**FYUGP 3RD SEMESTER**

**SUB- POLITICAL SCIENCE (MAJOR)**

**PAPER TITLE- INDIAN GOVT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT- II**

**FEATURES OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution of India, which came into effect on **26 January 1950**, is the **supreme law of the land**. It lays down the framework for political principles, the structure of government, and the rights and duties of citizens. Drafted by the **Constituent Assembly** under the leadership of **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, it is the longest written constitution in the world and is known for blending the best elements of various constitutions with India’s own traditions.

**1. Longest Written Constitution**

The Indian Constitution originally had **395 Articles, 22 Parts, and 8 Schedules**. It is detailed because it covers both the **Union and State structures**, fundamental rights, directive principles, and administrative provisions in great depth.

**2. Drawn from Various Sources**

Inspired by the constitutions of countries like the **UK** (parliamentary system, rule of law), **USA** (fundamental rights, judicial review), **Ireland** (Directive Principles), **Canada** (federal system with a strong centre), **Australia** (concurrent list, trade provisions), and others. This makes it a blend of global best practices adapted to Indian needs.

**3. Federal System with Unitary Bias**

India has a **federal structure** (division of powers between Union and States), but the centre has more power in matters of national importance. The **Union List** contains more subjects than the State List. In times of emergency, the system becomes more unitary as powers concentrate in the Centre.

**4. Parliamentary Form of Government**

India follows the **Westminster model** (like the UK). The **President** is the constitutional head of the state, but the **real executive power lies with the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister**. The government is responsible to the **Lok Sabha** (lower house).

**5. Single Citizenship**

Unlike countries such as the USA, where citizens have both national and state citizenship, India provides only **single citizenship** to promote unity and equality.

**6. Secular State**

India has no official religion. All religions are treated equally, and citizens have the **freedom of religion**. The state remains neutral in matters of faith.

**7. Fundamental Rights**

Part III of the Constitution guarantees six rights:

* 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

These are enforceable by courts and protect individuals from state abuse.

**8. Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs)**

Part IV of the Constitution contains guidelines for the state to ensure social and economic welfare (e.g., free education, equal pay for equal work). DPSPs are **non-justiciable** (cannot be enforced in court) but are fundamental in governance.

**9. Fundamental Duties**

Added by the **42nd Amendment (1976)** under Article 51A. These are moral obligations for citizens, like respecting the Constitution, protecting the environment, and promoting harmony.

**10. Independent Judiciary**

The judiciary is free from the control of the executive and legislature. The **Supreme Court** is the guardian of the Constitution and has powers like **judicial review** to protect rights and ensure constitutional supremacy.

**11. Universal Adult Franchise**

Every citizen aged **18 years or above** has the right to vote, regardless of religion, caste, gender, or economic status. This ensures political equality.

**12. Emergency Provisions**

The Constitution provides for three types of emergencies:

* 1. **National Emergency** (Article 352) – due to war, external aggression, or armed rebellion.
  2. **President’s Rule** (Article 356) – when a state government fails to function.
  3. **Financial Emergency** (Article 360) – when India’s financial stability is threatened.

During emergencies, central powers increase greatly.

**14. Blend of Rigidity and Flexibility**

Some provisions (like Fundamental Rights) require a **special majority** in Parliament to amend, while others can be changed by a **simple majority**. This balance allows the Constitution to adapt to changing times without losing stability.

**16. Bicameral Legislature**

At the Centre, the Parliament has **two houses**: Lok Sabha (House of the People) and Rajya Sabha (Council of States). This allows for representation of both the people and the states.

**18. Panchayati Raj and Local Self-Government**

Added by the **73rd and 74th Amendments** (1992). Ensures grassroots democracy through village panchayats, municipalities, and urban local bodies.

**Conclusion**

The Indian Constitution is remarkable for its **comprehensiveness, adaptability, and vision**. It combines the best elements of different systems while reflecting India’s unique needs. Its features — from fundamental rights to federalism, from parliamentary democracy to judicial independence — make it a **living document** that has successfully guided the country for over seven decades.

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