



CLASS - VIII SOCIAL SCIENCE NOTES JUNE

CIVICS: 1. THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

I. Answer the following Questions:

1. Why does a democratic country need a Constitution?

A democratic country needs a constitution because

- In a democracy people choose their representatives and the leaders might misuse their powers. Constitution provides safeguards against this.
- In a democracy, the constitution ensures that the dominant group does not use power against less powerful groups.
- The constitution guarantees fundamental rights to the citizens for their social, economic, and political welfare.

2. Look at the wordings of the two documents given below. The first column is from the 1990 Nepal Constitution. The second column is from the more recent Constitution of Nepal.

1990 Constitution of Nepal Part 7: Executive	2015 Constitution of Nepal Part 7: Federal Executive
Article 35: Executive Power: The executive power of the Kingdom of Nepal shall be vested in His Majesty and the Council of Ministers.	Article 75: Executive Power: The executive power of Nepal shall, pursuant to this Constitution and law, be vested in the Council of Ministers.

What is the difference in who exercises 'Executive Power' in the above two Constitutions of Nepal?

In the 1990 Nepal constitution, the Executive powers of the Kingdom were entirely in the hands of the King. According to the Interim constitution drafted in 2007, the executive powers of Nepal are in the hands of the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister.

There was a dire need for a new constitution as the ideals of the people had changed as the country had moved from a monarchy to a democracy. The old constitution was drafted when the country was under the rule of the king. The people of Nepal fought for a democratic government for many years. So the old constitution does not

reflect the ideals of the people. The new constitution will change the rules of the old constitution in order to bring in a new society with new ideas.

3. What would happen if there were no restrictions on the power of elected representatives?

If there were no restrictions on the power of elected representatives then:

- These leaders (representatives) might misuse their authority.
- This misuse of authority can result in gross injustice and mismanagement.

4. In each of the following situations, identify the minority. Write one reason why you think it is important to respect the views of the minority in each of these situations.

(a) In a school with 30 teachers, 20 of them are male.

10 female teachers are in minority.

It is important to respect the views of female teachers so that male teachers do not use their power against them.

(b) In a city, 5 per cent of the population are Buddhists.

5 percent of Buddhists are in minority.

It is important to respect the views of Buddhists so that they will not be dominated by the community in the majority.

(c) In a factory mess for all employees, 80 per cent are vegetarians.

20 percent of non-vegetarian employees are in minority.

Their views should be respected as eating non-vegetarian food is their personal choice.

(d) In a class of 50 students, 40 belong to more well-off families.

10 students belong to poor families and are in minority. Scholarships, special classes, and other welfare schemes like book bank, free supply of books, stationary and free uniform are to be planned to keep in view of their requirements.

5. The column on the left lists some of the key features of the Indian Constitution. In the other column write two sentences, in your own words, on why you think this feature is important:

Key Feature	Significance
Federalism	means more than one level of government in the country. India has a 3 tier government (Govt at state level, Govt at centre, Panchayat Raj is the Third tier of the government). India needs a 3 tier government because of the diverse religious and cultural composition of its citizens. A government in the centre alone could not be effective for everyone.
Separation of Powers	In order to prevent the misuse of power by the elected representative the constitution advocate Separation of powers. Each branch of the government has its powers fixed by the Constitution. The Constitution ensures that a balance of power is maintained between the Legislature Executive and the Judiciary.
Fundamental Rights	Fundamental Rights guarantees the rights of individuals against the State as well as against other individuals. It protects minority communities and guarantees rights against the majority.
Parliamentary Form of Government	In a Parliamentary form of government, the constitution guarantees universal adult franchise for all citizens. That is, all adults have a right to vote, irrespective of whether they are poor or rich, educated or uneducated, a Hindu, Muslim or a Christian. The idea of a universal adult franchise is based on equality.

HISTORY: 2. FROM TRADE TO TERRITORY

I. Answer the following Questions:

1. What attracted European trading companies to India?

European trading companies were attracted due to the following reasons:

1. Cheap and fine quality of silk and cotton.
2. For spices like pepper, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon etc.

2. What were the areas of conflict between the Bengal nawabs and the East India Company?

1. The Bengal nawabs asserted their power and autonomy and refused to grant the Company concessions,

2. They demanded large tributes for the Company's right to trade,
3. They denied the Company any right to mint coins,
4. They stopped the Company from extending its fortifications
5. Accusing the Company of deceit, they claimed that the Company was depriving the Bengal government of huge amounts of revenue and undermining the authority of the nawab. It was refusing to pay taxes, writing disrespectful letters, and trying to humiliate the nawab and his officials. These were the areas of conflict between the Bengal Nawabs and the East India Company.

3. How did the assumption of Diwani benefit the East India Company?

The Mughal emperor, in 1765, appointed the Company's the Diwan of the provinces of Bengal. The Diwani allowed the Company to exploit the vast revenue resources of Bengal. This solved a major problem that the company had earlier faced. Although its trade had expanded, it had to buy most of the goods in India with gold and silver imported from Britain. The overflow of gold from Britain stopped after the assumption of Diwani. Now revenue from India could finance Company expenses. These revenues they used to purchase cotton and silk textiles in India, maintain Company troops and meet the cost of building the Company fort and offices at Calcutta.

4. Explain the system of "subsidiary alliance".

Subsidiary Alliance System

1. **The Britishers as a supreme power:** Whichever state wanted to sign this treaty, had to accept the English as a supreme authority. The East India Company behaved as a guardian of that state.
2. **Appointment of resident:** The state kept an English Resident in their court, to check the activities of the king.
3. **Keeping of an English army:** Indian rulers were not allowed to have their army to protect the state from external and internal invasion. The state had to keep an English army. The state had to bear financial burden of the army.
4. **Giving to the territory:** If the Indian rulers failed to make payments, part of their territories were taken away as penalty.

e.g.,

- The Nawab of Awadh was forced to give over half of his territory to the company in 1801.
- Hyderabad was also forced to cede territories on similar grounds.

5. **Protection by the English:** In return for the above-mentioned conditions the English Company promised to protect the state from its enemies. They also promised the state not to interfere in the internal affairs of the state but this was a promise they seldom kept.

5. In what way was the administration of the Company different from that of Indian rulers?

The administration of the Company was different from that of the Indian rulers in the following ways:

1. The Company divided its administrative units called Presidencies. There were three Presidencies - Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In India, districts were the main administrative units.
2. Each presidency was ruled by a Governor. Districts were ruled by the Collectors.
3. The supreme head of the administration of the Company was the Governor-General. But in India, the head of the administration was the king.
4. The main job of the Governor-General was to introduce administrative reforms while the main job of the Collector was to collect revenue and taxes- and maintain law and order in his district.

6. Describe the changes that occurred in the composition of the Company's army.

1. East India Company adopted its own method when it began recruitment for the army.
2. It was known as the sepoy army (from the Indian word sipahi, meaning soldier).
3. With the change in warfare technology from the 1820s, the cavalry needs of the Company's army declined, because the British empire was fighting in Burma, Afghanistan, and Egypt. There the soldiers were armed with **muskets** and **matchlocks**.
4. The soldiers had to keep pace with changing military requirements.
5. Its infantry regiments now became more important.
6. In the early 19th century the British began to develop a uniform military culture.
7. Soldiers were given European-style training drills and discipline.
8. They regulated their life far more than before.
9. Often this created problems since caste and community feelings were ignored in building a force of professional soldiers.