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NOTES

Source	Term	Chapter Name
6th SCERT	Term – 1	Understanding Diversity
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UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY IN INDIA

Diversity refers to the existence of variations of different characteristics in a group of people. These characteristics could be anything that makes one person or group different from another. In the Indian context, it represents the mosaic of different cultures, races, languages, and religions that coexist within the nation's geographical boundaries.

India's diversity is not a source of weakness but a profound strength, often encapsulated in the phrase "Unity in Diversity."

- The phrase "Unity in Diversity" was coined by India's first Prime Minister, **Jawaharlal Nehru**, in his book 'The Discovery of India', to describe the unique blend of cultures in the nation.
- Historian **V.A. Smith** referred to India as an "Ethnological Museum" due to the vast variety of racial types co-existing here.

Dimensions of Diversity in India

India's vast geography, earning it the title of a **sub-continent**, is the foundational reason for its diversity. A sub-continent is a large, distinguishable part of a continent, possessing diverse physical features like mountains, plateaus, plains, rivers, and varied climatic patterns.

Impact of Geographical Diversity on Lifestyles:

Landform	Economic Activities	Associated Lifestyle & Culture	Examples
Plains	Primarily Agriculture	Agrarian societies, food habits based on crops like rice and wheat.	Indo-Gangetic Plains

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Coastal Areas	Fishing, Trade	Seafood-rich cuisine, maritime culture.	Kerala, Goa, Odisha
Mountains/Hills	Animal Rearing, Horticulture, Terrace Farming, Plantation Crops	Distinct food habits, unique clothing for cold climates, pastoral communities.	Himalayan states (Himachal, Uttarakhand), Western Ghats (Coffee & Tea)
Desert Areas	Animal Husbandry (Camel, Sheep), Dryland Farming	Nomadic lifestyles, water conservation practices, unique crafts.	Thar Desert (Rajasthan)

Climatic Extremes:

- **Highest Rainfall:** Mawsynram in Meghalaya.
- **Lowest Rainfall:** Jaisalmer in Rajasthan.

This ecological diversity directly influences the **flora and fauna** of a region, further shaping the local food, clothing, occupations, and livelihoods.

Racial Diversity:

India has been a melting pot of races due to historical migrations. Different groups entered India over millennia through land and sea routes, attracted by its wealth for trade or conquest.

- **Major Racial Groups that form the modern Indian populace include:** Dravidians, Negroids, Aryans, Alpines, and Mongoloids.

Family and Community Structure:

- **Family:** The fundamental unit of society, existing as **joint families** and **nuclear families**.
- **Community:** Groups of people living with a common interest or heritage.
- **Interdependence:** Communities are interdependent for amenities like water, food, education, and security, which fosters social harmony and co-existence despite cultural differences.

India is a secular country, as enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution. **Article 25-28** guarantee the fundamental right to freedom of religion.

- **Birthplace of Religions:** Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.
- **Home to Religions from Abroad:** Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism have flourished in India for centuries.
- **Festivals:** India is a "land of festivals," which are a vibrant manifestation of its religious and cultural diversity. Examples include Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Guru Nanak Jayanthi, Buddha Poornima, Onam, Pongal, Bihu, and Holi, often celebrated across community lines.

Language is one of the most significant markers of diversity in India.

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- **Census Data:**

- According to the **2001 Census**, India has **122 major languages** and **1599 other languages**.
- As per the **2011 Census**, the top five languages spoken by population percentage are:
 1. Hindi (43.63%)
 2. Bengali (8.30%)
 3. Marathi (7.09%)
 4. Telugu (6.93%)
 5. Tamil (5.89%)

- **Language Families:** The major language families in India are:

1. **Indo-Aryan** (dominant in North India)
2. **Dravidian** (dominant in South India; Tamil is the oldest Dravidian language)
3. **Austroasiatic**
4. **Sino-Tibetan**

- **Official Languages:** The **Eighth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution recognizes **22 languages** as official languages.

- **Classical Languages:** The Government of India has accorded "Classical Language" status to six languages based on their antiquity and rich literary heritage.

Language	Year of Recognition
Tamil	2004
Sanskrit	2005
Kannada	2008
Telugu	2008
Malayalam	2013
Odia	2014

- **Role of English:** Due to over 300 years of British rule, English has become an important language for official communication, higher education, and business.

Culture encompasses the customs, practices, dress, cuisine, religion, social habits, music, art, and architecture of a people.

Performing Arts:

Dance and Music

Classical Dances of India (as per Sangeet Natak Akademi)	State of Origin
Bharatanatyam	Tamil Nadu

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Kathak	North India (Uttar Pradesh)
Kathakali	Kerala
Kuchipudi	Andhra Pradesh
Mohiniyattam	Kerala
Odissi	Odisha
Sattriya	Assam
Manipuri	Manipur

Prominent Folk Dances	State of Origin
Bihu	Assam
Bhangra, Giddha	Punjab
Garba, Dandia Raas	Gujarat
Ghoomer, Kalbelia	Rajasthan
Lavani	Maharashtra
Karagattam, Oyilattam	Tamil Nadu
Theyyam	Kerala
Chholiya	Uttarakhand
Ras Lila	Uttar Pradesh

Art and Architecture

Architectural marvels across India reflect its diverse historical and religious influences.

