



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Syllabus



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Detailed syllabus of Political Science and International Relations Optional

- For any aspirant to crack an optional, it is important that they understand and memorise minute details of the syllabus and prepare according to its requirements. Political Science and International Relations has its detailed syllabus listed out by the UPSC. There are two Papers of PSIR Optional- Paper 1 and Paper 2. Both Papers can also be broadly divided into two parts- Part A and B with specific syllabus of each of these components.

PAPER 1

Paper 1 Part A

Political Theory and Political Thought

1. Political theory: meaning and approaches.
2. Theories of the state: Liberal, Neo-liberal, Marxist, Pluralist, Post-colonial and feminist.
3. Justice: Conceptions of justice with special reference to Rawl's theory of justice and its communitarian critiques.
4. Equality: Social, political and economic; relationship between equality and freedom; Affirmative action.
5. Rights: Meaning and theories; different kinds of rights; concept of Human Rights.
6. Democracy: Classical and contemporary theories; different models of democracy-representative, participatory and deliberative.
7. Concept of power: hegemony, ideology and legitimacy.
8. Political Ideologies: Liberalism, Socialism, Marxism, Fascism, Gandhism and Feminism.
9. Indian Political Thought: Dharamshastra, Arthashastra and Buddhist traditions; Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Sri Aurobindo, M.K. Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar, M.N. Roy.
10. Western Political Thought: Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, John S. Mill, Marx, Gramsci, Hannah Arendt.

Paper 1 Part B

Indian Government and politics

- Indian Nationalism:
 - Political Strategies of India's Freedom struggle : constitutionalism to mass Satyagraha, Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience ; militant and revolutionary movements, Peasant and workers' movements.
 - Perspectives on Indian National Movement: Liberal, Socialist and Marxist; Radical humanist and Dalit.

- Making of the Indian Constitution: Legacies of the British rule; different social and political perspectives.
- Salient Features of the Indian Constitution: The Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Duties, Directive Principles; Parliamentary System and Amendment Procedures; Judicial Review and Basic Structure doctrine.
 - a) Principal Organs of the Union Government: Envisaged role and actual working of the Executive, Legislature and Supreme Court.
 - b) Principal Organs of the State Government: Envisaged role and actual working of the Executive, Legislature and High Courts.
- Grassroots Democracy: Panchayati Raj and Municipal Government; significance of 73rd and 74th Amendments; Grassroot movements.
- Statutory Institutions/Commissions: Election Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General, Finance Commission, Union Public Service Commission, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Women; National Human Rights Commission, National Commission for Minorities, National Backward Classes Commission.
- Federalism: Constitutional provisions; changing nature of centre-state relations; integrationist tendencies and regional aspirations; inter-state disputes.
- Planning and Economic Development : Nehruvian and Gandhian perspectives; role of planning and public sector; Green Revolution, land reforms and agrarian relations; liberalization and economic reforms.
- Caste, Religion and Ethnicity in Indian Politics.
- Party System: National and regional political parties, ideological and social bases of parties; patterns of coalition politics; Pressure groups, trends in electoral behaviour; changing socio-economic profile of Legislators.
- Social Movements: Civil liberties and human rights movements; women's movements; environmentalist movements

PAPER 2

Paper 2 Part A

Comparative Political Analysis and International Politics:

- Comparative Politics: Nature and major approaches; political economy and political sociology perspectives; limitations of the comparative method.
- State in comparative perspective: Characteristics and changing nature of the State in capitalist and socialist economies, and, advanced industrial and developing societies.
- Politics of Representation and Participation: Political parties, pressure groups and social movements in advanced industrial and developing societies.
- Globalisation: Responses from developed and developing societies.
- Approaches to the Study of International Relations: Idealist, Realist, Marxist, Functionalist and Systems theory.
- Key concepts in International Relations: National interest, Security and power; Balance of power and deterrence; Transnational actors and collective security; World capitalist economy and globalisation.
- Changing International Political Order:
 - Rise of super powers; strategic and ideological Bipolarity, arms race and Cold War; nuclear threat;
 - Non-aligned movement : Aims and achievements;
 - Collapse of the Soviet Union; Unipolarity and American hegemony; relevance of non-alignment in the contemporary world.
- Evolution of the International Economic System: From Bretton-Woods to WTO; Socialist economies and the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance); Third World demand for new international economic order; Globalisation of the world economy.
- United Nations: Envisaged role and actual record; specialized UN agencies-aims and functioning; need for UN reforms.
- Regionalisation of World Politics: EU, ASEAN, APEC, SAARC, NAFTA.
- Contemporary Global Concerns: Democracy, human rights, environment, gender justice, terrorism, nuclear proliferation.

