

REFERENCE MATERIAL (GENERAL KNOWLEDGE) FOR CLASS

9th AND 10th

Please Note - This material is **only** for reference. Students are encouraged to also read from other sources.

Students are requested to refer to the General Knowledge section of classes 6 to 8 as well.

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PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

⁵In India, the Panchayati Raj system is identified as the prime instrument of decentralization through which democracy becomes truly representative and responsive. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) are considered as local self-government meant for providing basic infrastructure facilities, empowering weaker sections of the society and initiating the development process at the grass-roots level of rural India. The 73rd and 74th Amendments to its Constitution in 1992 added a three tier of local self-government to its federal structure. With the passage of 73rd Amendment Act, people's participation in the process of planning, decision-making, implementation and delivery system in rural India has been recognized. The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect from 24th April, 1993 has vested constitutional status on PRIs. The Act requires the state governments to devolve the functions, finance and functionaries pertaining to 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution to the PRIs to enable these bodies to function as institutions of self government. While Panchayat elections have been regularly held in most States and Union Territories after every 5 years, reservations have been provided to the women, Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes in proportion to their share of the population in each panchayat area.

The Three-Tier System of Panchayati Raj in India :

Village Level : In the structure of the Panchayati Raj, the village panchayat is the lowest unit. The panchayat chiefly consists of representatives elected by the people of the village. Only the persons who are registered as voters and do not hold any office of profit under the government are eligible for election to the panchayat. The panchayat is accountable to the general body of the village known as Gram Sabha. The Gram Panchayat must present its

⁵ <http://yojana.gov.in/>

budget, accounts of the previous year and annual administrative report before the Gram Sabha. Furthermore, it has to secure the latter's approval of the village production plan, proposals for taxation and development programmes before they are enforced by the panchayat.

Block Level : Block/ Union is the second or intermediate level of local self government in rural India. In Andhra Pradesh, it is known as Mandal Parishad, in Assam, it is known as Anchalik Panchayat, in Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab and Rajasthan it is known as Panchayat Samiti. Usually, a Panchayat Samiti consists of 20 - 60 villages depending on area and population. As the Chief Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti, the Block Development Officer is entrusted with the responsibility for implementing the resolutions of the Samiti and its Standing Committees. He prepares the budget and places it before the Samiti for approval. He also prepares the annual report of the Samiti and sends it to the Zila Parishad and the State Government. He is accountable to the president of the Samiti for his action. Panchayat Samiti supervises the work of the Panchayats and scrutinizes their budgets. It also reserves the right to suggest measures for improving the functioning of the Panchayats. The Samiti is charged with the responsibility of preparing and implementing plans for the development of agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, small scale and cottage industries, rural health etc.

District Level : Except in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the District / Zila Panchayat constitutes the apex body of the three-tier structure of the PRI. The Panchayat at the district level is called Zila Parishad in most of the States. In Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh it is called Zila Parishad and in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Gujarat its name is District Panchayat. The Chairman of the Zila Parishad is elected from among its members. There is a Chief Executive Officer in the Zila Parishad who is deputed to the Zila Parishad by the State Government. There are subject matter specialists or officers at the district level in all the states for various development programmes. The Zila Parishad, for the most part, performs co-ordinating and supervisory functions. It coordinates the activities of the Panchayat Samiti falling within its jurisdiction. In certain states the Zila Parishad also approves the budgets of the Panchayat Samitis. The Zila Parishad also renders necessary advice to the Government with regard to the implementation of the various development schemes. It is also responsible for the maintenance of primary and secondary schools, hospitals, dispensaries, minor irrigation works etc. and promotes local industries and art.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

⁶The Constitution offers all citizens, individually and collectively, some basic freedoms. These are guaranteed in the Constitution in the form of six broad categories of Fundamental Rights, which are justifiable. Article 12 to 35 contained in Part III of the Constitution deals with Fundamental Rights. These are - Right to Equality, Right to Freedom, Right against Exploitation, Right to Freedom of Religion, Cultural and Educational Rights and Right to Constitutional Remedies.

⁷ Article 12	In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires, “the State” includes the Government and Parliament of India and the Government and the Legislature of each of the States and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.
Article 13	Laws inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights.
Article 14	Equality before law.
Article 15	Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
Article 16	Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
Article 17	Abolition of Untouchability
Article 18	Abolition of titles.
Article 19	Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc.
Article 20	Protection in respect of conviction for offences.
Article 21	Protection of life and personal liberty.
Article 21A	Right to education.
Article 22	Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases.
Article 23	Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.
Article 24	Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.