Monument	Location	Significance
Brihadisvara Temple	Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu	Dravidian architecture (Chola dynasty)
Taj Mahal	Agra, Uttar Pradesh	Pinnacle of Mughal architecture
Konark Sun Temple	Konark, Odisha	Kalinga architecture
Sanchi Stupa	Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh	Buddhist architecture (Mauryan period)
Dilwara Jain Temples	Mount Abu, Rajasthan	Exquisite marble carvings (Jain architecture)
St. Thomas Cathedral	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Neo-Gothic architecture

Interesting Fact: About 60% of the total epigraphical inscriptions found by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) are from Tamil Nadu, mostly in the Tamil script.



Unity in Diversity:

Despite these vast differences, India remains a single nation, united by several factors.

1. **Constitutional Identity:** The Constitution of India provides a common framework of governance, rights, and duties for all citizens. It guarantees single citizenship, promoting a sense of Indian identity over regional or linguistic identities.
2. **Spirit of Patriotism:** The shared history of the freedom struggle against colonial rule instilled a spirit of nationalism that transcends regional and religious divides.
3. **National Symbols:** The National Flag, National Anthem, and National Emblem are powerful symbols that evoke a sense of pride and unity.
4. **Inter-state Linkages:** Economic interdependence through trade, migration for work and education, and nationwide celebrations like Republic Day and Independence Day act as strong binding forces.

- Cultural Syncretism:** Centuries of co-existence have led to the evolution of a syncretic culture, where traditions and practices from different communities have influenced one another.

Challenges to India's Diversity

While diversity is a strength, it also presents challenges that threaten the "unity" aspect:

- Communalism:** Pitting religious groups against each other for political gain.
- Regionalism:** Excessive loyalty to one's own region, sometimes leading to secessionist demands.
- Linguistic Chauvinism:** Agitations and conflicts based on language.
- Casteism:** Deep-rooted social hierarchy and discrimination based on caste.

India's diversity is a unique and precious heritage. The spirit of "**Unity in Diversity**" is not a static concept but an ongoing process that requires conscious effort. Upholding the constitutional value of **fraternity**, promoting tolerance and mutual respect, and ensuring equitable development for all regions and communities are crucial for strengthening the threads of unity that bind this diverse nation together.

ACHIEVING EQUALITY

Equality is a cornerstone of the Indian Constitution and a fundamental principle of a just society. It implies the absence of discrimination and the provision of equal rights, liberties, and opportunities to all citizens. In a diverse nation like India, achieving equality is intrinsically linked to respecting diversity and dismantling age-old structures of prejudice and discrimination that create social and economic inequalities.

While the ideal of '**Unity in Diversity**' promotes peaceful coexistence, societal tensions often arise when diversity is not accepted, leading to prejudice and discriminatory behaviour against 'different' groups.

Core Concepts: Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Discrimination

These three concepts are interconnected and represent a progression from thought to action.

Concept	Definition	Nature	Example
Prejudice	A pre-judgement; a preconceived opinion or feeling, especially of a hostile nature, formed without knowledge, thought, or reason. It is a negative and inferior judgment about others based on false beliefs.	Attitudinal (A thought or belief)	"People from rural areas are less civilised than urban people."
Stereotype	An over-generalized and fixed belief about a particular group or class of people. When prejudice becomes stronger and more ingrained, it evolves into a stereotype.	Cognitive (A fixed mental image)	"Boys are strong and don't cry"; "Girls are not good at sports."

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Discrimination	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, religion, or caste. It is the action that results from prejudice and stereotypes.	Behavioural (An action)	Denying a person a job or entry into a temple based on their caste or gender.
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Causes for the Rise of Prejudice:

- **Socialisation:** Learning prejudiced attitudes from family, peers, and society.
- **Conforming Behaviours:** Adopting the prejudices of a group to fit in.
- **Economic Benefits:** Justifying dominance and exploitation to maintain economic advantage.
- **Authoritarian Personality:** A personality type that is rigid in belief and intolerant of others.
- **Ethnocentrism:** The belief in the superiority of one's own culture or group.
- **Group Closure:** The process whereby a group maintains its identity by excluding others.
- **Conflicts:** Historical or ongoing conflicts between groups can entrench prejudice.

