

The Union Legislature

EXERCISES

A. Fill in the blanks:

1. The functions of the government are divided into three branches, namely, the **Legislature**, the **Executive** and the **Judiciary**.
2. Subjects for legislation are divided into three lists-the **Union** List, the **State** List and the **Concurrent** List.
3. The Union Parliament has two Houses-the **Lok Sabha** and the **Rajya Sabha**.
4. The **Rajya Sabha** is a permanent house. It cannot be dissolved.
5. The Parliament is answerable to the **legislature**.

B. Match the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. The President | (a) is the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha |
| 2. The Vice-President | (b) is a permanent house |
| 3. The Speaker | (c) nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha |
| 4. Parliament | (d) is the presiding officer of the Lok Sabha |
| 5. The Rajya Sabha | (e) can introduce a bill to amend the Constitution. |

Answer:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. The President | (c) nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha |
| 2. The Vice-President | (a) is the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha |
| 3. The Speaker | (d) is the presiding officer of the Lok Sabha |
| 4. Parliament | (e) can introduce a bill to amend the Constitution |
| 5. The Rajya Sabha | (b) is a permanent house |

C. Choose the correct answer:

1. The President carries out his/her functions on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Lok Sabha/the Council of Ministers/the Rajya Sabha.

Ans. The President carries out his/her functions on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.

2. Both the central and the state governments can make laws on the subjects in the Union List/State List/Concurrent List.

Ans. Both the central and the state governments can make laws on the subjects in the Concurrent List.

3. The Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha/Vidhan Sabha is also known as the Council of States.

Ans. The Rajya Sabha is also known as the Council of States.

4. The President can nominate 2/10/12 members from the Anglo-Indian community to the Lok Sabha.

Ans. The President can nominate 2 members from the Anglo-Indian community to the Lok Sabha.

5. At present the Lok Sabha consists of 545/645/525

Ans. At present the Lok Sabha consists of 545 members.

D. State whether the following are true or false:

1. The State List includes subjects of national importance.

False.

2. A member of the Lok Sabha should be at least 30 years of age.

True.

3. The Rajya Sabha is a permanent House and cannot be dissolved by the President

True.

4. The money bill has to be introduced in the Rajya Sabha.

False.

5. The Vice-President is the presiding officer of the Rajya Sabha.

True.

E. Answer the following questions in one or two words/ sentences:

Question 1.

Who is the nominal executive head of the government of India?

Answer:

The President of India, is only a nominal executive head of the government of India

Question 2.

How do we know that the Parliament has supreme authority in the government?

Answer:

The Lok Sabha exercise control over the Council of Ministers which is responsible and answerable to the Lok Sabha for all its policies, decisions and actions. This makes the Parliament the supreme authority in the government because it has the final authority to accept or reject the decisions of the executive.

Question 3.

Which branch of government interprets and defines laws?

Answer:

Judiciary defines and interprets the laws of the land and tries to prevent any person from violating the laws of the Constitution.

Question 4.

What is the minimum age qualification of an Indian voter?

Answer:

All Indian citizens, 18 years of age or above, have the right to vote.

Question 5.

Who conducts the meetings of the Lok Sabha?

Answer:

The Speaker conducts the meetings of the Lok Sabha

Question 6.

How are the members of the Rajya Sabha elected?

Answer:

These members are elected indirectly by the elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies.

Twelve members are nominated by the President from among persons who have distinguished themselves in the fields of art literature, science or social service.

Question 7.

What is meant by the term 'budget'?

Answer:

The budget is an estimate of the annual income and expenditure of the government of India.

Question 8.

What happens when a vote of no-confidence is passed against the Council of Ministers?

Answer:

Vote of no-confidence is a move in the Lok Sabha to express a lack of confidence in the Council of Minister. If such a motion is passed, then the Council of Ministers has to resign.

Question 9.

Explain the meaning of the term 'quorum'.

Answer:

Quorum refers to the minimum number of members required to be present to conduct a meeting.

F. Answer the following questions briefly:

In the context of the Parliamentary form of government, answer the following questions:

Question 1(a).

What are the main features of a parliamentary form of government?

Answer:

Features of the parliamentary form of government:

1. Under this system there is very close relationship between the executive and legislature.
2. All the members of the executive are the elected members of the majority party in the legislature.
3. After the general elections the elected representatives of the people of India form the Lok Sabha.

4. Subsequently, the council of Ministers is formed out of the elected members of the Lok Sabha.

Question 1(b).

Name the three branches of government and state their respective functions.

Answer:

According to the Constitution, the powers and functions of the government are divided into three branches-the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

The powers and functions are distributed among these branches in a manner that makes them equally balanced.

India is a parliamentary democracy. The Parliament, which is composed of the elected representatives of the Indian people, is vested with supreme power. The Parliament is the highest law making body and it makes laws for the entire country. Thus the Indian people enjoy supreme power through their representatives in the Parliament.

In a parliamentary form of government, there is a very close relationship between the legislature and the executive.

After the general elections, the elected representatives of the people form the Lok Sabha. The President appoints the leader of the majority party or the single largest party or group of parties within the Lok Sabha as the Prime Minister. Generally, the Prime Minister chooses his/her Council of Ministers from among the elected members of the Lok Sabha. He/she may also choose a Rajya Sabha members as a minister.

The Lok Sabha exercise control over the Council of Ministers which is responsible and answerable to the Lok Sabha for all its policies, decisions and actions. This makes the Parliament the supreme authority in the government because it has the final authority to accept or reject the decisions of the executive.

Question 1(c).

Why are powers distributed between the central and the state governments?

