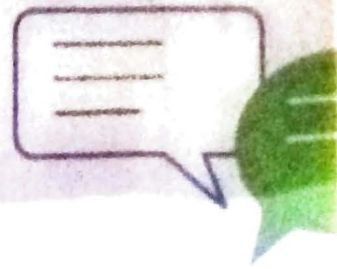


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Indian Polity for UPSC/APSC Exam Part B11: Fundamental Duties

LakshyaforIAS,
Guwahati
(lakshyaforias@gmail.com)



Fundamental Duties of the citizens are incorporated in Article 51A, Part IVA of the Constitution. Inserted by the Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act, 1976, it was part of a large number of changes brought about during the Emergency. Originally there were 10 Fundamental Duties under Article 51A, but Article 51A was amended by the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002, and the 11th Fundamental Duty was added.

List of Fundamental Duties:

- Article 51A: It shall be the duty of every citizen of India –
- To abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
 - To cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
 - To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
 - To defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
 - To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
 - To value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
 - To protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures;
 - To develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;

- To safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- To strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement.
- Who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and 14 years of age.

Features of Fundamental Duties:

- Some of them are moral duties while others are civic duties. For example, cherishing noble ideas of the freedom struggle is a moral duty and respecting the Constitution is a civic duty.
- They refer to the values which have been a part of Indian tradition, mythology, religions and practices.
- Fundamental Duties are confined to citizens only and do not extend to foreigners.
- Fundamental Duties are non-justiciable.

Criticism of Fundamental Duties:

- The list of duties does not cover important duties like casting votes, paying taxes, etc.
- Some of the duties are vague, ambiguous and difficult to be understood by the common people.
- Critics say that they are code of moral precepts as they are non-justiciable in nature.
- Their inclusion in the Constitution was described by the critics as superfluous.

Usefulness of Fundamental Duties:

Fundamental Duties of citizens serve a useful purpose. In particular, no democratic polity can

ever succeed where the citizens are not willing to be active participants in the process of governance by assuming responsibilities and discharging citizenship duties and coming forward to give their best to the country.

The most important task before us is to reconcile the claims of the individual citizen and those of the civic society. To achieve this, it is important to orient the individual citizen to be conscious of his social and citizenship responsibilities and so shape the society that we all become solicitous and considerate of the inalienable rights of our fellow citizens. Therefore, awareness of our citizenship duties is as important as awareness of our rights.

Every right implies a corresponding duty but every duty does not imply a corresponding right. Man does not live for himself alone. He lives for the good of others as well as of himself. It is this knowledge of what is right and wrong that makes a man responsible to himself and to the society and this knowledge is inculcated by imbibing and clearly understanding one's citizenship duties.

Fundamental Duties are the foundation of human dignity and national character. If every citizen performs his duties irrespective of considerations of caste, creed, colour and language, most of the malaises of the present day polity could be contained, if not eradicated, and the society as a whole uplifted. Rich or poor, in power or out of power, obedience to citizenship duty, at all costs and risks, is the essence of civilised life.

(Note: General Studies and Assamese Compulsory paper of APSC CCE will start from January. To enroll, contact 9085601887 / 6002400025)