UNIT 1  THE MAKING OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION*

Structure

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain stages of constitution making prior to the formation of Constituent Assembly;
- Understand the nature of representation of the Constituent Assembly; and
- Debate within the Constituent Assembly on some of the salient features of the Indian Constitution.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India was adopted on 26 November 1949, which means it was finalised by the Constituent Assembly on that day. But it became operative two months after its adoption, i.e., on 26 January 1950, which is also known as the date of its “commencement”. However, some provisions of it, i.e., those relating to citizenship, elections, provisional Parliament, temporary and transitional provisions had become operative on 26 November 1949 itself. The reason for its commencement after two months of its adoption was to signify the January 26 as the original date of achievement of Independence. It was this day, i.e. 26th January, in 1930 which the Indian National Congress (INC) had first celebrated as the Independence Day of India. It is important to note that the Constitution of India is product of a longdrawn process and deliberations. This unit deals with some issues relating to the making of the Indian Constitution.

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1.2 EVOLUTION OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION
1858-1935

The Constitution of India embodies provisions providing basic democratic rights of human beings including the persons who are not Indian citizens. It also embodies provisions for the availability of institutions for legislation, execution and jurisdiction for the fulfilment these rights. It presents a vision for social transformation and deepening of democracy in India. The process of evolution of democratic institutions and rights had started much before the Constituent Assembly really made the Constitution of India. It, however, must be underlined that the features of democratic institutions and values which were introduced during the colonial period were meant to serve the colonial interests in contrast to the purpose of the provisions of the Constitution made by the Constituent Assembly of India. Although the Indian Constitution was result of the deliberations (from December 9, 1947 to November 26, 1949) of the Constituent Assembly, some of its features had evolved over three quarters of a century through various Acts, i.e., from 1858 to 1935. You will read about them in sub-sections 1.2.1 below.

1.2.1 The Government of India Act, 1935, and Other Acts

With the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown, the British Parliament got involved in managing affairs of India. For achieving this purpose, from 1858 till 1935, the colonial government introduced certain features of constitution or rules of governance through different Acts. The Government of India Act, 1935 was the most important among these Acts. In this subsection of the unit, you will read about other Acts before reading about the Government of India Act, 1935. First of these other Acts was Government of India Act, 1858. It provided for a combination of centralised and decentralised power structure to govern India. The centralised structure was introduced in the areas which were under the direct control of the Crown. These areas were known as British India provinces or provinces. The decentralized structure was introduced in the areas which were not under the direct control of the Crown. These areas were ruled by the Indian princes, and were known as princely states or states. Under this system, the princes had freedom to govern in all internal matters of their princely states, but they were subject to the British control. In the centralized structure of power which was introduced in the provinces, all powers to govern India vested in the Secretary of State for India (and through him in the Crown). He acted on behalf of the Crown. He was assisted by a fifteen-member council of ministers. There did not exist separation of executive, legislative and judicial functions of government; these all were concentrated in the hands of the Secretary of State for India. In British India, the Secretary of State of India was assisted by the Viceroy, who was assisted by an executive council. At the district level, the viceroy was assisted by a small number of British administrators. The provincial government did not have financial autonomy. In 1870 viceroy Lord Mayo ensured that all parts of provincial administration received due share of revenue to meet their needs. The scope of political institutions in the provinces was expanded a little further following the introduction of Council of India Act, 1909. This Act introduced for the first time a “representative element” in British India, which included elected non-official members. This Act also introduced separate representation to Muslim community. The Government of India Act 1919
devolved some authority to the provincial governments, retaining the control of the central government (unitary government) on them. It relaxed the control of the central government in a limited way. It divided the subjects for jurisdiction of administration and sources of revenue between centre and provinces. Under this arrangement, the provincial government was given control on resources of revenue such as land, irrigation and judicial stamps. The provincial subjects were divided into “transferred” and “reserved” categories. The “transferred” subjects were governed by the governor, and “reserved” subjects were governed by the legislature. The governor (executive head) was not accountable to the legislature.