⁶ <https://knowindia.india.gov.in/profile/fundamental-rights.php>

⁷ <https://www.mea.gov.in/>

Article 25	Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
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Article 26	Freedom to manage religious affairs.
Article 27	Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion.
Article 28	Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions.
Article 29	Protection of interests of minorities.
Article 30	Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.
Article 31	Right to Property - Repealed by the Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Act, 1978
Article 32	Remedies for enforcement of rights conferred by this Part.
Article 33	Power of Parliament to modify the rights conferred by this Part in their application to Forces, etc.
Article 34	Restriction on rights conferred by this Part while martial law is in force in any area.
Article 35	Legislation to give effect to the provisions of this Part.

DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY ⁸

The Constitution lays down certain Directive Principles of State Policy, which though not justiciable, are 'fundamental in governance of the country', and it is the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws. These lay down that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order, in which justice-social, economic and political-shall form in all institutions of national life. Fundamental Rights are legal obligations, whereas the DPSPs is the moral obligation of the state to follow. The State shall direct its policy in such a manner as to secure the right of all men and women to an adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work and within limits of its economic capacity and development, to make effective provision for securing the right to work, education and to public assistance in the event of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement or other cases of undeserved want. The State shall also endeavour to secure to workers a living wage, humane conditions of work, a decent standard of life, and full involvement of workers in management of industries.

In the economic sphere, the State is to direct its policy in such a manner as to secure distribution of ownership and control of material resources of the community to subserve the

common good, and to ensure that operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to common detriment.

List of DPSPs under Indian Constitution⁹

Article 36	In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires, “the State” has the same meaning as in Part III.
Article 37	The provisions contained in this Part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

Article 38 State to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people.

⁸ <https://knowindia.india.gov.in/profile/directive-principles-of-state-policy.php>

⁹ <https://www.mea.gov.in/>

Article 39	Certain principles of policy to be followed by the State.
Article 39A	Equal justice and free legal aid.
Article 40	Organisation of village panchayats.
Article 41	Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases.
Article 42	Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.
Article 43	Living wage, etc., for workers.
Article 43A	Participation of workers in management of industries.

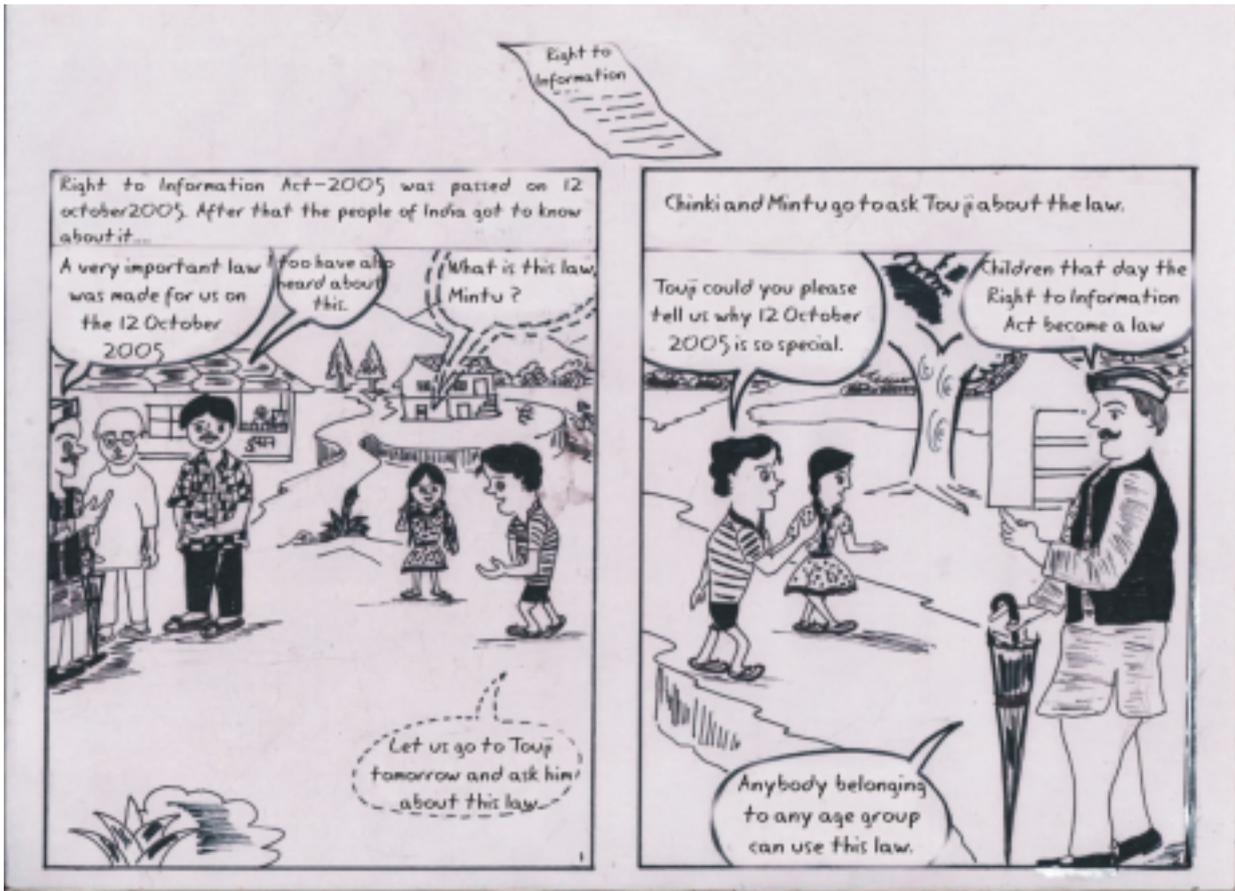
Article 44	Uniform civil code for the citizens
Article 45	Provision for free and compulsory education for children
Article 46	Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.
Article 47	Duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health.
Article 48	Organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry
Article 48A	Protection and improvement of environment and safeguarding of forests and wildlife
Article 49	Protection of monuments and places and objects of national importance.
Article 50	Separation of judiciary from executive.
Article 51	Promotion of international peace and security.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION¹⁰