Major Forms of Inequality and Discrimination in India

- **Origin:** The caste system is considered the most dominant reason for inequality in India. It originated in the flexible, occupation-based **Varna system** of the early Vedic period but degenerated into a rigid, birth-based hierarchical system in the Later Vedic period.
- **Impact:** This system institutionalized graded inequality and led to the practice of **Untouchability**, one of the most severe forms of discrimination.
- **Key Social Reformer: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**
 - **Popularly known as:** Baba Saheb.
 - **Background:** An Indian jurist, economist, politician, and social reformer who belonged to a depressed class and faced immense discrimination throughout his life.
 - **Key Contributions:**
 - **Chairman of the Drafting Committee** of the Constituent Assembly, earning him the title "**Father of the Indian Constitution.**"
 - Independent India's **first Law Minister.**
 - Fought relentlessly for the **annihilation of caste** and for social equality.
 - **Education:** M.A. (1915), D.Sc from the London School of Economics, Ph.D from Columbia University (1927).
 - **Honours:** Posthumously awarded the **Bharat Ratna** in 1990.

This refers to the systemic inequality between men and women in health, education, economic, and political spheres.

- **Manifestations:**
 - **Education:** Lower female literacy rates; girls being disallowed from pursuing higher education.
 - **Economic:** Limited career choices for women; gender pay gap.
 - **Social:** Forced marriages, restrictions on attire, and lesser decision-making power.
 - **Political:** Under-representation in legislative bodies.
- **Media Portrayal:** Gender-based stereotypes are often reinforced by media, such as advertisements showing women primarily in domestic roles (using detergents, washing machines) and men in dominant, aggressive roles (bike stunts).

This involves the unequal treatment of an individual or group based on their religious beliefs. Despite India's secular fabric, religious discrimination and communal tensions have been persistent challenges, sometimes even manifesting in places of worship.

The Constitutional Framework for Equality in India

The Constitution of India is the supreme law that provides a legal framework to combat discrimination and ensure equality.

Constitutional Provision	Article	Description
Equality Before Law	Article 14	Guarantees that the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
Prohibition of Discrimination	Article 15(1)	Prohibits the State from discriminating against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth.
Abolition of Untouchability	Article 17	Abolishes "Untouchability" and forbids its practice in any form. The enforcement of any disability arising out of Untouchability is a punishable offence.

The Preamble itself secures to all citizens **JUSTICE** (social, economic, and political), **LIBERTY** (of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship), and **EQUALITY** (of status and of opportunity).

Socio-Economic Inequality

Socio-economic inequality is a state where the benefits of economic growth are not distributed evenly, leading to disparities in income, education, and health.

- **Link between Literacy and Sex Ratio (2011 Census - Tamil Nadu Data):**
 - Districts with **low literacy rates** (e.g., Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri) also tend to have a **lower sex ratio** (fewer females per 1,000 males).

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- Districts with **high literacy rates** (e.g., Kanyakumari, The Nilgiris) often have a **higher sex ratio**.
- **Inference:** This data suggests a correlation between low human development (indicated by low literacy) and gender disparity (indicated by adverse sex ratio), often stemming from socio-economic backwardness.

Literacy rate – 2011 Census

High			Low		
S.No.	District Name	Percentage	S.No.	District Name	Percentage
1	Kanyakumari	92.14%	1	Dharmapuri	64.71%
2	Chennai	90.33%	2	Ariyalur	71.99%
3	Thoothukkudi	86.52%	3	Villupuram	72.08%
4	The Nilgiris	85.65%	4	Krishnagiri	72.41%

Source: Censusindia.gov.in>tamilnadu

Sex Ratio – 2011 Census

Number of females per 1,000 males

High			Low		
S.No.	District Name	Sex Ratio	S.No.	District Name	Sex Ratio
1	The Nilgiris	1041	1	Dharmapuri	946
2	Thanjavur	1031	2	Salem	954
3	Nagapattinam	1025	3	Krishnagiri	956
4	Thoothukkudi, Tirunelveli	1024	4	Ramanathapuram	977

Source: Censusindia.gov.in>tamilnadu

Case Studies in Overcoming Adversity

Global Context: The Fight Against Apartheid

- **Apartheid:** A policy of racial segregation and discrimination enforced by the white minority government in South Africa from 1948 to 1994.
- **Nelson Mandela:** A key anti-apartheid revolutionary who was imprisoned for 27 years. After his release in 1990, he led the movement that successfully ended apartheid and became South Africa's first black president. His life is a global symbol of the fight for racial equality and human rights.

Indian Achievers: Triumphant Against Odds

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Achiever	Background	Achievement
Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam	Born into a poor Muslim family in Rameswaram; sold newspapers to support his family.	Aerospace scientist, the "Missile Man of India," and the 11th President of India ("People's President"). Recipient of the Bharat Ratna (1997).
Viswanathan Anand	Middle-class family from Chennai.	Five-time World Chess Champion, India's first Grandmaster (1988), and the first recipient of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award (1991-92).
S. Ilavazhagi	Daughter of a daily-wage auto-rickshaw driver from a poor family in Chennai.	2008 World Carrom Champion.
Mariyappan Thangavelu	Son of a single mother who was a labourer/vegetable seller in Salem; suffered permanent disability in his leg.	Won the gold medal in the men's high jump T-42 event at the 2016 Rio Paralympics.