The Government of India Act, 1935 was different from the earlier Government of India Acts. As you have read above, under those Acts the government in the British India provinces was unitary. It means that the same government operated at different vertical levels. Unlike the earlier Acts, the Government of India Act, 1935 also provided for provincial government enjoying provincial autonomy. It provided “safeguards” for minorities. Such “safeguards” included provisions for separate representations to Muslims, Sikhs, the Europeans, Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians.

This Act also provided for three lists of divisions of power between the federation (central government) and provinces: federal (central), concurrent and provincial. The Act also provided for establishment of a federal court to adjudicate disputes between federation and provinces. The executive head of the provincial government was Governor, who enjoyed special power. Under the special power the Governor could veto the decisions of the provincial legislature. He acted on behalf of the Crown, and was not a subordinate of the Governor-General (the changed designation of Viceroy). He enjoyed discretionary powers to exercise his “individual judgments” in certain matters. In such matters, he did not need to work under the advice of ministers: he was to act under the control of the Governor-General, and indeed the Secretary of the State. He was also not accountable to the legislature but he was required to act on the advice of ministers, who were accountable to the legislature.

Government of India Act, 1935 also had provisions for setting up a central government consisting of representatives from the provinces (areas ruled by the British India government) and the states (the areas covered under princely states). Such government was supposed to be known as federal government because of composition with members both from provinces and the states. However, the federal government could not be formed because there was no unanimity among the princes to join the federation; consent of all princes was essential for the formation of federation. Thus, only the provincial governments could be formed as per this Act. And election to the provincial legislature as per the Government of India Act, 1935 was held in 1937. Following the election of 1937, provincial governments headed by the Indian National Congress were formed in eight provinces. The Indian National Congress government resigned in 1937. Nevertheless, according to M. Govinda Rao and Nirvikar Singh (2005), the Government of India Act, 1935 provided a basis to the Constituent Assembly to make the Constitution.

1.2.2 The Nehru Report (1928): First Indian Initiative to Draft Constitution

As you have read above, attempts to introduce elements of constitution in British India through different Acts since 1858 were made by the British rulers. Indians
Constituent Assembly and Constitution

had no role in it. The first attempt by Indians themselves to prepare a Constitution of India was made in the Nehru Report (1928). Earlier, effort by Indians was made in the name of the swaraj (self-rule) by leaders of Indian national movement during the non-cooperation movement in 1921-22. The Nehru Report was known as such because it was named after the chairman of its drafting committee, Motilal Nehru. The decision to constitute the drafting committee was taken in the conference of the established All India parties. The principal among these parties included Indian National Congress, Swaraj Party and Muslim League. The Justice Party of Madras and Unionist Party of Punjab did not participate in this meeting. The Nehru Report demanded universal suffrage for adults and responsible government both in the centre and in the provinces. It, however, supported the Dominion Status, not complete independence for India. It meant that Indians would have freedom to legislate on certain limited matters under the control of the British India government. For this, the Nehru Report prepared list of central and provincial subjects, and fundamental rights. It also raised demands for universal suffrage for men and women adults. Indeed, it was in 1934, a few years after the preparation of the Nehru report, that the Indian National Congress officially demanded a constitution of Indian people, without the interference of outsiders.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: 1) Use the space below for your answers

2) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

1) What is the difference between adoption and commencement of the Constitution of India?

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2) When was the Constitution of India adopted, and when did it commence?

