Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) Chapter 4: Executive - Notes, Important Questions and MCQs (2026-27)

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These Class 11 Political Science Chapter 4 notes cover “Executive” from the NCERT textbook Indian Constitution at Work (2026-27): what the executive is, political and permanent executive, presidential, parliamentary and semi-presidential systems, the parliamentary executive in India, powers and position of the President, the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, and the bureaucracy – with tables, Q&A, 10 MCQs and a free PDF.

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Chapter Overview

The executive is the organ of government that implements laws and policies. It includes the political executive – elected leaders such as the Prime Minister and ministers – and the permanent executive – civil servants who carry out day-to-day administration.

India adopted a parliamentary executive: the President is the nominal head, while real power lies with the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, who are collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. This choice made the executive accountable to the people’s representatives.

Important Topics and Concepts

What is the Executive?

- Carries out laws and policies made by the legislature.
- Political executive: elected, responsible for policy (PM, ministers).
- Permanent executive: civil servants appointed on long-term basis, implement policies.
- Executive includes the head of state, head of government, ministers and bureaucracy.

Types of Executive

- Presidential (USA, Brazil): President is both head of state and head of government; directly elected; not responsible to legislature.
- Parliamentary (UK, India, Japan): PM is head of government; monarch or president is nominal head; executive responsible to legislature.
- Semi-presidential (France, Russia, Sri Lanka): President and PM share power; president may appoint/dismiss PM.

The President of India

- Nominal head; elected indirectly by an electoral college of MPs and MLAs for five years; can be removed by impeachment.
- Powers exercised on the advice of the Council of Ministers (Art. 74).
- Discretion: can return advice for reconsideration once; can use a “pocket veto” on ordinary bills (no time limit).
- Chooses the PM when no party has a clear majority.
- The Vice-President is ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

Prime Minister and Council of Ministers

- The PM is the leader of the majority party or coalition in the Lok Sabha.
- The Council of Ministers includes Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers; size limited to 15% of the Lok Sabha.
- Collective responsibility: the ministry stays in office only while it has the confidence of the Lok Sabha.
- The PM coordinates government policy and is the link between the President and the Council; coalition politics has affected the PM’s position.
- State level: Governor, Chief Minister and Council of Ministers follow a similar pattern.

Permanent Executive: Bureaucracy

- Civil servants are trained professionals – All India Services (IAS, IPS), Central and State services.
- Recruited through the UPSC and State PSCs on merit; reservation ensures representation of disadvantaged groups.
- Expected to be politically neutral and work for any elected government.
- Issues: excessive power, delays, red tape, need for accountability.

Types of Executive Compared

Most-asked table.

Feature	Presidential	Parliamentary	Semi-presidential
Head of government	President	Prime Minister	President and PM share
Head of state	President	Monarch/President (nominal)	President

Feature	Presidential	Parliamentary	Semi-presidential
Responsibility to legislature	No	Yes	PM yes
Examples	USA, Brazil	UK, India, Japan	France, Russia, Sri Lanka

President of India – Key Facts

Aspect	Detail
Election	Indirect – electoral college of MPs and MLAs
Term	5 years
Removal	Impeachment by Parliament
Acts on	Advice of Council of Ministers (Art. 74)
Discretion	Return advice once; pocket veto; choosing PM in hung House
Deputy	Vice-President (Chairman of Rajya Sabha)

Important Definitions and Terms

Term	Meaning
Executive	Organ that implements laws
Political executive	Elected leaders who make policy
Permanent executive	Civil servants
Parliamentary system	Executive responsible to legislature
Presidential system	Separately elected executive head
Semi-presidential	President and PM share powers
Pocket veto	President keeping a bill pending indefinitely
Collective responsibility	Whole ministry answerable to Lok Sabha
Council of Ministers	PM and ministers
UPSC	Union Public Service Commission

Short Answer Questions

Q1. What is the executive?

The organ of government that implements laws and policies.

Q2. Distinguish political and permanent executive.

Political executive is elected and makes policy; permanent executive is appointed civil servants who implement it.

Q3. Give one example each of presidential and semi-presidential systems.

USA (presidential); France (semi-presidential).

Q4. How is the President of India elected?

Indirectly, by an electoral college of elected MPs and MLAs.

The President’s power to keep an ordinary bill pending without a time limit.

Q6. What is collective responsibility?

