

Preamble to the Constitution of India

Objectives, Features and Importance

The **Preamble of the Indian Constitution** is more than just an introduction; it is the essence of India's constitutional philosophy. It outlines the **values of sovereignty, socialism, secularism, democracy, and republicanism** while ensuring **justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity**. For competitive exams like **SSC, Railways, Banking, UPSC, and State PSCs**, the Preamble is a crucial topic as questions frequently test its **keywords, amendments, and related Supreme Court cases**.

Preamble to the Constitution of India

The Preamble to the Indian Constitution is the introductory statement that lays down the philosophy, guiding principles, and objectives of the Constitution. It reflects the vision of the framers and serves as a roadmap for governance. Adopted on **26th November 1949** and enforced on **26th January 1950**, the Preamble acts as the soul of the Constitution and emphasizes justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity for the people of India.

Source of the Preamble

The Indian Preamble is based on the **Objectives Resolution** moved by **Jawaharlal Nehru** in 1946 in the Constituent Assembly. This resolution provided the framework for the Indian Constitution, focusing on sovereignty, democracy, equality, and fraternity. Many ideals in the Preamble, such as liberty and fraternity, were also inspired by the **French Revolution**, while democratic values drew influence from the **American Constitution**.

Objectives of the Preamble

The Preamble mentions four key objectives of the Constitution: **Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity**. Justice ensures fairness in social, economic, and political spheres. Liberty guarantees freedom of thought, expression, faith, and worship. Equality provides equal status and opportunities to all, while fraternity promotes national unity, integrity, and the dignity of the individual. These objectives form the **foundation of Indian democracy**.

Features of the Preamble

The Preamble reflects several essential features of the Indian Constitution:

1. **It is derived from the will of the people.**
2. **It states the nature of the Indian state:** Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic.
3. **It specifies the objectives of the Constitution:** Justice, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.
4. **It serves as a guiding principle** for governance and judicial interpretation.

Thus, the Preamble serves as both an **identity card of the Constitution** and the **blueprint of India's democratic ideals**.

Important Terms in the Preamble

The Preamble contains key terms that define the character of the Indian state:

- **Sovereign:** India is independent in both internal and external matters.
- **Socialist:** Focuses on reducing inequality and ensuring social justice (added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976).
- **Secular:** India has no official religion and guarantees freedom of belief (added by 42nd Amendment, 1976).
- **Democratic:** Government is elected by the people and is responsible to them.
- **Republic:** The head of state is elected, not hereditary.

Amendments to the Preamble

The **42nd Amendment Act of 1976** is the only amendment that changed the Preamble. It added three words: **“Socialist”, “Secular”, and “Integrity”**. With this amendment, the Preamble came to emphasize social and economic justice, religious equality, and national unity. Despite this change, the basic structure of the Preamble remains intact, and it continues to serve as the guiding vision of the Constitution.

Importance of the Preamble

The Preamble is considered the **philosophical foundation** of the Constitution. Though it is **not legally enforceable**, it plays a vital role in guiding courts while interpreting constitutional provisions. It reflects the **will of the people** and establishes that sovereignty lies with the citizens of India. The Supreme Court has often used the Preamble as a **tool for judicial interpretation** in landmark cases like *Kesavananda Bharati* (1973).

Practice MCQs on Preamble to the Constitution of India

Q1. The Preamble to the Indian Constitution was adopted on:

- a) 15th August 1947
- b) 26th November 1949

c) 26th January 1950

d) 26th January 1930

Answer: b) 26th November 1949

Q2. Which words were added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976?

a) Socialist, Secular, Integrity

b) Sovereign, Republic, Fraternity

c) Democratic, Republic, Justice

d) None of the above

Answer: a) Socialist, Secular, Integrity

Q3. The term “We, the People of India” in the Preamble signifies:

a) Sovereignty of Parliament

b) Sovereignty of the People

c) Authority of President

d) Supremacy of Judiciary

Answer: b) Sovereignty of the People

Q5. The Preamble is based on:

a) Indian Independence Act, 1947

b) Objectives Resolution

c) Government of India Act, 1935

d) Nehru Report, 1928

Answer: b) Objectives Resolution

Q5. In which case was the Preamble declared as part of the Constitution?

a) Berubari Case (1960)

b) Golaknath Case (1967)

c) Kesavananda Bharati Case (1973)

d) Indira Gandhi vs Raj Narain (1975)

Answer: c) Kesavananda Bharati Case (1973)

Q6. The Preamble of India enshrines the ideals of:

a) French Revolution

b) Russian Revolution

c) American Revolution

d) Industrial Revolution

Answer: a) French Revolution

Q7. Who moved the Objectives Resolution in the Constituent Assembly?

a) B.R. Ambedkar

b) Jawaharlal Nehru

c) Rajendra Prasad

d) Sardar Patel

Answer: b) Jawaharlal Nehru

Q8. Which one of the following is not mentioned in the Preamble?

a) Justice

b) Equality

c) Education

d) Fraternity

Answer: c) Education

Q9. How many times has the Preamble been amended?

a) Never

b) Once

c) Twice

d) Thrice

Answer: b) Once (42nd Amendment, 1976)

Q10. The head of state being elected, not hereditary, is signified by the word:

a) Sovereign

b) Secular

c) Republic

d) Democratic

Answer: c) Republic