Constitutional and Non-Constitutional Bodies

Constitutional Bodies

Election Commission of India (ECI)

- Constitutional Basis: Article 324
- Structure: Comprises a Chief Election Commissioner along with other Election Commissioners, the number of whom is decided by the President of India. Currently, the Commission consists of one Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
- Appointment: The President appoints members based on recommendations from a three-member Selection Committee, which includes the Prime Minister, a Union Minister nominated by the Prime Minister, and the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- **Tenure:** Members serve for six years or until reaching the age of 65, whichever comes first.
- **Removal:** The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed using the same procedure and grounds as a Supreme Court judge. Other Election Commissioners may be removed following the Chief Election Commissioner's recommendation.
- **Resignation:** Members may resign by submitting a written resignation to the President.
- **Post-Tenure Opportunities:** Members can be reappointed to other positions by the Union Government.
- Functions: The Commission oversees the supervision, direction, and control of elections for the Parliament, State Legislatures, the President, and the Vice-President.

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

- Constitutional Basis: Articles 315 to 323
- **Structure:** Consists of a Chairman and several members as appointed by the President.
- **Appointment:** Members are appointed by the President, and at least half of them must have held office under the Government for at least 10 years.
- **Tenure:** Members hold office for six years or until they turn 65, whichever is earlier.
- **Removal:** The President may remove members following constitutional provisions, especially on grounds of misbehavior, subject to an inquiry by the Supreme Court.

- **Resignation:** Members may resign by writing to the President.
- Post-Tenure Employment: The Chairman cannot take up any further employment; other members may be appointed as Chairman or members of UPSC or State PSCs but cannot hold other posts. Neither Chairman nor members can serve a second term.
- **Functions:** UPSC acts as the central agency responsible for recruiting personnel for various government services.

State Public Service Commission (SPSC)

- Constitutional Basis: Articles 315 to 323
- **Structure:** Includes a Chairman and members as decided by the Governor of the state.
- Appointment: Members are appointed by the state Governor.
- **Tenure:** Members serve for six years or until the age of 62, whichever is earlier.
- Removal: Although appointed by the Governor, removal can only be carried out by the President under constitutional conditions, including Supreme Court inquiry for misbehavior.
- **Resignation:** Members may resign by submitting a resignation to the Governor.
- Post-Tenure Appointment: Chairpersons can be appointed as UPSC or SPSC chairpersons or members but cannot take up other employment. Members have similar appointment options but no second term eligibility.
- **Functions:** Responsible for conducting examinations for recruitment to state services.

Finance Commission of India (FCI)

- Constitutional Basis: Article 280
- **Structure:** Consists of a Chairman and four other members appointed by the President.
- Appointment: President appoints all members.
- Qualification of members- The Chairman must have experience in Public Affairs. The other four members should be chosen from people who are either:
 - A High Court judge or someone qualified to be a judge,
 - An expert in government finance and accounts,
 - o Experienced in financial matters and administration,
 - Or an expert in Economics.
- Term: Duration is fixed by the President's order.
- **Post-Tenure Appointment:** Members may be reappointed.
- **Functions:** Makes recommendations on the distribution of tax revenues between the Centre and states, principles for grants-in-aid to states, measures to

strengthen funds of Panchayats and Municipalities based on state recommendations, and other finance-related matters referred by the President.

Goods and Services Tax Council (GST Council)

- **Constitutional Basis:** Article 279-A (introduced by the 101st Constitutional Amendment, 2016)
- **Structure:** Chaired by the Union Finance Minister and includes the Union Minister of State for Revenue or Finance, along with finance or taxation ministers nominated by each state government.
- **Secretariat Location:** New Delhi, with the Union Revenue Secretary acting as ex-officio secretary.
- **Functions:** Advises the Centre and states on the structure of GST including tax rates, exemptions, principles of levy, apportionment of inter-state GST, and model GST laws. The Chairperson of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is a permanent non-voting invitee.

National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)

- Constitutional Basis: Article 338
- **Structure:** Comprises a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and three members, appointed by the President.
- **Tenure:** Three years
- **Post-Tenure Appointment:** Limited to two terms maximum.
- Functions: Ensures protection and safeguards for Scheduled Castes and the Anglo-Indian community across social, economic, educational, and cultural domains.