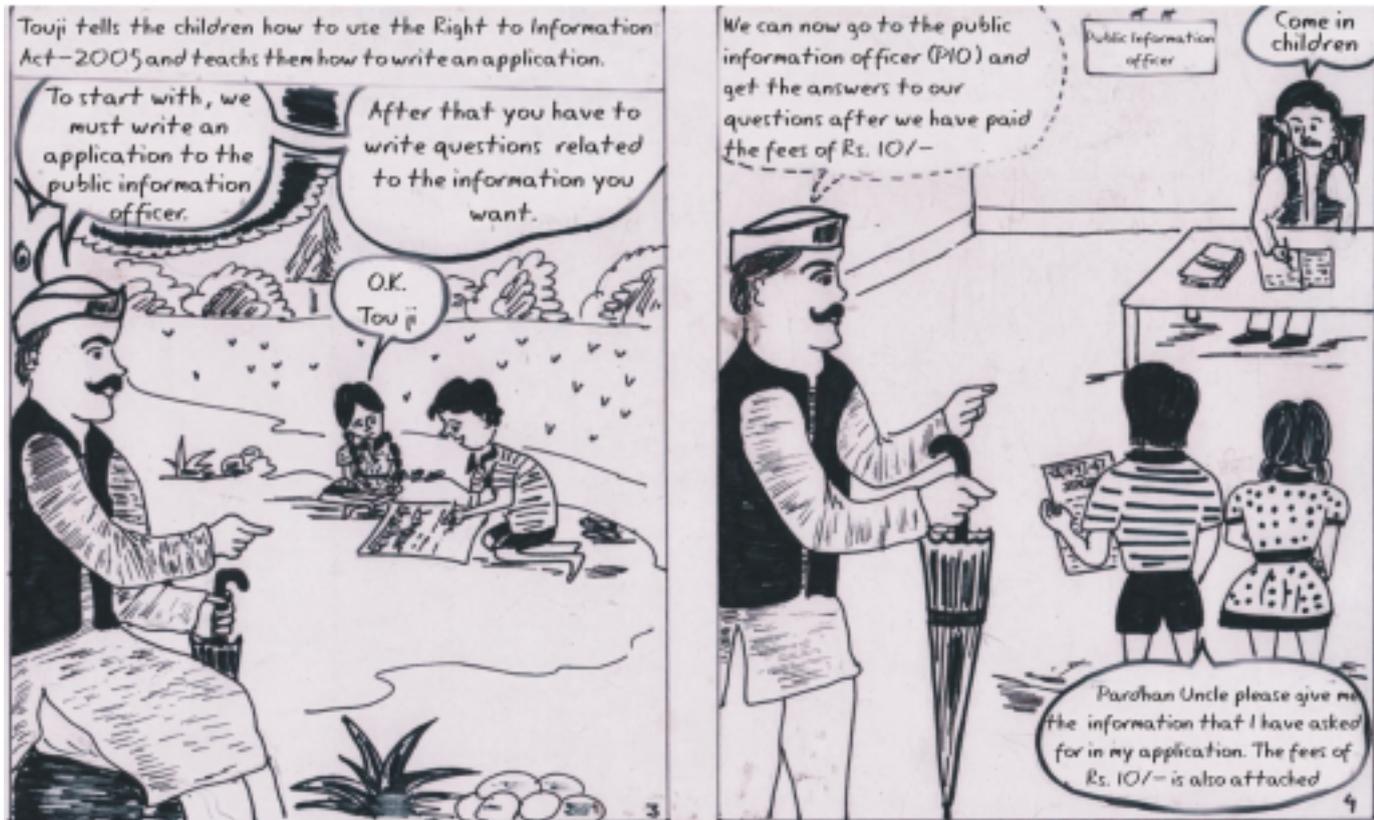
Right to Information Act 2005 mandates timely response to citizen requests for government information. It is an initiative taken by Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to provide a- RTI Portal Gateway to the citizens for quick search of information on the details of first Appellate Authorities, PIOs etc. amongst others, besides access to RTI related information / disclosures published on the web by various Public Authorities under the government of India as well as the State Governments

