuse of the powers of the state. The Constitution of India lists six fundamental rights for its citizens, namely:

1. Right to Equality
2. Right to Freedom
3. Right against Exploitation

4. Right to Freedom of Religion
5. Cultural and Educational Rights
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies

5. Secularism

A state is called secular when it doesn't promote any one religion as the official state religion. For example, India does not have any official state religion. People from different castes and religions reside together here.