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- Constitutional Basis: Article 338-A
- **Structure:** Consists of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and three members appointed by the President.
- **Tenure:** Three years
- Post-Tenure Appointment: Limited to two terms maximum.
 Functions: Works to protect the interests and provide safeguards for Scheduled Tribes in social, economic, educational, and cultural matters.

National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)

• **Constitutional Basis:** Article 338-B (introduced by the 102nd Constitutional Amendment, 2018)

- **Structure:** Includes a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and three members, all appointed by the President.
- **Tenure:** Three years
- Post-Tenure Appointment: Limited to two terms.
- **Functions:** Focuses on safeguarding the interests of socially and educationally backward classes, ensuring protection in social, economic, educational, and cultural fields.

Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities (CLM)

- Constitutional Basis: Article 350-B (7th Amendment, 1956)
- Structure: A one-member body appointed by the President.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi, with regional offices in Belgaum (Karnataka), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), and Kolkata (West Bengal).
- Ministry: Falls under the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Functions:** Investigates safeguards for linguistic minorities, submits reports to the President, and monitors implementation through visits, conferences, and other mechanisms.

Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)

Constitutional Provisions:

- Articles 148 to 151 of the Constitution deal with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.
- The CAG is a **constitutional authority**.

Appointment and Term:

- Appointed by the **President of India** by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Term: 6 years or until the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- Takes an oath before the President.
- Can **resign** by writing to the President.

Removal Process:

- Same as that of a **Supreme Court judge**.
- Can be removed **on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity**.
- Requires a special majority in both Houses of Parliament.

Independence:

• Cannot be removed at the **President's pleasure**.

- Ineligible for further government office after retirement.
- Salary and service conditions are determined by Parliament.
- Expenditure of the CAG is charged on the Consolidated Fund of India (not subject to vote in Parliament).
- No minister can represent the CAG in Parliament.

Duties and Powers (Article 149):

The CAG is empowered to audit:

- Accounts of the Union and State governments.
- Expenditure from the Consolidated Fund, Contingency Fund, and Public Account of India and the states.
- Accounts of government companies, PSUs, and other bodies substantially financed by the government.
- Certifies net proceeds of taxes.
- Audits transactions related to debt, advances, and suspense accounts.
- Submits reports to the President/Governor, which are then laid before Parliament/State Legislature.

Types of Audits:

- Compliance/Regularity Audit Examines legality and regularity of expenditure.
- Performance Audit Evaluates efficiency and effectiveness of government programs.
- Propriety Audit Assesses wastefulness or extravagance in public spending (discretionary).

Reports:

- The CAG submits reports to:
 - \circ **President** (for Union matters) \rightarrow **Laid before Parliament**.
 - Governor (for State matters) → Laid before State Legislature.
- Examined by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU).

Attorney General of India (AGI)

- Constitutional Basis: Articles 76, 88, 105
- Appointment: Appointed by the President.
- Qualifications Must be a citizen of India, and Must have been a judge of a High Court for 5 years; OR an advocate of a High Court for 10 years; OR a distinguished jurist in the opinion of the President of India.

- **Tenure:** Not fixed constitutionally.
- **Resignation:** By submitting resignation to the President.
- **Remuneration:** Determined by the President.
- The Attorney General of India (AGI) is a part of the Union Executive.
 - The Union Executive consists of:
 - The President,
 - The Vice-President,
 - o The Prime Minister,
 - o The Council of Ministers (CoM), and
 - The Attorney General of India (AGI).

• Functions:

- Serves as the chief legal advisor to the Central Government and represents it in the Supreme Court and High Courts.
- Article 88 of the Constitution confers on AGI the right to speak, right to participate in the proceedings of either House, any joint sitting of the Houses, and any committee of Parliament of which he may be named a member.
- However, in such proceedings, the Attorney general is not entitled to vote in such proceedings.

Advocate General of the State (AGS)

- Constitutional Basis: Articles 165, 177, 194
- Appointment: Appointed by the Governor of the respective state.
- **Tenure:** Not specified by the Constitution.
- **Criteria for appointment** Must be a citizen of India. He must also be eligible to become a High Court judge. This means:
 - He should be a barrister with over 5 years of experience, or
 - A civil servant with over 10 years of service, including at least 3 years in a
 Zila Court, or
 - A pleader with more than 10 years of practice in any High Court.
 - Also, he must be under 62 years of age, which is the maximum age for a High Court judge.
- **Resignation:** By writing to the Governor.
- **Remuneration:** Determined by the Governor.
- **Functions:** Acts as the principal legal advisor to the State Government and represents it in courts, including the Supreme Court and High Courts.