These examples underscore that adverse conditions arising from socio-economic background, religion, or physical disability do not define an individual's potential for success.

Remedial Measures and the Way Forward

Abolishing deep-rooted inequality and discrimination requires a multi-pronged approach:

1. **Ensuring Access to Basic Services:** Universal and quality access to healthcare and education is critical for leveling the playing field.
2. **Effective Legal Implementation:** Strict enforcement of constitutional provisions and laws like the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
3. **Promoting Social Harmony:** Encouraging inter-caste and inter-faith interactions through measures like community dining and celebrating cultural diversity.
4. **Gender Sensitization:** Raising awareness about gender bias and promoting women's visibility and participation in public life and decision-making institutions.
5. **Changing Mindsets:** Using education and media to challenge stereotypes and foster a culture of respect, empathy, and tolerance from a young age.
6. **Economic Empowerment:** Creating inclusive growth models that provide equitable opportunities for all sections of society, thereby reducing economic drivers of prejudice.

NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF INDIA

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National Symbols are the embodiment of a nation's identity, heritage, and values. They serve as a powerful source of patriotic sentiment and are designed to unite the citizens by creating a shared visual, cultural, and constitutional identity. For a nation as diverse as India, these symbols play a crucial role in fostering a sense of unity, pride, and belonging among its people. They are broadly categorized into Natural Symbols and Emblems of the State.

Natural National Symbols of India

These symbols are chosen from India's unique flora and fauna to represent the nation's rich biodiversity and natural heritage.

Symbol	Name (Scientific Name)	Adopted	Key Facts and Significance
National Animal	Bengal Tiger (<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>)	1973	Represents strength, agility, and grace. India is home to ~70% of the world's tiger population. Project Tiger was launched in 1973 for its conservation.
National Heritage Animal	Indian Elephant (<i>Elephas maximus indicus</i>)	2010	Represents wisdom, majesty, and plays a critical role as a keystone species in maintaining forest ecosystems. Project Elephant (1992) is a key conservation initiative.
National Bird	Indian Peacock (<i>Pavo cristatus</i>)	1963	Native to the Indian subcontinent, it symbolizes beauty, grace, and pride. It has significant representation in Indian art, mythology, and culture. A peacock sanctuary is located at Viralimalai, Tamil Nadu.
National Aquatic Animal	Ganges River Dolphin (<i>Platanista gangetica</i>)	2010	A reliable indicator of the health of the river ecosystem. It is an endangered species. It is functionally blind and uses echolocation (ultrasound waves) to navigate and hunt.
National Reptile	King Cobra (<i>Ophiophagus hannah</i>)	-	The world's longest venomous snake, found in the rainforests and plains of India. It is the only snake that builds a nest for its eggs.
National Flower	Lotus (<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>)	1950	Symbolizes purity, beauty, wealth, and knowledge. Despite growing in muddy water, it blooms clean, representing triumph over

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			adversity. It holds a sacred status in Indian culture.
National Tree	Indian Banyan (<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>)	1950	Represents immortality and has immense medicinal value. Its vast structure provides shelter to numerous species. The Great Banyan Tree in the Indian Botanical Garden, Howrah, is a famous example.
National Fruit	Mango (<i>Mangifera indica</i>)	1950	Known as the "King of Fruits," it is cultivated across India and is a rich source of Vitamins A, C, and D. Varieties like 'Imam Pasand' date back to the Mughal era.
National River	The Ganges (Ganga)	2008	A perennial river, 2,525 km long, making it the longest river flowing within India. It is sacred in Hinduism and is a lifeline for millions. The Namami Gange Mission is a major initiative to clean and protect it.
National Microorganism	<i>Lactobacillus delbrueckii</i> subsp. <i>bulgaricus</i>	2012	A 'friendly' bacterium that curdles milk to form yogurt (curd). It is recognized for its digestive and health benefits.

State Symbols of Tamil Nadu (Example)

Like the nation, states also have their own symbols to represent regional identity.

Symbol	Name
Animal	Nilgiri Tahr
Bird	Emerald Dove
Flower	Gloriosa Superba (Flame Lily)
Tree	Palmyra Tree

Emblems of the State of India

These are the official symbols of the sovereign Republic of India.

- **Description:** A horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (Kesari) at the top, white in the middle, and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. In the centre of the white band is a navy-blue wheel (Chakra) with 24 spokes.
- **Symbolism:**
 - **Saffron:** Courage and sacrifice.

