

Historical Background & Making of the Constitution

✈ POAO1 · Indian Polity · AFCAT GA

AFCAT Level

★ High Priority

✦ **AFCAT Focus:** Questions are direct and factual — matching an Act to its key provision is the most common pattern. Focus on: (1) which Act introduced which "first" feature, (2) Constituent Assembly — who chaired what, (3) the two critical dates: 26 Nov 1949 (adopted) and 26 Jan 1950 (enforced). The level is NCERT Class 9–10.

1. Constitutional Development Under Company Rule (1773–1858)

📄 Key Acts — Company Rule to Crown Rule (1773–1947)

🕒 Company Rule (1773–1858)

- ▶ **Regulating Act 1773:** First Parliamentary control over EIC; created post of Governor-General of Bengal — Warren Hastings was the 1st; established Supreme Court at Calcutta (1774)
- ▶ **Pitt's India Act 1784:** Dual Control system — political functions under Board of Control (Parliament) + commercial under EIC; GG

🕒 Crown Rule (1858–1947)

- ▶ **GoI Act 1858:** EIC abolished after 1857 Revolt; GG became Viceroy — Lord Canning was 1st; Secretary of State for India created in London Cabinet with 15-member India Council
- ▶ **Morley-Minto Reforms 1909:** Separate electorates for Muslims introduced (communal politics; seeds of partition); first Indian in Viceroy's Executive Council: Satyendra Prasanna Sinha

gained override power over council

- ▶ **Charter Act 1813:** EIC monopoly over Indian trade ended; ₹1 lakh annual education grant (first); missionaries permitted to enter India
- ▶ **Charter Act 1833:** EIC commercial activities stopped; GG of Bengal became GG of India – Lord William Bentinck was 1st; first Central Legislative Council for all India
- ▶ **Charter Act 1853:** EIC charter left open-ended (signalling end); competitive exams for civil services introduced (first); legislature and executive functions separated for first time

- ▶ **Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms (GoI Act 1919):** Dyarchy in provinces – Transferred subjects (Indian ministers) + Reserved subjects (Governor); first bicameral legislature at Centre (Council of State + Legislative Assembly)
- ▶ **GoI Act 1935:** Provincial Autonomy – Dyarchy abolished in provinces; three legislative lists (adopted in our Constitution); Federal Court established; 321 sections, 10 schedules – longest British Act for India

⚠ AFCAT Common Traps:

- EIC Indian trade monopoly ended = **1813** (not 1833; China trade continued until 1833)
- First GG of *India* (not Bengal) = Lord Bentinck = **Charter Act 1833**
- Competitive exams for civil services = **1853** (NOT 1833 – a very common confusion)
- Separate electorates for Muslims = **Morley-Minto 1909** (not 1919)
- Dyarchy introduced in provinces = **GoI Act 1919**; abolished in provinces = **GoI Act 1935**

2. The Constituent Assembly (1946–1950)

👥 Constituent Assembly – Formation, Persons & Key Facts

Formation

Key Dates



Cabinet Mission Plan, 1946

- ▶ Formed under **Cabinet Mission Plan 1946**
- ▶ Members **indirectly** elected by Provincial Assemblies – not by direct vote of citizens
- ▶ Approximately 1 seat per 10 lakh population
- ▶ Initial strength: **389 members**; reduced to **299** after Partition



Must memorise for AFCAT

- ▶ First meeting: **9 December 1946**
- ▶ Objectives Resolution moved by Nehru: **22 January 1947**
- ▶ Constitution *adopted*: **26 November 1949** (Constitution Day)
- ▶ Constitution *enforced*: **26 January 1950** (Republic Day)
- ▶ Total duration: **2 years 11 months 18 days** · 11 sessions · 165 days · Cost: ₹64 lakh



Key Persons

Most directly tested in AFCAT

- ▶ **President of CA:** Dr. Rajendra Prasad
- ▶ **Drafting Committee Chairman:** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (7 members) – "Father of Indian Constitution"
- ▶ **Objectives Resolution:** Jawaharlal Nehru (moved it on 13 Dec 1946)
- ▶ **Constitutional Adviser:** Sir B.N. Rau
- ▶ **First proposed CA (1934):** M.N. Roy



Numbers

Constitution – original vs current

- ▶ **Originally (1950):** 395 Articles · 22 Parts · 8 Schedules
- ▶ **Currently:** 470+ Articles · 25 Parts · 12 Schedules
- ▶ Longest written constitution in the world
- ▶ Sources: GoI Act 1935 (federal structure, emergency, 3 lists); UK (parliamentary system); USA (FRs, judicial review); Ireland (DPSP)



AFCAT PYQ Practice – POA01

Q1. Which Act introduced the system of 'Dyarchy' at the provincial level in India?