NITI Aayog

- The Union Cabinet passed a **resolution** on January 1, 2015, creating the **National Institution for Transforming India**, or NITI Aayog.
- It is the top policy "Think Tank" of the Indian government, offering input on direction and policy.

• Organization:

- o PM the ex-officio chairman
- Vice-Chairperson
- o Three full-time members
- Four ex-officio Members
- Chief Executive officer

• Composition:

- o PM as Chairman
- o Governing Council CM and Lt Governor/Administrator
- Regional Council
- Special Invitees

Objective

- To build, with the active participation of States, a common vision of national development priorities, sectors, and strategies.
- To continuously promote cooperative federalism through organised support programmes and procedures with the States, acknowledging that powerful States lead to powerful nations.
- To create methods for creating reliable plans at the village level and gradually combining these at higher tiers of governance.
- To make sure that the interests of national security are taken into account in economic policy in the sectors that are particularly mentioned.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

• The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India is an independent statutory body established on 12 October 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

Objectives

- To strengthen institutional arrangements that allow for a comprehensive and focused approach to addressing human rights issues.
- To investigate allegations of excesses by authorities independently, demonstrating the government's commitment to safeguarding human rights.
- To complement and bolster existing efforts aimed at promoting and protecting human rights.

Key Functions

- Investigates complaints of human rights violations or negligence in preventing such violations by public servants, either suo motu or on petition.
- Reviews safeguards provided under the Constitution and laws for the protection of human rights and recommends measures for their effective implementation.
- Studies international treaties and instruments on human rights and advises the government on their effective implementation.
- Visits prisons and detention centers to observe living conditions and makes recommendations for improvements.
- Promotes human rights awareness and undertakes research and education in the field of human rights.
- Composition: The National Human Rights Commission is a multi-member body.
 - It consists of a chairperson and five members, each bringing a wealth of experience and expertise to the commission. The composition is as follows:
 - Full-Time Members: The chairperson should be either a retired Chief
 Justice of India or a judge of the Supreme Court.
 - Members include a sitting or retired judge of the Supreme Court, a sitting or retired Chief Justice of a High Court, and three individuals (with at least one being a woman) who possess knowledge or practical experience in human rights.
 - Seven Ex-officio Members: In addition to these full-time members, the commission includes seven ex-officio members, comprising the chairpersons of various national commissions, including:
 - The National Commission for Minorities
 - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (SCs)
 - The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (STs)
 - The National Commission for Women
 - The National Commission for Backward Classes (BCs)
 - The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
 - The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities
- Appointments: President, on recommendations of a 6-member committee=PM +
 Speaker LS +Deputy Chairman of RS +Leaders of opposition (LS + RS) + Union
 Home Minister.
- **Removal**: The President of India can remove the NHRC chairperson or members under certain circumstances, including insolvency, engaging in outside paid employment, physical or mental incapacity, being declared of unsound mind, or conviction and imprisonment for a crime.

- **Headquarters**: The headquarters is in New Delhi, with the authority to establish offices elsewhere in India.
- **Reports**: The National Commission of Human Rights is required to submit an annual report to both the Central Government and the relevant State Government.
- NHRC Salaries and Allowances: The salaries, allowances, and other conditions of service for the chairperson and members are set by the Central government.

State Human Rights Commission (SHRC)

- The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) is a statutory body in India, established under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act of 1993.
- **Objective**: It is tasked with safeguarding rights relating to life, liberty, equality, and dignity of individuals, which are guaranteed by the Constitution of India and embodied in the international covenants.

Objectives

- To strengthen the institutional arrangements through which human rights issues could be addressed in their entirety in a more focussed manner,
- To look into the allegations of excesses, independently of the government, in a manner that would underline the government's commitment to protect human rights,
- To complement and strengthen the efforts that have already been made in this direction.
- Composition: The State Human Rights Commission is a multi-member body consisting of:
 - A Chairperson, and two other members.
 - The chairman should be a retired Chief Justice or a judge of high Court and members should be serving or retired judge of a High Court or a Judge in the state with a minimum of 7 years experience as District Judge and a person having knowledge or practical experience with respect to human rights.
- Appointment: The chairperson and members are appointed by the Governor on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the chief minister as its head, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the state home minister and the leader of the opposition in the Legislative Assembly.
 - In the case of a state having a Legislative Council, the chairman of the Council and the leader of the opposition in the Council would also be the members of the committee.