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- **White:** Peace, truth, and purity.
- **Green:** Fertility, growth, and auspiciousness.
- **Ashoka Chakra:** Represents the 'Wheel of Dharma' (righteousness) and progress.
- **Key Facts:**
 - **Designer:** Pingali Venkayya.
 - **Adopted by the Constituent Assembly:** July 22, 1947.
 - **Ratio:** The ratio of the width of the flag to its length is 2:3.
 - **First Hoisting:** By Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on August 15, 1947, at the Red Fort.
 - **First Woven at:** Gudiyatham, Vellore (Tamil Nadu). The first flag is now preserved at the Fort Museum, Chennai.
 - **Manufacturing Rights:** The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has the authority to manufacture the flag.
 - **Kodi Kaatha Kumaran:** Tirupur Kumaran, a freedom fighter, died protecting the flag from being dishonored by the police in 1932.
- **Source:** Adapted from the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath.
- **Adopted on:** January 26, 1950.
- **Description:**
 - Features four Asiatic lions mounted back-to-back on a circular abacus (only three are visible). They symbolize power, courage, confidence, and pride.
 - The abacus is girded by sculptures of an **elephant** (energy), a **horse** (speed), a **bull** (hard work), and a **lion** (majesty), separated by intervening wheels (Dharma Chakras).
 - **Motto:** The words "**Satyameva Jayate**" (Truth Alone Triumphs) from the **Mundaka Upanishad** are inscribed below the abacus in Devanagari script.
- **Usage:** It is the official seal of the Government of India and is found on official communications, currency, and passports.

Symbol	Details
National Anthem	'Jana Gana Mana' Composer: Rabindranath Tagore (originally in Bengali). Adopted: January 24, 1950. First Sung: December 27, 1911, at the Calcutta Session of the INC. Playing Time: Approx. 52 seconds.
National Song	'Vande Mataram' Composer: Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

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	Source: His novel <i>Anandmath</i> (1882). Status: Accorded equal status with the National Anthem on January 24, 1950.
National Pledge	"India is my country..." Author: Pydimarri Venkata Subba Rao (in Telugu).
National Calendar	Saka Calendar Based on the Saka Era, beginning in 78 AD . Adopted: March 22, 1957, based on the recommendation of the Meghnad Saha Committee . The year begins on Chaitra 1 (March 22).
National Currency	Indian Rupee (INR) The symbol '₹' was designed by D. Udaya Kumar and adopted in 2010 . The 'Rupiya' was first introduced by Sher Shah Suri in the 16th century.

National Holidays

India officially celebrates three national holidays.

Holiday	Date	Significance
Independence Day	August 15	Celebrates India's independence from British rule in 1947. The Prime Minister hoists the national flag at the Red Fort, Delhi.
Republic Day	January 26	Marks the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect in 1950, turning the nation into a republic. The main event is the parade at Kartavya Path, where the President hoists the flag. The 'Beating Retreat' ceremony on Jan 29 marks the end of the celebrations.
Gandhi Jayanti	October 2	Celebrates the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation." The United Nations declared this day as the International Day of Non-Violence in 2007.

The National Symbols of India are not merely representations but are integral to the nation's identity and ethos. They encapsulate the country's rich biodiversity, profound history, and the foundational principles of truth, peace, and courage. Respecting these symbols is a fundamental duty of every citizen, as they perpetually remind us of our shared heritage and the unifying spirit of a diverse India.

The Constitution of India

The Constitution of India is the supreme law of the land. It is a comprehensive and authentic legal document that lays down the framework defining the fundamental political principles, establishing the

structure, procedures, powers, and duties of government institutions, and setting out the fundamental rights, directive principles, and duties of citizens. It is the longest written constitution of any sovereign country in the world.

Historical Context of Republic Day (January 26):

- At the **Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress in December 1929**, a resolution was passed for '**Purna Swaraj**' (Complete Independence).
- **January 26, 1930**, was declared as Purna Swaraj Day.
- To commemorate this historic day, the Constitution of India was formally adopted and brought into effect on January 26, 1950, marking India's transition to a fully sovereign republic.

The Making of the Constitution

The framing of the Constitution was undertaken by the **Constituent Assembly**, which was set up under the **Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946**.

- **Initial Strength (1946)**: 389 members, representing different provinces and princely states.
- **Chairman**: **Dr. Rajendra Prasad** was the President of the Constituent Assembly.
- **Prominent Members**: Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, and Sarojini Naidu.
- **Women Members**: There were 15 women members in the Constituent Assembly.

This was the most crucial committee, tasked with preparing the draft of the Constitution.

- **Chairman**: **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, widely regarded as the "**Father of the Constitution of India**" and its chief architect.
- **Other Members (Legal Experts)**: N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Dr. K.M. Munshi, Syed Mohammad Saadullah, N. Madhava Rau, and T.T. Krishnamachari.
- **Constitutional Advisor**: **Sir B.N. Rau**.
- **First Meeting**: The Constituent Assembly met for the first time on **December 9, 1946**.
- **Sources of the Constitution**: The framers examined the constitutions of nearly **60 countries** (including the UK, USA, USSR, France, Switzerland) and adopted their best features, modifying them to suit Indian conditions.
- **Duration**: The process took **2 years, 11 months, and 18 days**.
- **Drafting Process**: Around 2,000 amendments were considered before finalizing the draft.
- **Total Expenditure**: Approximately ₹64 lakh.
- **Adoption and Enactment**: The Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on **November 26, 1949**. This day is celebrated as **Constitution Day (or National Law Day)**.
- **Commencement**: The Constitution came into full effect on **January 26, 1950**.

