

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

UPSC 2021 · 10 marks

Mention the founding principles that define India's Constitution.

● **FLOW SNAPSHOT** — how the answer moves**Intro routes**

- R1** authority belongs to the people, not Crown/class/ruler
→ sovereignty is the base
- R2** **Austin**: "social document" → unity + democracy + social revolution as the frame

Body flow

popular sovereignty ("We, the People") → republic + democracy (adult franchise, responsible executive) → rule of law / Article 14 → Fundamental Rights (Part III → political democracy) → DPSP (Part IV → social-economic democracy) → secularism (Articles 25–30, S.R. Bommai) → federalism with strong Union → independent judiciary

Counter-view

Austin's social aim vs **K.T. Shah** — Constitution "almost entirely political and not at all social or economic"

Conclusion routes

- R1** these principles fuse a plural society into one democratic community
- R2** political democracy + social democracy together → peaceful social revolution

India's constitution rests on a conviction: that authority belongs to the people, not to any Crown, class or ruler. Granville Austin called it "first and foremost a social document", built to combine national unity, democracy and social revolution.

Popular sovereignty is the base, expressed in "We, the People of India". From it flows republicanism and democracy - an elected head of state, universal adult franchise and a responsible executive. Rule of law and equality before law, anchored in Article 14, ensure that no authority stands above the law.

Fundamental Rights in Part III secure civil and political democracy, while the DPSPs in Part IV lay the ground for social & economic democracy.

Secularism, reflected in Articles 25-30 and affirmed in *S.R. Bommai vs. Union of India*, keeps the state neutral while permitting social reform. Federalism with a strong Union holds a diverse country together and an independent judiciary guards these limits.

Together these principles turn a plural society into one democratic political community committed to social transformation.