

75 Years of the Indian Constitution: A Journey of Democracies and Rights

Legal and Governance



Introduction:

- The Indian Constitution, adopted on **26th November 1949** and enforced on **26th January 1950**, is the foundation of the world's largest democracy.
- It has evolved over **75 years**, ensuring democracy, governance and protection of fundamental rights.
- This journey highlights **legal advancements, democratic growth, and challenges in governance**.

1. The Making of the Indian Constitution

- Drafting process led by **Dr B.R. Ambedkar**, with input from the **Constituent Assembly**.
- Influences from various global constitutions. (**UK, USA, Ireland, Canada**).
- Key features: **Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic** with a focus on **justice, liberty, equality and fraternity**.

2. Evolution of democracy in India

- **First General election (1951-1952):** India's a transition into a full-fledged democracy.
- Growth of **multi-party democracy** and electoral reform.
- Role of the **Election Commission of India** in ensuring free and fair elections.
- Impact of **constitutional amendments** on democratic governments.

3. Protection and Expansion of Rights

- **Fundamental Rights (Part III of the Constitution):** Protection of individual freedom.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):** Social justice and economic welfare.
- Expansion of rights through **judicial interpretation**, including:
 - ♦ **Right to Education (Article 21A, 2002)**
 - ♦ **Right to Privacy (2017, Puttaswamy case)**
 - ♦ **Decriminalization of section 377 (2018, LGBTQ+ rights)**

4. Legal Reforms and Governance

- **Landmark amendments:**
 - **42nd Amendment (1976):** Strengthened the role of the state in governance.
 - **73rd and 74th Amendment (1992):** Strengthened local governance. (**Panchayati Raj** and **Urban Local Bodies**).
 - **103rd Amendment (2019):** Introduced **10% reservation for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS)**.
- Role of the institutions like **Supreme Court, High Court and NHRC** in upholding rights and governance.

5. Challenges and the Road Ahead

- **Judicial Backlog and Reforms:** Need for faster case resolutions.
- **Electoral Reforms:** Addressing money and muscle power in politics.
- **Digital Rights and Privacy:** Navigating governance in the digital age.
- **Strengthening Federalism:** Balancing power between the **Center and States**.

6. Conclusion

- The **Indian Constitution** has played a crucial role in shaping democracy and governance over 75 years.
- While **challenges remain, legal advancements, judicial activism and governance reforms** continue to uphold the spirit of democracy.
- The next phase of India's constitutional journey must focus on **inclusive governance, digital right and strengthening democratic institutions.**