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Preservation: The original handwritten copies of the Constitution (in Hindi and English) are preserved in special helium-filled cases in the Library of the Parliament of India.

The Preamble: Philosophy of the Constitution

The Preamble is the preface to the Constitution. It embodies the basic philosophy and fundamental values on which the Constitution is based. The Preamble declares India to be a:

- **Sovereign:** India is an independent nation with the ultimate power to govern itself, free from external control.
- **Socialist:** Aims to achieve socialist ends through democratic means, focusing on social and economic equality. (Added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976).
- **Secular:** The state has no official religion. All religions are treated with equal respect, and citizens are free to practice any religion. (Added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976).
- **Democratic:** The government is elected by the people through **Universal Adult Franchise**.
- **Republic:** The head of the state (the President) is an elected person, not a hereditary monarch.

The Preamble also secures for all its citizens the core objectives of **Justice** (social, economic, political), **Liberty** (of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship), **Equality** (of status and opportunity), and **Fraternity** (assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation).

Salient Features of the Indian Constitution

- **Parliamentary Form of Government:** The executive is collectively responsible to the legislature (Parliament at the Centre, Legislative Assembly in states).
- **Universal Adult Franchise:** Every citizen who is 18 years of age or older has the right to vote without any discrimination.
- **Fundamental Rights (Part III):** These are the basic human rights guaranteed to all citizens. They are justiciable (enforceable by courts).

Fundamental Rights (Articles 12-35)
1. Right to Equality (Art. 14-18)
2. Right to Freedom (Art. 19-22)
3. Right against Exploitation (Art. 23-24)
4. Right to Freedom of Religion (Art. 25-28)
5. Cultural and Educational Rights (Art. 29-30)
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies (Art. 32) - <i>Dr. Ambedkar called this the 'heart and soul' of the Constitution.</i>

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- **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) (Part IV):** These are guidelines for the government to follow while framing laws and policies to establish a just society. They are non-justiciable but are fundamental in the governance of the country.
- **Fundamental Duties (Part IV-A):** Added by the 42nd Amendment (1976), these are moral obligations on all citizens to help promote a spirit of patriotism and uphold the unity of India.

Examples include:

- Respecting the Constitution, National Flag, and National Anthem.
- Cherishing the ideals of the freedom struggle.
- Protecting the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India.
- Promoting harmony and brotherhood.
- Conserving natural heritage and the environment.
- Developing a scientific temper and humanism.
- Safeguarding public property.
- **Providing educational opportunities for children between 6-14 years** (added by the 86th Amendment, 2002).

Evolution of the Constitution

The Constitution is a living document, capable of evolving with the changing needs of society.

- **Original Structure (1950):** 395 Articles, 22 Parts, and 8 Schedules.
- **Present Structure:** Over 448 Articles, 25 Parts, and 12 Schedules.
- **Amendments:** The process of amendment (Article 368) allows the Constitution to be updated. As of October 2021, there have been 105 amendments.

UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRACY

Democracy, as a form of government, is a system where the supreme power is vested in the people, who exercise it either directly or through their elected representatives. It is more than just a political system; it is a way of life that upholds the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

- **Etymology:** The term 'democracy' is derived from two Greek words:
 - 'Demos' meaning 'the people'.
 - 'Kratia' meaning 'power' or 'rule'. Thus, democracy literally means "the rule of the people."
- **Birthplace of Democracy:** Ancient Greece, particularly the city-state of Athens.
- **Classic Definition by Abraham Lincoln:** "Democracy is a government of the people, by the people, for the people."

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- **Thirukkural on Good Governance:** "The world will constantly embrace the feet of the great king who rules over his subjects with love," highlighting the importance of a ruler's bond with the people, a core democratic value.

Evolution from Monarchy to Democracy

- **Early Human Societies:** Started as hunter-gatherer groups, evolving into tribes with chiefs.
- **Formation of Kingdoms:** Victorious tribes united smaller groups, leading to the formation of kingdoms ruled by monarchs (kings). Monarchy became the dominant form of government worldwide, including in India, before the colonial era.
- **Transition to Democracy:** In India, the struggle against British colonialism culminated in independence, after which the nation adopted a democratic system of governance.

Types of Democracy

Democracy can be broadly classified into two main types based on the mode of public participation.

Feature	Direct Democracy	Representative Democracy (Indirect Democracy)
Law Making Power	Lies directly with the citizens. People can frame, discuss, and amend laws.	Lies with elected representatives who make laws on behalf of the people.
Decision Making	Based on the will of the majority, achieved through direct participation in assemblies or referendums.	Decisions are taken by representatives in legislative bodies (e.g., Parliament, State Assemblies).
Applicability	Suitable for countries with a small population and geographical area.	Suitable for large, populous, and diverse countries like India.
Examples	Ancient Greek city-states, modern-day Switzerland.	India, USA, UK, Canada.

HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills): Is Direct Democracy possible in India?

No, it is not practicable due to India's vast population (over 1.4 billion) and immense geographical and cultural diversity. Convening all citizens for decision-making would be logistically impossible.

Type	Parliamentary Democracy	Presidential Democracy
Executive-Legislature Relation	The Executive (Council of Ministers) is a part of and is collectively responsible to the Legislature.	The Executive (President) is separate from and not responsible to the Legislature.
Head of Government	Prime Minister	President

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Head of State	Can be a Monarch (UK) or a President (India).	President
Examples	India, UK, England, Canada	USA

Aims and Pillars of Democracy in India

The core aim of Indian democracy is to secure justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity for its citizens, ensuring the welfare of the people. This is achieved through a framework established by the Constitution.

Key Aims:

- To ensure freedom, equality, and justice for all.
- To maintain law and order.
- To empower people with the right to elect their representatives.
- To hold the government accountable to the people.

Universal Adult Franchise:

- The cornerstone of Indian democracy, giving every citizen aged **18 and above** the right to vote, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex, or economic status.
- **Global Milestones for Women's Suffrage:**
 - **New Zealand (1893):** First country to grant voting rights to women.
 - **United Kingdom (1918):** Granted partial suffrage, full in 1928.
 - **USA (1920):** Granted voting rights to women.

The Constitution of India:

The Constitution of India is the supreme law that guides the democratic functioning of the nation.

- **Role of the Constitution:**
 - Defines political principles and the structure of government institutions.
 - Outlines the powers and responsibilities of the government.
 - Guarantees the **Rights and Duties** of citizens.
 - Includes **Directive Principles of State Policy** for governance.
- **Chief Architect: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, who headed the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly. For this reason, he is known as the 'Chief Architect of our Constitution'.
- **Key Feature:** The Indian Constitution is the **longest written constitution in the world**.

Global Perspective on Democracy

- **International Day of Democracy:** Observed on **September 15th**, as resolved by the UN General Assembly in 2007.

- **Faith in Democracy:** According to world statistical data, 79% of Indian citizens have faith in the democratic system, placing India first among democratic nations in this regard.

Oldest Democracies in the World

Democracy	Period/Year	Location	Significance
Greek Democracy	5th Century BCE	Athens, Greece	Foundation of Western political philosophy.
Roman Republic	509 BCE – 27 BCE	Italian Peninsula	Significant expansions in republican governance concepts.
San Marino	301 CE	Italy	Claims to be the oldest constitutional republic, with an earliest written constitution still in effect.
Icelandic Commonwealth	930 CE	Thingvellir, Iceland	Established the Althing, one of the oldest and longest-functioning parliaments in the world.
British Democracy	13th Century CE	England	The signing of the Magna Carta (1215) was a crucial step in limiting monarchical power and establishing parliamentary principles.
US Democracy	1789 CE	USA	The oldest standing federal constitutional republic.

Democracy in India is a dynamic and evolving process. While representative democracy is the chosen path, its success hinges on active citizen participation, adherence to constitutional values, and the commitment of elected representatives to the welfare of the people. It is a system built on democratic decision-making, where open discussion and consensus are valued over autocratic rule, ensuring that the government truly remains of the people, by the people, and for the people.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Local Self-Government refers to the management of local affairs by local bodies, which are representative institutions elected by the people of that area. The system is designed to decentralize power and promote grassroots democracy, allowing for more effective and responsive governance tailored to local needs. In India, local self-government is structured into rural and urban bodies, as mandated by the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992.

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- **Philosophical Foundation:** Mahatma Gandhi advocated for 'Gram Swaraj' (village self-sufficiency) and envisioned **Panchayati Raj** as the foundation of India's political system, where each village would be responsible for its own affairs.

Structure of Local Bodies in India

Local government in India is a state subject. The structure can be broadly divided into two categories:

Rural Local Bodies (Panchayati Raj Institutions - PRIs)	Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)
1. Village Panchayat	1. Municipal Corporation
2. Panchayat Union (Block/Mandal Samiti)	2. Municipality
3. District Panchayat (Zila Parishad)	3. Town Panchayat (Nagar Panchayat)

Historical Fact: The **Chennai Corporation**, established in **1688**, is the oldest local body in India.

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

ULBs are constituted to govern urban areas, with their classification based on population size and revenue generation.