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- (a) Gol Act 1909 (b) Gol Act 1919 (c) Gol Act 1935
(d) Indian Independence Act 1947

✓ Answer: (b) Gol Act 1919

The Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms (GoI Act 1919) introduced Dyarchy in provinces — subjects were divided into Transferred (given to Indian ministers responsible to legislature) and Reserved (retained by Governor). The 1935 Act abolished provincial Dyarchy and introduced Provincial Autonomy. Option (a) 1909 introduced separate electorates, not Dyarchy.

Q2. The Indian Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on:

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- (a) 26 January 1950 (b) 15 August 1947 (c) 26 November 1949
(d) 9 December 1946

✓ Answer: (c) 26 November 1949

The Constitution was *adopted* on **26 November 1949** — now celebrated as Constitution Day (Samvidhan Diwas). It came into *force* on **26 January 1950** — Republic Day. The Constituent Assembly first met on 9 December 1946. Independence was on 15 August 1947.

Q3. Who was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution?

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- (a) Jawaharlal Nehru (b) Dr. Rajendra Prasad (c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(d) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

✓ Answer: (d) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar chaired the Drafting Committee (7 members) which drafted the text of the Constitution. He is called the "Father of the Indian Constitution." Nehru moved the Objectives Resolution. Rajendra Prasad was President of the CA. Patel chaired the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities.

Q4. The Government of India Act, 1935 provided for:

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- (a) Dyarchy at provincial level
(b) Abolition of Dyarchy at provincial level and Provincial Autonomy
(c) Separate electorates for Muslims
(d) Bicameral legislature at Centre for the first time

✓ Answer: (b) Abolition of Dyarchy and Provincial Autonomy

GoI Act 1935 abolished Dyarchy in the provinces (introduced by 1919 Act) and gave Provincial Autonomy. However, Dyarchy was ironically introduced at the Centre under 1935. Option (c) — separate electorates were in 1909; option (d) — bicameral legislature first came in 1919.

Q5. Which of the following was the first Charter Act to end the East India Company's monopoly over trade with India?

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(a) Charter Act 1793 (b) Charter Act 1813 (c) Charter Act 1833 (d) Charter Act 1853

✓ Answer: (b) Charter Act 1813

The **Charter Act 1813** ended the EIC's monopoly over trade with India (though China trade monopoly continued until 1833). It also allocated ₹1 lakh annually for Indian education — the first specific government education grant. The 1833 Act completely stopped all EIC commercial activities.

🌟 Memory Chart — POA01 Historical Background

🕒 Company Rule

Firsts

- ♦ **1773:** GG of Bengal (Warren Hastings)
- ♦ **1784:** Dual Control (Pitt's Act)
- ♦ **1813:** Education grant; trade open
- ♦ **1833:** GG of India (Bentinck)
- ♦ **1853:** Competitive exams; LS split

🕒 Crown Rule Firsts

- ♦ **1858:** Viceroy (Canning); SoS India
- ♦ **1909:** Separate electorates (Muslims)
- ♦ **1919:** Dyarchy; bicameral legislature
- ♦ **1935:** Provincial Autonomy; 3 Lists
- ♦ **1935:** Federal Court → SC 1950

📅 CA Key Facts

- ♦ **Adopted: 26 Nov 1949**
- ♦ **Enforced: 26 Jan 1950**
- ♦ CA President: Rajendra Prasad
- ♦ Drafting Cttee: Ambedkar
- ♦ Original: 395 Articles · 8 Schedules

📄 Quick Reference — POA01

📄 Act Firsts

- GG Bengal: Warren Hastings (1773)
- GG India: Bentinck (1833)
- Viceroy: Canning

👥 CA Persons

- President: Dr. Rajendra Prasad
- Drafting Cttee: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
- Objectives Resolution:

🏢 Sources

- Parliamentary system: UK
- Fundamental Rights: USA
- DPSP: Ireland

(1858)

- Separate electorates:
1909
- Competitive exam:
1853

J. Nehru

- Constitutional
Adviser: B.N. Rau
- First proposed (1934):
M.N. Roy

- Federal + Emergency:
Gol 1935
- Strong Centre:
Canada



Mock Tests



Subject Quiz



Telegram

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