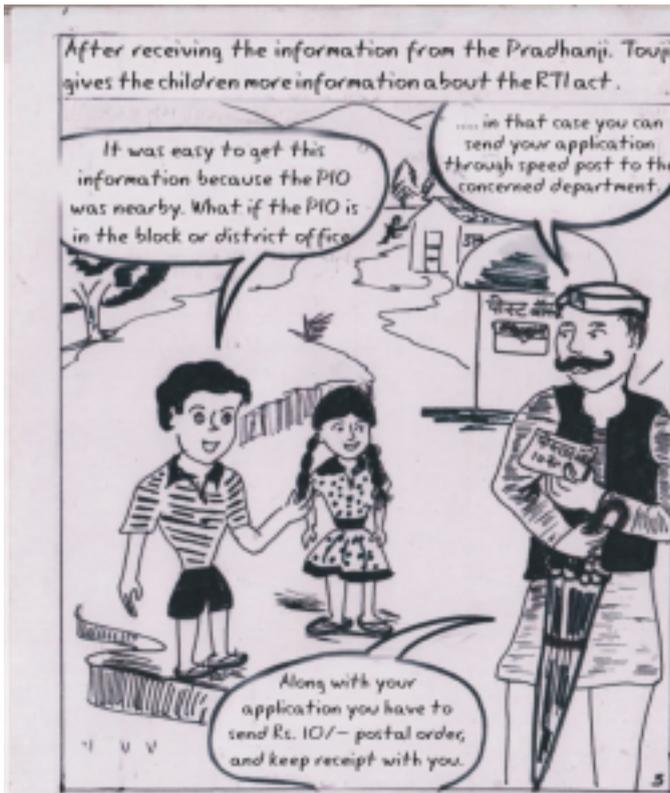
Objective of the Right to Information Act :

The basic object of the Right to Information Act is to empower the citizens, promote transparency and accountability in the working of the Government, contain corruption, and make our democracy work for the people in a real sense. It goes without saying that an informed citizen is better equipped to keep necessary vigil on the instruments of governance and make the government more accountable to the governed. The Act is a big step towards making the citizens informed about the activities of the Government.



¹⁰ <https://rti.gov.in/>







PREAMBLE

<https://secure.mygov.in/read-the-preamble-india/>

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Who was the first speaker of the Lok Sabha?
 - A. Smt.Meira Kumar
 - B. Hukum Singh
 - C. M. A. Ayyangar
 - D. G. V. Mavlankar

2. What does the given symbol signify ?



A. The State Emblem

B. Reserve Bank of India

C. Indian Army

D. Income Tax Department