Type of ULB	Criteria	Political Head	Administrative Head
Municipal Corporation	Large urban areas with a population typically above 10 lakhs and high revenue.	Mayor (directly or indirectly elected)	Commissioner (an IAS officer)
Municipality	Smaller cities and towns with a population typically between 1 lakh and 10 lakhs.	Chairperson (elected by the people)	Executive Officer (EO)
Town Panchayat (Nagar Panchayat)	A transitional area, between a village and a city, with a population typically around 10,000.	Chairperson (elected by the people)	Executive Officer (EO)

Tamil Nadu Specifics:

- There are **21** Municipal Corporations in Tamil Nadu (as of recent data).
- **Walajahpet** was the first Municipality established in Tamil Nadu.
- Tamil Nadu was the **first state in India** to introduce the Town Panchayat system.

Rural Local Bodies (Panchayati Raj Institutions - PRIs)

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, mandated a three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj in every state.

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Tier	Body	Composition & Election	Political Head	Administrative Head
Village Level	Village Panchayat	Comprises a President and Ward Members, directly elected by the Gram Sabha. Villages are divided into wards based on population.	Panchayat President	Panchayat Secretary
Block Level	Panchayat Union (Block Samiti)	Formed by grouping several Village Panchayats. Councillors are elected from each Panchayat.	Panchayat Union Chairperson (elected by and from among the elected councillors)	Block Development Officer (BDO)
District Level	District Panchayat (Zila Parishad)	The apex body, formed at the district level. Members are elected by the people from wards (based on ~50,000 population per ward).	District Panchayat Chairperson (elected by and from among the elected members)	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) / District Collector

The Gram Sabha: Foundation of Panchayati Raj

- **Definition:** The Gram Sabha is the general assembly of all adult voters (aged 18 and above) registered in the electoral rolls of a Village Panchayat.
- **Nature:** It is the only **permanent unit** in the Panchayati Raj system and functions as the primary body of direct democracy at the grassroots level.
- **Role:**
 - It is a forum for people to discuss local development needs and grievances.
 - It reviews the annual budget and audit reports of the Panchayat.
 - It approves the list of beneficiaries for various government schemes.
- **Meetings:**
 - Legally required to meet at least four times a year on specific dates: **January 26** (Republic Day), **May 1** (Labour Day), **August 15** (Independence Day), and **October 2** (Gandhi Jayanti).
 - Special meetings can be convened during emergencies.
- **Participation:** Officials like the District Collector, BDO, and elected representatives also participate in these meetings.

Functions of Local Bodies

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The functions of local bodies are divided into two categories to ensure the delivery of essential public services.

Category	Village Panchayat (Rural)	Municipal Corporation (Urban)
Obligatory Functions (Mandatory)	Water supply, street lighting, cleaning roads, drainage, laying roads, implementing government schemes.	Drinking water supply, street lighting, maintenance of a clean environment, primary health facilities, road construction, solid waste management, birth/death registration.
Discretionary Functions (Optional)	Establishing parks, libraries, and playgrounds.	Building parks, playgrounds, corporation schools, space for markets, building flyovers.

Revenue Sources of Local Bodies

To perform their functions, local bodies are empowered to raise funds through various sources.

Source	Village Panchayat	Municipal Corporation
Taxes	House Tax, Professional Tax, Tax on shops.	House Tax, Water Tax, Professional Tax, Entertainment Tax, Tax on shopping complexes, Vehicle Charges.
Fees & Charges	Water charges, fees for property tax, fees for transfer of immovable property.	Various fees for services provided.
Grants-in-aid	Funds from Central and State Governments (as per Finance Commission recommendations).	Funds from Central and State Governments.

Key Features of the Panchayati Raj System (Post-73rd Amendment)

- **Panchayati Raj Day:** Celebrated on **April 24th** every year, as the 73rd Amendment Act came into force on this day in 1993.
- **Three-Tier System:** A uniform structure of Panchayats at village, intermediate (block), and district levels.
- **Reservations:**
 - Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in proportion to their population.
 - Reservation of **not less than one-third (33%)** of the total seats for women (including seats reserved for SC/ST women).
- **Elections:** Regular elections every **five years**, conducted by the **State Election Commission**.

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- **Tenure:** A fixed tenure of five years for all levels. If a Panchayat is dissolved prematurely, elections must be held within six months.
- **State Finance Commission:** Constituted every five years to review the financial position of the Panchayats and recommend principles for fund distribution.

Role of Women in Local Self-Government

The reservation of seats for women has been a transformative step in promoting political empowerment.

- **National Mandate:** Minimum 33% reservation.
- **Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Amendment) Act, 2016:** Increased the reservation for women in Panchayat Raj institutions to 50%.
- **Impact:** This has led to a significant increase in the number of women participating in local governance and decision-making, bringing new perspectives to development.

Local Body Elections

- **Conducting Body:** The **State Election Commission (SEC)**, an independent constitutional body, is responsible for conducting free and fair elections to all local bodies in the state.
- **Tenure of Representatives:** 5 years.
- **Electoral Unit:** Constituencies are known as **Wards**. People elect their ward members/councillors, who in turn may elect the heads of the institutions (indirect election). Heads like the Panchayat President are often directly elected.