



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the constitutional powers and functions of the President of India, highlighting their role as both the ceremonial head of the state and the guardian of the Constitution. **(250 Words)**

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Approach

- Write an Introduction about the President of India.
- Write the power and functions of the President assigned by the constitution of India.
- Mention the importance of the President as ceremonial head of state and guardian of the constitution.
- Write appropriate conclusions.

Introduction

The **President of India** is the **head of state** and the **supreme commander** of the Indian Armed Forces. The powers and functions of the President are outlined in the **Constitution**. The **President's role** is largely ceremonial, but certain powers and functions are significant in the functioning of the Indian government.

Body

Some key constitutional powers and functions of the President:

Executive Powers:

- **Appointment of the Prime Minister:** The President appoints the **Prime Minister**. The Prime Minister is usually the leader of the majority party in the **Lok Sabha (the lower house of Parliament)**. The President appoints other members of the **Council of Ministers** on the advice of the **Prime Minister**.

Legislative Powers:

- **Summoning and Proroguing of Parliament:** The President has the authority to **summon** and **prorogue** both houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha). The President also has the power to **dissolve the Lok Sabha**.
- **Addressing Parliament:** The President addresses both houses of Parliament at the beginning of the first session after each general election.

Financial Powers:

- **Budget Approval:** The President causes the budget to be laid before Parliament and, after general discussion, allows it to be voted on.

Military Powers:

- **Commander-in-Chief:** The President is the **supreme commander** of the **Indian Armed Forces**, and **all armed forces'** commands are exercised by him/her (Art 53).

Judicial Powers:

- **Pardon and Reprieve:** The President has the power to **grant pardons, reprieves, respites, or remissions** of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offense (Art 72).

Emergency Powers:

- **Proclamation of Emergency:** The President can proclaim a **state of emergency** if he/she is satisfied that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India or any part of its territory is threatened, whether by **war** or **external aggression** or **armed rebellion (Art 352-360)**.

The President of India plays a dual role, serving as both the **ceremonial head of the state** and the **guardian of the Constitution**. These roles underscore the symbolic and constitutional aspects of the President's position:

Ceremonial Head of the State:

- **Symbolic Representation:** The President represents the unity and integrity of the nation. The ceremonial aspects of the office involve state functions, ceremonies, and events where the President acts as the symbol of the Indian state.
- **Diplomatic Protocol:** The President hosts foreign dignitaries, receives credentials of ambassadors, and participates in state visits. These activities contribute to projecting India's image on the global stage.

Guardian of the Constitution:

- **Assent to Legislation:** The President has the power to assent to bills passed by Parliament. In certain circumstances, the President can also return the bill for reconsideration or refuse assent, potentially preventing legislation that might violate the Constitution.

Conclusion

The President holds a pivotal position, embodying both the ceremonial essence of national unity and the constitutional duty of safeguarding democratic principles. Through a careful balance of executive, legislative, diplomatic, military, and emergency powers, the President plays a crucial role in upholding the democratic fabric of the nation.