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3) How was the Government of India Act, 1935 different from the earlier Acts?
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4) What did the Nehru Report recommend?
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1.3 FORMATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

1.3.1 The Cripps Mission
Initially, the colonial authorities resisted the demand for creation of a Constitution of India. But with the change in the circumstances - the outbreak of the World War II and formation of the new Coalition (Labour-led) government in Britain, the British government was forced to acknowledge the urgency to solve the problem related to Constitution of Indians. In 1942, the British government sent its cabinet member – Sir Stafford Cripps with the draft declaration on proposals (regarding formation of constitution for Indians) to be implemented at the end of the WW II provided both the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress had agreed to accept them. The draft proposals of the Cripps Mission recommended the following: providing Dominion Status to India, i.e., equal partnership of the British Commonwealth of Nations; all Provinces (ruled by the British India government) and Indian States (ruled by Indian princes) should constitute one Indian Union by the British Constitution; the Constitution of India should be framed by an elected Constituent Assembly of Indian people but if any province (or Indian State) which was not prepared to accept the Constitution was to be free to retain its constitutional position which had existed at that time. Such provinces were to be free to enter separate constitutional arrangements.

Both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League did not accept the proposals of the Cripps Mission. The Muslim League demanded that India should be divided on the communal lines and some provinces should form an independent state of Pakistan; and, there should be two Constituent Assemblies, one for Pakistan and another for India.
Constituent Assembly and Constitution

1.3.2 The Cabinet Mission

The British Indian government made several attempts to bridge the differences between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. But it was unsuccessful. The British government sent another delegation of the Cabinet members, known as the Cabinet Delegation, which came to be known as the Cabinet Mission Plan. It consisted of three cabinet members – Lord Pathic-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A.V. Alexander. The Cabinet Delegation also failed to bring the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League to an agreement. It, however, made its own proposal which was announced simultaneously on 16 May, 1946 in England as well as in India. The Cabinet delegation made the following recommendations: there should a Union of India consisting of British India and the States, which would have jurisdiction over subjects of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Communication; all residuary powers would belong to the Provinces and the States; the Union would have Executive and Legislature consisting of the representatives from the Provinces and the States but for decision relating to a major communal issue in the legislature a majority of representatives of two major communities would be present, and voting along with the majority of all members present and voting would be required; the provinces would be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures; and each group would be free to determine the Provincial Subjects which would be taken up by the Group organisation.

1.3.3 Election to the Constituent Assembly

Meanwhile, according to the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, the election to the Constituent Assembly was held in which members of both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League were returned. The members of the Constituent Assembly were elected by the Provincial Legislative Assemblies. However, differences between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League arose on interpretation of “Group Clauses” of the Cabinet Mission. The British government intervened at this stage and explained to the leaders in London that the contention of the Muslim League was correct. And on December 6, 1946, the British Government published a statement, which for the first time acknowledged the possibility of two Constituent Assemblies and two States. As a result, when the Constituent Assembly first met on December 9, 1946, it was boycotted by the Muslim League, and it functioned without the participation of the Muslim League.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: 1) Use the space below for your answers

2) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

1) What were the recommendations of the Cripps Mission?

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1.4 NATURE OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY’S REPRESENTATION