The Council of Ministers as a whole is responsible to the Lok Sabha.

Q7. What limits the size of the Council of Ministers?

It cannot exceed 15% of the total members of the Lok Sabha.

Q8. Who recruits IAS officers?

The Union Public Service Commission.

Long Answer Questions

Q1. Explain the powers and position of the President of India.

Nominal head; executive power formally vested in the President.

Acts on advice of the Council of Ministers (Art. 74).

Can send advice back once for reconsideration.

Pocket veto on ordinary bills.

Discretion in choosing PM when no clear majority.

Q2. Describe the role of the Prime Minister.

Leader of the majority in the Lok Sabha.

Selects ministers and allocates portfolios.

Coordinates government policy and chairs the Cabinet.

Link between President and Council of Ministers.

Position affected by coalition politics.

Q3. Why did India choose a parliamentary executive?

Ensures executive accountability to elected representatives.

Prevents concentration of power in one person.

Experience of British parliamentary practice.

Suits India’s diversity through broad representation.

Constant scrutiny through questions and confidence votes.

MCQs with Answers

1. India has which type of executive?(a) presidential (b) parliamentary (c) semi-presidential (d) monarchicalAnswer: (b) parliamentary

2. President acts on advice under Article(a) 72 (b) 74 (c) 78 (d) 356Answer: (b) 74

3. Example of semi-presidential system(a) USA (b) France (c) UK (d) IndiaAnswer: (b) France

4. Council of Ministers is responsible to(a) President (b) Rajya Sabha (c) Lok Sabha (d) Supreme CourtAnswer: (c) Lok Sabha

6. Pocket veto applies to(a) money bills (b) ordinary bills (c) constitutional amendments (d) budgetsAnswer: (b) ordinary bills

7. Maximum size of Council of Ministers(a) 10% of LS (b) 15% of LS (c) 20% of LS (d) 25% of LSAnswer: (b) 15% of LS

8. Permanent executive consists of(a) ministers (b) civil servants (c) judges (d) MPsAnswer: (b) civil servants

9. President’s term(a) 4 years (b) 5 years (c) 6 years (d) lifeAnswer: (b) 5 years

10. IAS officers are recruited by(a) Parliament (b) UPSC (c) President directly (d) Election CommissionAnswer: (b) UPSC

Quick Revision Points

- Political vs permanent executive.
- Presidential, parliamentary, semi-presidential.
- President: indirect election, Art. 74, discretion, pocket veto.
- PM and Council of Ministers; 15% cap; collective responsibility.
- Vice-President chairs Rajya Sabha.
- Bureaucracy: IAS/IPS, UPSC, neutrality.

Chapter Summary

The executive implements laws and includes both elected political leaders and permanent civil servants. Countries use presidential, parliamentary or semi-presidential systems; India chose a parliamentary executive for accountability.

The President is the nominal head acting on ministerial advice with limited discretion, while the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers hold real power and are collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. The bureaucracy, recruited on merit, provides continuity and should remain neutral and accountable.

Exam Tips and PYQ Pattern

- Compare executive types in a table.
- Remember Article 74 and the 15% rule.
- Explain the President’s discretionary powers precisely.
- Use coalition examples when discussing PM’s power.
- Write 4–5 points for bureaucracy questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is this chapter in the 2026-27 CBSE syllabus?

Yes. It is part of the NCERT Class 11 Political Science textbook “Indian Constitution at Work”, prescribed in the CBSE 2026-27 syllabus.

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What type of executive does India have?

A parliamentary executive with the President as nominal head and the Prime Minister as real head.

What are the discretionary powers of the President?

Returning advice once for reconsideration, the pocket veto and choosing a PM when no party has a majority.

Conclusion

Executive explains who runs India’s government and how they are held accountable. Learn the comparison tables, practise the Q&A here and save the free PDF for revision.

More Notes: Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) Chapter 3: Election and Representation notes | Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) Chapter 5: Legislature notes | All Class 11 Political Science notes

Author Bio: Written and reviewed by the Nextoper Editorial Team, a group of CBSE political science educators who build chapter notes directly from the NCERT textbook and past board paper patterns.

Freshness Note: These notes follow the NCERT Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) textbook, Indian Constitution at Work (NCERT reprint 2026-27, rationalised syllabus), and the CBSE syllabus for the 2026-27 session. Last checked on 25 November 2026.