
Chapter 2

Constitutional Design

❖ Constitution

- A constitution is a written document containing a set of fundamental rules on the basis of which the government functions.
- It determines the working of the Centre and the States and their relationship with each other as well as with the citizens.

❖ Need of a Constitution

- Determines the composition of the government and powers of various organs of the government.
- Formulate guidelines that oversee decision-making within different government institutions and organisations.
- Lays down the broad principles on which the foundation of the country is based.
- It sets the rules according to which a country is governed.
- It lays down the rules for protecting the interests of the minorities and preventing them from domination by the majority.
- It stipulates the rules for preventing the misuse of power by political leaders.
- It ensures certain rights to the citizens and protects their freedom.

❖ Constituent Assembly

An assembly of the elected delegates entrusted with the task of drafting the Constitution of India. **Dr. Rajendra Prasad** was the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly.

- Later, when the country was divided into India and Pakistan, the Constituent Assembly also got divided.
- At the beginning, the assembly decided on some basic principles. Then a **Drafting Committee** was formed for giving the final shape to the Constitution. Its chairman was **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**.

❖ Preamble to Our Constitution

- It contains the philosophy of our constitution. It lays importance on the following principles:
 - **Justice**, social, economic and political.
 - **Liberty** of thoughts, expression, belief, faith and worship.
 - **Equality** of status and of opportunity.

- **Fraternity** assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation.

❖ **Importance of Preamble**

- Pronounces India to be a socialist, secular, sovereign and democratic republic.
- Visualizes social, economic and political justice for all the citizens.
- Grants every individual the freedom of expression, thought, faith, belief, worship, etc.
- It provides for the equality of opportunity to all the citizens and protects every individual's dignity.
- Encourages a sense of brotherhood among citizens.
- Unity of the nation is the ultimate goal.

❖ **Secularism and India as a Secular State**

- Secularism means equality of all religions and treating each religion with due respect.
- India is a secular state because the State has no religion of its own and treats all religions equally.
- People are free to practice any religion of their choice.
- Everybody is treated equally irrespective of his caste, colour, creed, social and economic background, etc.