

# Salient Features of The Constitution of India

Presentation By

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# SALIENT FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

The Constitution of India expresses the vision of India as a democratic nation. While doing so, it also reflects core constitutional values. Constitutional values mentioned in the Preamble permeate all the salient features of Indian Constitution

1. **Longest written Constitution :** The Constitution of India is the longest written constitution. It originally contained a Preamble, 395 Articles in 22 Parts, 12 Schedules and 5 Appendices.

## **2. A unique blend of rigidity and flexibility :**

The Constitution lays down special procedure for constitutional amendments. Based on the ease of amendment procedure, Constitutions can be flexible or rigid. In the unwritten Constitution like the British Constitution, amendments are made through ordinary law-making procedure.

**3. Fundamental Rights :** The most visible difference between the Indian Constitution and the Government of India Act, 1935 under British rule is the inclusion of a set of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution.

**4. Fundamental Duties :** The Constitution (42nd Amendment Act, 1976) has introduced a Code of ten “Fundamental Duties” for Citizens. In 2002, one more duty was added to it.

**5. Directive Principles of State Policy :** It is a novel feature of the Constitution. The Directive Principles of State Policy contained in Part IV are in the form of positive directions to the State which the State shall strive to promote welfare of the people.

**6. An independent Judiciary :** The democratic freedoms granted by the Constitution would have been useless in the absence of independent machinery to safeguard them. The Judiciary is the only resort for a citizen to enforce the constitutional provisions and secure the rights.

**7. Integrated Judicial system :** Unlike the judicial systems of federal countries like the United States of America, the Indian Constitution has established an integrated judicial system. Although the Supreme Court is at the national level, High Courts at the state level and subordinate courts at the district and lower level, there is a single hierarchy of Courts.

**8. Single citizenship :** Though the Constitution envisaged a dual polity i.e., Centre and States, it provides for a single citizenship for the whole of India. It means that every Indian is a citizen of India, irrespective of the place of his/her residence or birth anywhere in the country.

**9. Universal adult franchise :** Under the Indian Constitution every adult above 18 years of age has been given the right to elect representatives for the legislatures without any discrimination or prescribing any qualification based either on religion, race, caste, sex, descent, and place of birth or residence or even property, education or the like.

**10. Federal structure of government :** A federal state is a state where a country is divided into smaller regions and the government is functioning at two levels.

**11. Emergency provisions :** The most remarkable feature of the Indian Constitution is that being a federal Constitution it acquires unitary character during the time of emergency.

**12. Parliamentary form of government :** After independence, Constitution makers had choices of Presidential system or Parliamentary system of government.

**13. Systems of local self-government :** This can be said to be the third most significant feature in the governance structure of India, after Federal structure and Parliamentary form of government.

**14. Secularism :** In no other country of the world so many religions co-exist as in India. In view of such diversity the Constitution guarantees complete freedom of religion to all. The citizens of our country are free to follow any religion and they enjoy equal rights without any distinction of caste, creed, religion or sex. Even though the word “secular” has been included in the Preamble by 42nd Amendment, the secular feature of the Indian State was already ensured in various provisions of the Constitution.

## **15. Special attention to Scheduled Areas and autonomy provisions to some States :**

The Fifth and Sixth Schedules to the Constitution give special attention to needs of the States in North-eastern as well as Central parts of India. The people residing in these areas have distinct and beautiful culture which needs to be protected and promoted. Therefore provisions have been made for providing them autonomy in the management of their local regions.

## **16. Affirmative action :**

The Indian Constitution has some special provisions for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in public appointments and reservation of seats in educational institutions and the Union and State legislatures. These are meant to ensure the development and welfare of the weaker sections of society and bring them back to the Indian mainstream of life.

**Thank You**