- **Tenure**: The chairperson and members hold office for a term of three years or until they attain the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier. They are eligible for re-appointment.
- Salaries and allowances: The salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the chairperson or a member are determined by the state government. But they cannot be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.
- **Removal**: Although the chairperson and members of a State Human Rights Commission are appointed by the governor, they can be removed only by the President (and not by the Governor).

Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)

- The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), a **statutory body** in India, is the main agency for **preventing corruption** in the **Central** Government.
- Mandate: It is conceived as the apex vigilance institution, monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government and advising various authorities in Central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing, and reforming their vigilance work.
- Headquarters: New Delhi.
- **Establishment**: It was established in **1964** by an **Executive Resolution** of the Central Government on the recommendation of the **Santhanam Committee** on Prevention of Corruption (1962-64).
 - Thus, originally, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) was neither a constitutional body nor a statutory body.
 - Later, it was conferred statutory status by the Central Vigilance Commission Act, (CVC Act) 2003.
- **Composition**: The Central Vigilance Commission is a multi-member body consisting of:
 - o A Central Vigilance Commissioner as the Chairperson of the CVC, and
 - Not more than two Vigilance Commissioners (VCs).
- **Appointments**: By the President of India by warrant under his/her hand and seal on the recommendation of a three-member Committee consisting of:
 - The Prime Minister as the Chairperson
 - A Union Minister of Home Affairs
 - The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- Tenure: The Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) and Vigilance Commissioner (VCs) hold office for a term of four years or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
 - They are not eligible for further employment after their tenure under the Central Government or the State Government.

- **Removal**: The President of India can remove the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) and Vigilance Commissioner (VCs) from office.
- **Investigations**: For investigation work, CVC has to depend on two external sources CBI and Chief Vigilance Officers (CVO).
- **Reports**: The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) presents an annual report on its performance to the President.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is a multidisciplinary investigation agency of the Government of India that investigates corruption-related cases, economic offences, and cases of conventional crime.
- As India's foremost investigative agency, it provides a centralized mechanism for high-quality investigations.
- **Establishment**: In 1963, the CBI was officially formed following a resolution from the Ministry of Home Affairs, based on the recommendations of the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption.
 - It was subsequently transferred to the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions, enhancing its operational framework.
- Organizational Structure: The CBI is led by a Director, typically an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the rank of Director General of Police. The agency comprises various ranks, including Special Directors, Additional Directors, and Joint Directors, organized into seven divisions, each focusing on specialized areas.

• Key Divisions:

- **Anti-Corruption Branch**: Investigates corruption-related offenses involving public officials.
- Economic Offenses Wing: Deals with financial crimes, such as fraud and money laundering.
- Special Crimes Unit: Handles high-profile cases, including terrorism and other serious offenses.
- Appointment: The Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation is appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, based on the recommendations of a Selection Committee, as stipulated in the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act of 1946. The Appointment Committee is composed of:
 - Prime Minister Chairperson
 - Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha or the Leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha – Member
 - Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court Judge recommended by the Chief Justice – Member

- Tenure: The Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Act, 2021 allows for extending the Director's tenure from two years to a maximum of five years.
 - However, it is important to note that extensions can only be granted for one year at a time.

Central Information Commission (CIC)

- The Central Information Commission (CIC) is a statutory body in India, established under the provisions of the Right to Information Act (2005).
- It functions as the overseer for implementing the RTI Act in the organizations of the Central Government as well as Union Territories (UTs).
 - It looks into the complaints made to it and decides the appeals regarding matters related to the RTI Act and pertaining to the public offices under the Central Government and the UTs.
- Composition: It consists of a Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten Information Commissioners.
- **Appointment:** They are appointed by the **President** on the recommendation of a Committee consisting of:
 - The Prime Minister as the Chairperson,
 - o The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and
 - o A Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
- **Qualification**: The Chief Information Commissioner and the Information Commissioners should be persons of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in
 - o Law,
 - Science, and Technology,
 - Social service,
 - Management,
 - Journalism,
 - o Mass media.
 - Administration and governance.

They should NOT be

- A Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union Territory.
- Holding any other office of profit
- Connected with any political party
- Carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.
- **Tenure**: The Chief Information Commissioner and an Information Commissioner hold office for such term as prescribed by the Central Government or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

- The Chief Information Commissioner as well as Information Commissioners are not eligible for reappointment.
- **Removal**: The President can remove the Chief Information Commissioner or any Information Commissioner from the office.
- Salary and Service Conditions: The salary, allowances, and other service conditions of the Chief Information Commissioner and an Information Commissioner shall be such as prescribed by the Central Government.

