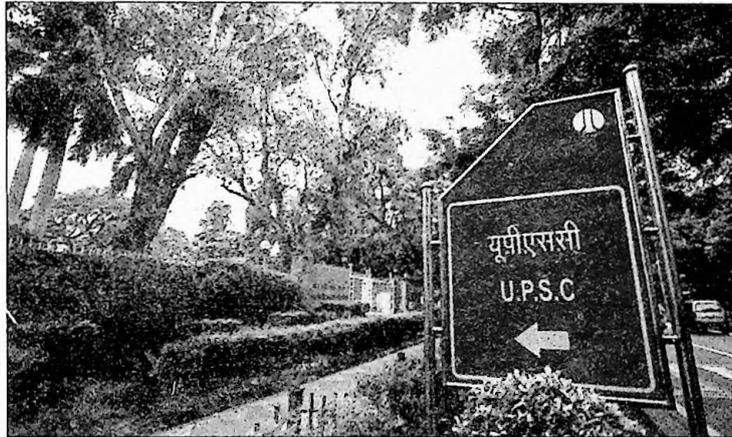


# IAS PRELIMS EXAM

## HOW TO COMMAND POLITY TOPICS

S B Singh

**W**ithout a sound strategy, no amount of hard work can assure success in a competitive examination like the Civil Services. The key to success lies in knowing the nature of the exam, right sources to follow the syllabus, and finally, a strategy that suits your individual needs. There is no single strategy that applies to all in any exam. It depends on your educational background, personal interest, and a study plan tailored to your needs. To take an example, if you are from science, engineering, or, medical background, you will find the science and technology section of the syllabus familiar. Also, the CSAT paper is easier for those who are from science and mathematics background. On the other hand, if one comes from art, humanities background, history, polity, geography, economy should appear more familiar to him. Thus, for a science stream student, the real challenge is to master the core subjects of history, polity,



geography and economics, while, for a student of art stream, science portion poses a challenge. Awareness about one's weak, unfamiliar areas of the syllabus is the starting point of preparation. The golden rule of preparation, thus is: *master your strong areas in a way that you score very high marks from those sections. At the same time, focus on your weak areas in such a way that you fetch a respectable score in these sections.* Though no part of the syllabus should be ignored because there will be questions from each part, but at

the same time, you should score maximum from two or three areas of the GS syllabus. The safest mode of preparation for the prelims exam is to ensure that you get at least qualifying marks in the CSAT paper, and then to command history, polity, geography and environment very well. From these three sections, at least 50 questions will be

asked. Then, cover economics, art and culture and current affairs reasonably well so that no area remains neglected. In other words, though all areas of the GS syllabus must be covered, but there should be a prioritization, based on the number of questions being asked from each section.

**Covering Polity for Prelims:** Polity is a subject that is liked by most of the candidates as it sounds familiar, interesting, and contemporary. The number of questions asked on polity ranges between 15-20 each year. What is most interesting about polity is its predictable nature. If one knows what to study and how to study in polity, maximum questions can be anticipated. Always remember, key to success in the exam is reading from the good

Continued on page 4

**EN QUESTION OF THE WEEK**  
Readers' views elicited on important issues  
Last date for entry submission: 30/03/2022  
**FREE SUBSCRIPTION FOR WINNERS**  
BEST ENTRY on page 39

Continued from page 1

**IAS PRELIMS EXAM: HOW TO COMMAND ...**

sources. Good sources mean original text books. Always go for reading authentic, original books written by wellknown subject experts. Though plenty of material and video lectures are available, they do not explain the nuances of polity as clearly as a good, authentic book does. An analysis of the last several years' questions clearly reveals that a clause by clause knowledge of the various constitutional provisions is essential to correctly answer the questions. To understand this with an example, let us consider that a question is being asked about holding a joint session of the both Houses of Parliament. Unless one knows all the clauses of Article 108 of the Constitution on joint sessions, it would be difficult to answer this question. Only by reading this article clause wise, the various aspects of summoning a joint session of the Parliament can be understood. In the present trend of prelims exam, the constitutional clauses appear in the options of the multiple choice questions and without understanding this article, it will be difficult to answer a question on joint session of Parliament correctly. Thus, in order to be able to correctly answer a question on Article 108, one should know the following: what is a joint session, who can summon it, who shall preside over such a session, on what grounds it can be summoned, how the voting takes place in a joint session etc. All this can be known by reading the original Article only. This necessitates the reading of the bare acts of the Constitution. For this, **P M Bakshi's book: The Indian Constitution** is a must read.