It is often argued that the Constituent Assembly of India did not represent the masses of India because its representatives were not elected through the universal adult franchise. Rather they were indirectly elected by the restricted adult franchise confined to the elite sections of society – the educated and tax payers. According to Granville Austin the reasons for the restricted franchise and indirect election to the Constituent Assembly members were spelled by the Cabinet Mission Plan. These were to avoid the cumbersome and slow progress in the process of Constitution making. The Cabinet Mission provided for the indirect election to the Constituent Assembly by the elected members of the provincial legislature. The Indian National Congress agreed to this proposal of the Cabinet Mission forsaking the claim of adult franchise to hold election to the Constituent Assembly. Despite having been elected through the restricted adult franchise, the Constituent Assembly represented different shades of opinions and religious communities of India. Austin observed that though there was a majority of the Indian National Congress in the Constituent Assembly, it had an “unwritten and unquestioned belief” that the Indian National Congress should represent social and ideological diversity. There was also its “deliberate policy” that the representatives of various minority communities and viewpoints should be represented in the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly consisted of members with different ideological orientations, and three religious communities -Sikhs, Muslims and General (Hindus and all other communities like the Anglo-Indians, Parsis, etc). In words of K. Santaram “There was hardly any shade of opinion not represented in the Assembly” (see Austin, 2012, p.13, fn.48). Majority of the Constituent Assembly members belonged to the Indian National Congress. It also included more than a dozen non-Indian National Congress members. Some of these were A.K. Ayyer, H.N. Kunjru, N.G. Ayyanger, S.P. Mukherjee and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. S.P. Mookerji represented the Hindu Mahasabha. The Constituent Assembly included representatives from the Princely States as well. It needs to be underscored that Dr. Ambedkar was initially elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal as member of the Scheduled Caste Federation. But he lost this seat due to the partition of Bengal and was re-elected by the Bombay Indian National Congress (as a non-Indian National Congress candidate) at the request of the Indian National Congress High Command. The Constituent Assembly sought to address concerns of every person irrespective of their social and cultural orientations. Before incorporating a provision in the constitution, it held elaborate deliberations. Thus, the members of the Constituent Assembly could overcome the limitations of having been elected by the restricted franchise. As you will
read in unit 3 Preamble, the Constituent Assembly sought to accommodate universal values of democracy. The Constituent Assembly adopted several provisions from different constitutions of world and adapted them to the needs of India. In fact, Austin argues that while incorporating different provisions in the Constitution including those which were borrowed from other countries the Constituent Assembly adopted “two wholly Indian concepts” of resolving differences among its members, i.e., consensus and accommodation.

Most members of the Constituent Assembly participated in its proceedings. But these were twenty individuals who played the most influential role in the Assembly. Some of them were Rajendra Prasad, Maulan Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru, Govind Ballabh Pant, P. Sitaramayya, A.K. Ayyar, N.G. Ayyangar, K.M. Munshi, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Satyanarayan Sinha. Though the Constituent Assembly was the sole forum where deliberations took place, yet the deliberations took place in coordination of three bodies – the Constituent Assembly, the Indian National Congress Party, and the interim government. Some members of the Constituent Assembly were also members of other bodies at the same time. Austin said that “an oligarchy” of four – Nehru, Patel, Prasad and Azad had enjoyed unquestioned honour and prestige in the Assembly. They dominated the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. Some of these were simultaneously in the government, Indian National Congress Party and the Constituent Assembly. Prasad was President of Indian National Congress before becoming the President of the Constituent Assembly. Patel and Nehru were Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister respectively at the same time. They were part of the inner circles of the committees of the Constituent Assembly. The Constitution Drafting Committee meticulously incorporated in the draft constitution the decisions of the Constituent Assembly. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, chairman of the Drafting Committee played the leading role in drafting of the Constitution. Acknowledging the pivotal role of Dr. Ambedkar, T.T. Krishnamachari, a member of the Drafting Committee, said in one of his speeches:

“The House is perhaps aware that out of the seven members nominated by you, one had resigned from the house and was replaced. One had died and was not replaced. One was away in America and his place was not filled up, and another person was engaged in State Affairs, and there was a void to that extent. One or two people were far away from Delhi and perhaps reasons of health did not permit them to attend. So it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting this constitution fell upon Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable.”(Ambedkar, Writings and Speeches, Vol.13, p.v, 1994).

Dr. Ambedkar on his part “gave much of credit” to S.N. Mukerjee - B.N. Rau’s and Ambedkar’s assistant, the Drafting Officer of the Assembly, “for the careful wording of the Constitution” (Austin 2012, p.20, fn.70).

1.5 THE ROLE OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN THE MAKING OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION 1946-1949

The inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly was held on 9 December 1946. It was supposed to be attended by all 296 members but only 207 members could attend it because the Muslim League members absented from it. As stated
earlier, they had boycotted the Constituent Assembly. In this meeting, Acharya J.B. Kripalani requested Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha to be the temporary chairman of the House. The members passed a resolution on 10 December 1946 for election of a permanent chairman, and on 11 December 1946, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the permanent Chairman of the Constituent Assembly. On 13 December 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru moved resolution regarding the Objectives of the constituent Assembly as discussed in unit 3.