Paper 2 Part B

India and the World

- Indian Foreign Policy: Determinants of foreign policy; institutions of policy-making; continuity and change.
- India's Contribution to the Non-Alignment Movement: Different phases; current role.
- India and South Asia:
 - Regional Co-operation: SAARC-past performance and future prospects.
 - South Asia as a Free Trade Area.
 - India's "Look East" policy.
 - Impediments to regional co-operation: river water disputes; illegal cross-border migration; ethnic conflicts and insurgencies; border disputes.
- India and the Global South: Relations with Africa and Latin America; leadership role in the demand for NIEO and WTO negotiations.
- India and the Global Centres of Power: USA, EU, Japan, China and Russia.
- India and the UN System: Role in UN Peace-keeping; demand for Permanent Seat in the Security Council.
- India and the Nuclear Question: Changing perceptions and policy.
- Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy: India's position on the recent crisis in Afghanistan, Iraq and West Asia, growing relations with US and Israel; vision of a new world order.

UPSC Mains- Political Science and International Relations Booklist by Toppers

- UPSC exams has three stages for an aspirant to become an officer- Prelims, Mains and Interview. In UPSC Mains Exam, students have to choose from 48 optionals. PSIR Optional is one of the most popular and scoring Optionals for UPSC Mains. It has produced a number of UPSC top rankers including Tina Dabi, Ria Dabi, Navneet Mann, Chandrima Attri, Trupti Dodhmishe, Ravinderpreet Kaur, Rupesh Kumar, Mirant Parikh and more.
- However, one thing common to the UPSC strategy of UPSC Toppers is having a consolidated booklist of PSIR Optional which includes basic sources to cover both papers of PSIR. Political Science and International Relations has two papers with respective syllabus- Paper 1 Part A deals with Western Political Thought, Indian Political Thought, Political Theory and Paper 1 Part B deals with Indian Government and Politics. PSIR Paper 2 Part A deals with Comparative Politics and International Relations and paper 2 Part B deals with India's foreign Policy.
- Here are basic and additional books and sources to use to cover Paper 1 and Paper 2 of PSIR Optional that are recommended by UPSC Toppers as well.

Paper 1 Part A- Western Political Thought, Indian Political Thought and Political Theory

Essential Books and Sources:

- MPSE 003- Western Political Thought (Plato to Marx)
- MPSE 004- IGNOU Material- Social and Political Thought in Modern India
- "An Introduction to Political Theory" by O.P Gauba. 7TH EDITION, Mayur Publications
- Editorials on important personalities, theoretical concepts and book reviews in news.
- Justice series by Michael Sandel on YT.
- **Additional Books and Sources:**
 - "A History of Political Thought: Plato to Marx" by Subrata Mukherjee and Sushila Ramaswamy.
 - "Western Political Thought: From Socrates to the age of Ideology" by Brian. R. Nelson.
 - "Modern Indian Political Thought: Text and Context" by Bidyut Chakrabarty and Rajendra Kumar Pandey.
 - "Political Theory: An Introduction" by Rajeev Bhargava and Ashok Acharya, 2nd edition, Pearson.
 - "Political Theory: An Introduction" by Andrew Heywood.

- **Paper 1 Part B- Indian Government and Politics**
- **Essential Books and Sources:**
- India's Struggle for Independence by Bipin Chandra.
 - Indian Polity by Laxmikanth.
- The Oxford Companion to Politics in India by Niraja Gopal Jayal and Pratap Bhanu Mehta.
- Rethinking Public Institutions in India by P.B. Mehta, Devesh Kapur and Milan Vaishnav.
- Editorials on IGP by P.B. Mehta, Gopalkrishna Gandhi, Gautam Bhatia, Suhrit Parthasarthy, Christopher Jaffrelot, Ashok Gulati, Jean Derez etc.
- **Additional Books and Sources:**
- Indian Government and Politics by A.S.Narang, Geetanjali Publication
- Our Constitution: An Introduction to India's Constitution and Constitutional Law" by Subhash C. Kashyap.
- **Paper 2 Part A- Comparative Politics and International Relations**
- **Essential Books and Sources:**
- The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations by John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens.
- Global Politics by Andrew Heywood.
- MPS 004- IGNOU Material Comparative Politics: Issues and Trends
- Editorials by Shyam Saran, C. Raja Mohan, Harsh Pant, Amitabh Mattoo, Suhasini Haider, Happymon Jacob, Stanly Johnny and Websites like ORF, IDSA, Project Syndicate, Council on Foreign Relations etc.
- **Additional Books and Sources:**
- Theories of International Relations by Palgrave publications.
- Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches by Georg Sorenson and Robert Jackson.
- **Paper 2 Part B- India and the World**
- Updates on PIB and MEA Website including the Distinguished Handbook Series.
- Editorials by Shyam Saran, C. Raja Mohan, Harsh Pant, Amitabh Mattoo, Suhasini Haider, Happymon Jacob, Stanly Johnny and Websites like ORF, IDSA, Project Syndicate, Council on Foreign Relations etc.
- Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview by Harsh Pant.

- **Additional Books and Sources:**

- Choices: Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy by Shivshankar Menon
- Can the Elephant Dance? By David Malone
 - MPSE-001- IGNOU Material- India and the World (Unit 1- 6)

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