**Topics to be covered in polity:**

- I. **Meaning and types of Constitution:** What is a constitution, what purposes it serves, how it is written. Differences between unitary, federal constitutions.
- II. **Constitutional development during British rule:** Main provisions of The Regulating Act 1773, Pitts India Act 1784, Charter Acts of 1813, 1833, 1853. Government of India Act of 1858, Indian Council Acts of 1861, 1892, 1909. Government of India Acts, 1919, 1935, The Indian Independence Act 1947. The Simon Commission, Round Table Conferences, Cripps Mission, Cabinet Delegation.
- III. **The making of the Constitution:** the Constituent Assembly, manner of its election, various committees of the constituent assembly and their presidents, the objective resolution introduced by Nehru in the constituent assembly.

- IV. **Main features of the Constitution:** Internal and external sources from which it has been drawn, what accounts for such a lengthy constitution, federalism and its unique features in our constitution, secularism, judicial review, limitations on parliamentary sovereignty.
- V. **Preamble:** Its utility, whether it is a part of the Constitution, various keywords used in the preamble and their meaning: We the people of India, sovereign, secular, socialist, democratic republic, justice, dignity, fraternity, unity and integrity.
- VI. **The Union and its territories (Articles 1-4):** Interpretation of the term, "union of states"; linguistic reorganization of the states, 1956, provisions relating to creation of new states.
- VII. **Citizenship (articles 5-11):** Criteria for citizenship under article 5, 6, 7, 8 Citizenship Act 1955 enacted under article 11, its main features. Dual citizenship and overseas citizenship of India, The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The concept of citizenship, rights and obligations of citizens.
- VIII. **Fundamental Rights (Articles 12-35):** Meaning and evolution of fundamental rights, position of fundamental rights in the constitution, amendability of fundamental rights, doctrine of basic structure, article wise understanding of each fundamental right, suspension of fundamental rights during emergency.
- IX. **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP, Articles 36-51):** Nature of DPSPs, comparison between fundamental rights and DPSPs, article wise interpretation of each directive, directives given elsewhere in the constitution viz; Art. 335, 350A, 351. Implementation of DPSPs.
- X. **Fundamental Duties:** Position in the constitution, enumeration of duties, utility and limitation of duties, comparing rights with duties.
- XI. **Union Executive:** Post and position of the President, manner of election, removal by impeachment, executive, legislative, emergency powers, pardoning powers, relationship between the President and the Council of Ministers (article 74). The Council of Ministers, collective responsibility, cabinet and the cabinet committees, Cabinet secretariat, role of the cabinet secretary, functions of the PMO.
- XII. **Union Legislature (Parliament):** Functions of Parlia-

ment, composition of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, comparison of powers of the two houses, budgetary procedure in parliament, passage of bills in parliament, various parliamentary committees: composition and functions, parliamentary privileges, rules and procedures of lok Sabha and rajya Sabha, devices like the Question Hour, Zero Hour, Short duration questions, Adjournment motion, calling attention motion, censure motion, no confidence motion, powers of the speaker and his controversial role in recent times, disruption of parliament and remedial measures.

**XIII. State Executive:** Role of Governor, controversies regarding his manner of appointment and removal, discretionary powers of governor.

**XIV. State Legislature:** Provisions for unicameral and bicameral legislatures, comparison between upper and lower houses of state legislatures, role of and justification for having legislative councils.

**XV. Judiciary:** Organization of Indian judiciary, concept of an independent judiciary, what makes the judiciary independent, composition of the supreme court, appointment of judges, removal of judges, jurisdiction of supreme court, review jurisdiction, curative petition before supreme court. Creation of National Courts of Appeal, High Courts: composition, jurisdiction, subordinate courts, village courts. PIL, Judicial activism, administrative tribunals, Lok Adalats, alternative dispute resolution: mediation, reconciliation, arbitration, concept of plea bargaining, reforms in judiciary, need for an All India Judicial Service, reforms in the criminal justice system.