The Constituent Assembly divided its work among different committees for its smooth functioning. Some of the important committees were: (a) Union Power Committee. It was chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru and had nine members; (b) Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities. It had 54 members and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was its chairman; (c) Steering Committee and its 3 members which included Dr. K.M. Munshi (chairman), Gopalaswami Iyengar and Bhagwan Das; (d) Provincial Constitution Committee. It had 25 members with Sardar Patel as its chairman; (e) Committee on Union Constitution. It had 15 members with Jawaharlal Nehru as its chairman.

After discussing the reports of these committees, the Constituent Assembly appointed a Drafting Committee on 29 August 1947 under the chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The draft was prepared by Sir B.N. Rau, Advisor to the Constituent Assembly. A 7-member Committee was constituted to examine the draft. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who was Law Minister as well as chairman of the Drafting Committee piloted the draft in the Assembly. Dr. Ambedkar presented “Draft Constitution of India”. The “Draft Constitution” was published in February, 1948. It was discussed by the Constituent Assembly clause by clause in its several sessions and was completed by October 17, 1949. This discussion was known as the second reading. The Constituent Assembly again met on 14 November 1949 to discuss the draft further or to give it a third reading. It was finalised on 26 November 1949 after receiving the signature of the President of the Constituent Assembly. But it was January 26, 1950 which became the date of commencement of the Constitution.

1.6 SALIENT FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Indian Constitution has some salient features. These features give Indian Constitution a distinct identity. It is based on the features of different constitutions of the world. In the words of Dr. Ambedkar, The Indian constitution was prepared “after ransacking all the known Constitutions of the world”. The chapter on Fundamental Rights (unit 4) is based on the American Constitution; the Parliamentary System has been adopted from the British Constitution; the Directive Principles of State Policy (unit 5) have been adopted from the constitution of Ireland; the Emergency provisions (unit 11) are based on the Constitution of Weimar (Germany) and Government of India Act, 1935. The features which have been borrowed from other Constitutions have been modified in the light of the needs of our country. It is the longest written constitution. At the time of its formation, the constitution of India had 395 Articles and 8 Schedules. It ensures both Justiciable and Non-Justiciable Rights: Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the State Policy. The constituent makers preferred universal adult franchise over the separate electorates. You will read about it below.
1.6.1 Universal Adult Suffrage and Abolition of the Separate Electorate

After debating its draft list of Fundamental rights the Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights did not recommend inclusion of all of them in the section III of the Constitution as the Fundamental Rights. Instead, it suggested that these should be incorporated in other places in the Constitution. One such example is that of the Universal suffrage, and Secret and periodic elections. The sub-Committee agreed unanimously in favour of the Universal suffrage but suggested that it should not be part of the Fundamental Rights. Accordingly, it was placed in the Article 326 of the Part XV on election. The word “universal”, however, is missing from the Article 326. But the fact that every adult citizen of the country is entitled to vote makes it practically a universal adult franchise. In fact, before Indians really got the right to universal adult franchise, the prominent leaders of the Indian National movement strove for the abolition of the separate electorate in favour of the joint electorate. The British had sought to continue separate electorate in India since the Morley-Minto reforms, 1909 till the Communal Award of 1932 in the Constitution. The Communal Award aimed to accord separate electorate for Muslims, Europeans, Sikhs, Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians. It also provided for seats for the Depressed Classes which were to be filled in elections from special constituencies. In such constituencies only the depressed classes could vote. In addition, the depressed classes were also entitled to vote in general constituencies. Gandhi opposed the recommendation of the notion of separate electorate for the depressed classes. In opposition to the proposal for separate electorate, he set on fast unto death in September 1932. Gandhi’s fast evoked opposition from Ambedkar. However, both Gandhi and Ambedkar reached compromise in Poona Pact. According to the Poona Pact, seats were reserved for the depressed classes in the general constituencies. This resulted in the abolition of the separate electorate. The abolition of separate electorate got reflected in the reservation of seats in the legislative bodies Constitution.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3
Note: 1) Use the space below for your answers
2) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

1) How was the social diversity reflected in the composition of the Constituent Assembly?
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2) Who did Austin call as “an oligarchy” of four within the Constituent Assembly?
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3) What were the committees within the Constituent Assembly? Mention some of them.