Answer:

As India is a vast country, it is not possible for one central government to take care of the specific needs of people living in different parts of the country. Therefore, the country has been divided into different units, which are called states. Each state has a state government and the processes of the government are shared by the central government and the state governments.

The parliamentary form of government is also present in the states. The pattern is the same-the state executive is formed out of the state legislature, whose members are directly elected by the people.

Question 2.

Give an account of the Lok Sabha with reference to:

- (a) Its composition
- (b) Basic qualifications of its members
- (c) Its term

Answer:

(a) Composition:

1. The maximum strength of the Lok Sabha can be 552 members.
2. A maximum of 530 members can be elected directly by the people of India from different territorial constituencies.
3. A maximum of 20 members can be elected from the union territories.
4. The President can nominate two members from the Anglo-Indian community.
At present, the Lok Sabha consists of 545 members.

(b) Basic qualifications of its members:

1. Should be a citizen of India.
2. Should be at least twenty-five years of age.
3. Should not be holding an office of profit under the government.
4. **Its term:** The Lok Sabha is elected for a 5-year term. However, the President may dissolve it before the expiry of its term if the party in power loses the support of a majority. Its life can be extended for 1 year at a time in case of a national emergency.

Question 3.

Give an account of the Rajya Sabha with reference to:

- (a) Its composition
- (b) Basic qualifications of its members
- (c) Its term

Answer:

(a) Its composition:

1. The maximum strength of the Rajya Sabha can be 250 members.
2. 238 members' represent the states and the union territories. Seats are allotted to each state according to its population. These members are elected indirectly by the elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies.
3. Twelve members are nominated by the President from among persons who have distinguished themselves in the fields of art, literature, science or social service.

(b) Basic qualification of the Members of the Rajya Sabha:

1. Should be citizens of India
2. Should be at least 30 years of age
3. Should be registered voters

(c) Its term: The Rajya Sabha is a permanent House. It cannot be dissolved by the President/Each member is elected for a period of 6 years. One third of its members retire every 2 years. Members can be re-elected.

Question 4.

With reference to the functions of the Parliament, explain the following:

- (a) Law-making functions
- (b) Control over the executive
- (c) Judicial functions

Answer:

(a) Law making functions of the Parliament:

1. The Parliament can frame new laws or modify existing ones on any subject in the Union or Concurrent List.
2. In some cases the Parliament can also pass laws on subjects under the State List.
3. Only the Parliament can initiate a Bill to amend the Constitution.

(b) Control over the Council of Ministers:

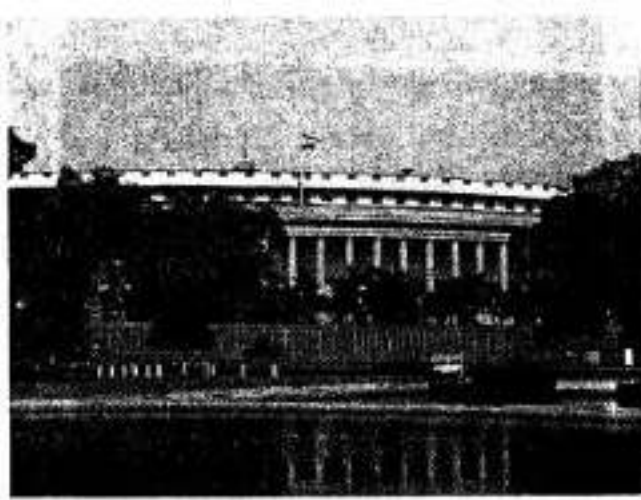
1. The Parliament keeps a watch over the government. The Council of Ministers is directly responsible and answerable to the Lok Sabha for its policies and actions.
2. The Council of Ministers has to resign immediately if a vote of no-confidence is passed against it by the Lok Sabha.
3. The Members of Parliament can discuss government policies and question the ministers. Hence, they can exercise a check on the working of the government.
4. The Parliament can move an adjournment motion to discuss and focus on any matter of public importance which requires immediate and urgent attention from the government, for instance, natural disasters such as earthquakes and unforeseen situations such as police firing or terrorist attacks, etc.

(c) Judicial Functions of the Parliament:

The Parliament can impeach or remove the President, the Vice-President and judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts if any of them violate the Constitution or misuse their authority.

G Picture study:

This is the picture(given on Next Page) of an important government building in India.



Question 1.

Identify the building.

Answer:

House of the People (Parliament House).

Question 2.

Which branch of the government functions in this building?

Answer:

Lok Sabha.

Question 3.

Who are the members of this branch of the government?

Answer:

Elected representatives of the people of India are the members of this branch. The lower house of the Parliament is the Lok Sabha. The maximum strength of the Lok Sabha can be 552 members.

- A maximum of 530 members can be elected directly by the people of India from different territorial constituencies.
 - Not more than 20 members can be elected from the union territories.
 - The President can nominate two members from the Anglo- Indian Community.
- At present, Lok Sabha consists of 545 members.

Question 4.

What are the basic qualifications of the members?

Answer:

A member of the Lok Sabha:

- Should be a citizen of India
- Should be at least 25 years of age.
- Should be a registered voter

Question 5.

What is their primary function? Mention any two other important functions.

Answer:

The Primary Functions of Parliament house are:

1. The Parliament can frame new laws or modify existing ones on any subjects in the Union or Concurrent List.
2. No money can be raised or spent without the approval of the Lok Sabha.
3. In some cases, the parliament can also pass laws on subjects under the State List.
4. Only the Parliament can initiate a Bill to amend the Constituion.

The other two important functions are:

- (a) Judicial Function
- (b) Elective Functions