Powers of CIC

- The Commission can **suo-moto** order an inquiry into any matter if there are reasonable grounds.
- While inquiring, the Commission has the powers of a Civil Court.

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- **Establishment**: Under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, which was enacted in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.
- Objective: To investigate and prosecute offences that threatens India's sovereignty, security, and integrity, friendly relations with foreign States, matters relating to international treaties etc
- **Schedule of Offences**: The Act includes a schedule of laws under which the NIA can investigate and prosecute offences-
 - The Explosive Substances Act, 1908.
 - The Atomic Energy Act, 1962.
 - Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
 - Anti-Hijacking Act, 2016.
 - Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982.
 - Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Maritime Navigation and Fixed Platforms on continental shelf Act, 2002
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005
 - The SAARC Convention (Suppression of Terrorism) Act, 1993
- Headquarters: New Delhi with 2 Zonal offices at Guwahati & Jammu.

- **Headed by:** Director-General (DG), who is a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.
- Jurisdiction: It extends to the whole of India and it applies also
 - o To citizens of India outside India.
 - o To persons in the service of the Government wherever they may be.
 - To persons on ships and aircrafts registered in India wherever they may be, and
 - To persons who commit a Scheduled Offence beyond India against the Indian citizen or affecting the interest of India.

Powers of NIA:

- Investigation: Central Government can direct NIA to investigate when it
 is of the opinion that a Scheduled Offence has been committed.
- Prosecution: The NIA can prosecute cases in specially designated NIA courts.
- Coordination with State Police: It collaborates with state law enforcement agencies during investigations.
- Extraterritorial Operations: The agency can investigate and prosecute offences committed outside India, subject to international cooperation agreements.

Lokpal and Lokayukta

- Under an act of Parliament (Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013) Statutory
 Body.
- Lokpal at Centre and Lokayukta at State.

About Lokpal

- Composition: Lokpal is a multi-member body that consists of one chairperson and a maximum of 8 members.
- Qualification:

- Chairperson of the Lokpal should be either the former Chief Justice of India or the former Judge of Supreme Court or an eminent person with impeccable integrity and outstanding ability, having special knowledge and expertise of minimum 25 years in the matters relating to anti-corruption policy, public administration, vigilance, finance including insurance and banking, law and management.
- Out of the maximum eight members, half will be judicial members and minimum 50% of the Members will be from SC/ ST/ OBC/ Minorities and women.
- The judicial member of the Lokpal is either a former Judge of the Supreme Court or a former Chief Justice of a High Court.
- The non-judicial member should be an eminent person with impeccable integrity and outstanding ability, having special knowledge and expertise of minimum 25 years in the matters relating to anti-corruption policy, public administration, vigilance, finance including insurance and banking, law and management.
- **Term for members**: 5 years or till the age of 70 years.
- Appointment: Appointed by the President after obtaining the recommendations of a Selection Committee consisting of-
 - Prime Minister (Chairperson)
 - Speaker of Lok Sabha
 - Leader of Opposition /Leader of single largest opposition party in Lok
 Sabha
 - Chief Justice of India/Judge of the Supreme Court nominated by him/her
 - One eminent jurist to be nominated by the President
- Jurisdiction of Lokpal: Includes Prime Minister (except on allegations of corruption relating to international relations, security, the public order, atomic energy and space), Ministers, members of Parliament, Groups A, B, C and D officers and officials of Central Government.

Powers and Functions

- Superintendence Over Investigations of Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) concerning matters referred for preliminary inquiry or investigation.
- Can authorize agencies to search for and seize documents relevant to an investigation.
- Central Vigilance Commission must report to the Lokpal on actions taken on referred complaints, with the Lokpal issuing guidelines for effective disposal.
- Powers of a civil court for the purpose of any preliminary inquiry, the
 Inquiry Win Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
- g under the Superintendence: It has the power of superintendence and directs any investigative agency, including the Central Bureau of Investigation, for cases referred to it by the Lokpal.
- Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (FCRA): Jurisdiction includes foreign donations in excess of Rs 10 Lakhs per year under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act.
- The Act provides a requirement for establishing **Lokayukta** institutions through state legislation within 365 days of the Act coming into effect.