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1.7 LET US SUM UP

The making of Indian Constitution largely consisted of two phases – 1858 to 1935 and 1946 to 1949. With the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown, the British government introduced different elements of governance through different Acts. These also included the elements of representation of Indians in the institutions of governance. The motive of the British to introduce them was to serve their colonial interests rather than to provide democratic rights to them. The provision for communal representation introduced through the Morley-Minto Reforms in 1909 and through the Communal Award in 1932 was opposed by the leaders of the Indian National Movement. Gandhi’s fast resulted in the Poona Pact abolishing the separate electorate and in giving the reservation to the depressed classes in the provincial legislature. After the Indian National Congress emphasized the need for making of a Constitution of India by their own Constituent Assembly, the changed political situation following the Second World War and change of government in Britain, the British reluctantly realized the urgency for establishment of the Constituent Assembly of India for Indians. The Constituent Assembly which was set up following the recommendations of the Cabinet Mission Plan was elected through the restricted adult franchise by the provincial assemblies. Despite having elected by the privileged sections of the society, the Constituent Assembly represented different shades of opinions and ideologies. It also represented different social groups of India. The Constituent Assembly discussed all issues thoroughly before reaching decision on them. The decision and suggestions of different sub-Committees of the Constituent Assembly were finally incorporated in the Constitution of India. The Constitution of India is a document which provides a vision for social change. The Constitution is an embodiment of principles of liberal democracy and secularism, with some elements of social democracy. It ensures protection of cultural, linguistic and religious rights of individuals and communities.

1.8 REFERENCES


### 1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

**Check Your Progress Exercise 1**

1) Adoption of the constitution denotes an act of its acceptance by the Constituent Assembly after completion of its formation. Commencement of the Constitution means the incident of its implementation for the first time.

2) It was adopted on 26 November, 1949 and it commenced on 26 January, 1950.

3) Unlike the earlier Acts, the Government of India Act, 1935 provided for provincial autonomy. It also provided for three lists of divisions of power between the federation (central government) and provinces: federal (central), concurrent and provincial. The Act also provided for establishment of a federal court to adjudicate disputes between federation and provinces.

4) The Nehru Report was first attempt by Indians to form their own constitution. It demanded universal suffrage for adults and responsible governments both in the centre and in the provinces. It prepared list of central and provincial subjects, and fundamental rights. It also raised demands for universal suffrage for men and women adults. It, however, supported Dominion Status, not complete independence for India.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2**

1) Its recommendations included: draft proposal to form a constitution of India after the end of World War II if both the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress accepted it; providing Dominion Status to India, formation of Indian union consisting of all provinces and Indian states under the British Constitution, making of Constitution of India by a constituent assembly to be elected by Indians with the proviso that provinces or Indian states were free to retain the existing position.

2) Its recommendations included: formation of Union of India consisting of British India provinces and the States having jurisdiction over subjects of foreign affairs, defense and communication; giving residuary powers to the provinces and the states, and freedom to the provinces to form groups with executives and legislatures.
Check your Progress Exercise 3

1) Although the members of the constituent assembly were indirectly elected by the provincial legislatures which consisted of the elite sections of the society, because of an “unwritten and unquestioned belief” and “deliberate policy” of the Congress it represented diverse opinions. Constituent Assembly represented three religious communities, various ideological viewpoints and members from different social backgrounds.

2) The four members whom Austin called “an oligarchy” in the Constituent Assembly were Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

3) These were the devices formed by Constituent Assembly to help it in its smooth functioning. Some of the important committees were: Union Power Committee chaired by Jawaharlal, Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities chaired by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Provincial Constitution Committee, and Committee on Union Constitution.