**XVI. Centre - State relations:** Division of legislative, administrative and financial powers between the union and the states, role of finance commission with special reference to the 15th finance commission and its terms of reference. Problem areas in Indian federalism

**XVII. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs):** Article wise provisions contained in part IX and IX A of the constitution, composition and functions of panchayats. The 11th and 12th schedules relating to functions of PRIs. PESA Act, 1996.

**XVIII. Cooperative Societies:** Constitutional provisions, Mandate of the newly formed ministry of cooperation, state and multistate cooperatives.

**XIX. Administration of Union Territories:** constitutional

**FORM IV**

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper Employment News published in the first issue every year after the last day to February, 2022.

1. Place of Publication : Delhi
2. Periodicity of its publication : Weekly
3. Printer's Name : Ms. Monideepa Mukerjee  
Address : Director General  
Publications Division,  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting,  
6th Floor, Sookna Bhawan,  
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,  
New Delhi -110003
4. Publisher's Name : Ms. Monideepa Mukerjee  
Nationality : Indian  
Address : Director General  
Publications Division,  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting,  
6th Floor, Sookna Bhawan  
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,  
New Delhi-110003
5. Editor's Name : Manogyan Rani Pal  
Nationality : Indian  
Address : Publications Division,  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting,  
7th Floor, Sookna Bhawan  
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road  
New Delhi-110003
6. Names and Addresses of individuals who own the Newspaper and Partners or more than one percent of the total capital : Wholly owned by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Government of India

I, Ms. Monideepa Mukerjee hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Publisher/Printer

provisions with special reference to the status of Delhi

**XX. Administration of scheduled and tribal areas:** provisions of the 5th and 6th Schedules

**XXI. Emergency provisions:** Provisions of Article 352, 356 and 360.

**XXII. Amendment procedure:** Provisions of Article 368. Important amendments of the constitution.

**XXIII. All India Services:** Provisions under Art. 308-323 relating to all India services, constitutional protection granted to these services, composition and functions of UPSC, recent controversy relating to deputation of the IAS in central government.

**XXIV. Anti - defection law:** Provisions of the law, controversial role of the speakers in disqualification of members, ineffectiveness of the law and need to strengthen it.

**XXV. Delimitation Commission:** Its Constitutional roots in Articles 82 and 327. Functions and composition of the commission. Recent controversy over delimitation exercise in Jammu and Kashmir

**XXVI. Electoral reforms and the role of Election Commission:** Main features of the RPA Act, 1950, electoral reforms for free and fair elections, functions of the Election Commission, reforming the election commission, electoral funding, electoral bonds, RTI and political parties, simultaneous elections.

**XXVII. Important constitutional and statutory**

**bodies:** CAG, Finance Commission, Attorney General, Advocate General, Inter-State Council, National Commissions for SCs, STs, and OBCs. National Commission for Women, National Commission for Minorities, NHRC, CVC, CBI.

**XXVIII. Comparison of Indian Constitution with the British, US and Canadian constitutions**

Besides covering the above mentioned topics, the following polity terms and terminologies must also be understood clearly. Important terms in polity: meaning of 'state', sovereignty, secularism, liberty, equality, citizenship, rights, duties, constitutional rights and statutory rights, democracy, curative petition, plea bargaining, statutory bail, parole, voting rights of prisoners, recall, referendum, plebiscite, filibustering, gerrymandering, lame duck parliament.

**Sources:**

1. P.M. Bakshi: The Constitution of India
2. Granville Austin: The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation
3. D. D. Basu: The Indian Constitution
4. S C Kashyap: Our Political System
5. Bidyut Chakrabarty: Indian Constitution: Text, context and Interpretation
6. Rules and Procedures of Lok Sabha: A Handbook (available online only)
7. A C Kapoor and K K Mishra: Select Constitutions

(S B Singh is an academician and civil services mentor. He can be reached at: sb\_singh2003@yahoo.com)  
Views expressed are personal