The Union Executive

Powers — Legislative & Financial

- **Legislative**: **summons** & **prorogues** Parliament (ends a session without dissolving it); addresses the opening session; can **dissolve** the Lok Sabha → **fresh elections**; calls a **joint session** on a bill deadlock
- Every bill needs the President's **assent**; may send it back **once**, must sign if passed a **second time**
- **Nominates 12** members to the **Rajya Sabha** & **2 Anglo-Indians** to the **Lok Sabha**
- **Ordinances** (executive orders) when Parliament is **not in session**; valid only **6 weeks** after it meets again
- **Financial**: **budget** presented in the President's name; **money bills** need their **permission**; advances from the **Contingency Fund** for unforeseen expenditure

Council of Ministers

- **Formation**: after **Lok Sabha elections** (every **5 years**) the President appoints the **PM**; PM submits a list of ministers → President **approves & appoints**
- **Coalition govt**: no single party has a majority, so 2+ parties work together
- **3 ranks**: **Cabinet Ministers**, **Ministers of State**, **Deputy Ministers**; all must be in **either House** (or be elected within **6 months**)
- **Allotment of portfolios**: each minister gets a **department** (Defence, Finance, Agriculture, ...)

The Prime Minister

- Heads the **Council of Ministers**, India's **most powerful** political institution
- **Real head** of govt & **elected head** of the country; exercises the President's powers **except discretionary powers**
- **Leader** of the **majority party** or **largest coalition**; addresses the nation from the **Red Fort** on **Independence Day**
- **Link** between the **President**, the **people** & **Parliament**; **coordinates** the different departments
- **Advises** the President & **informs** them of the Council's decisions; this advice is **binding**
- **Selects** & can **expand** the Council; **distributes portfolios**; **presides** over meetings; can **demand the resignation** of any minister

Election, Term & Impeachment

- Elected **indirectly** by an **electoral college**: elected members of **both Houses of Parliament** + **State Legislative Assemblies**
- **Term = 5 years**; removed by **impeachment** for **violating the Constitution**, **treason** or **corruption**
- **Rashtrapati Bhavan** = official residence; its **Amrit Udyan** garden opens to visitors every **February**
- **Attorney General** = govt's **chief legal adviser**, appointed by the President; attends Parliament but has **no vote**

The Cabinet

- **Cabinet** = **inner core** of the Council; holds the **most important portfolios**, makes key **decisions & policies**: the **real executive power**
- **Collectively responsible** to the **Lok Sabha**; a **no-confidence** vote against **any one** Cabinet Minister → the **whole Council resigns**
- **Narendra Modi** = **15th PM**, re-elected in **2024**

The Vice-President

- Qualifications **same as President**, but must be eligible for the **Rajya Sabha**; **term = 5 years**
- **Ex-officio Chairperson** of the **Rajya Sabha**
- Takes over the President's functions in their **absence**, or on a **vacancy** till a new President is elected
- **Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan**: philosopher; **1st VP (1952–62)**, later **2nd President**; **5 September** is observed as **Teacher's Day** in his honour

Powers — Executive, Military, Judicial & Emergency

- **Executive**: appoints the **PM** (leader of the majority party or coalition)
- Appoints **Union Ministers** (on PM's advice), **governors**, **Comptroller & Auditor General**, **Attorney General**, **Supreme & High Court judges**, **ambassadors**
- **Military**: **Supreme Commander** of the Defence Forces; can **declare war** or **conclude peace**; **treaties** made in the President's name
- **Judicial**: can **pardon**, **reduce** or **suspend** a sentence, even a **death sentence**; answerable to no court, except through **impeachment**
- **Emergency**: **National** (external aggression / armed rebellion), **President's Rule** (a state govt fails), **Financial**; needs Parliament's **approval**
- **Discretionary**: if no party has a **clear majority** & no coalition forms, President **chooses the PM**, who must prove a majority

Union Executive & Civil Servants

- Executive branch **enforces** the laws made by the legislature
- **Union Executive** = **President**, **Vice-President**, **Prime Minister** & **Council of Ministers**; helped by **civil servants** & the **police force**
- President = **constitutional** but only **nominal** head; **actual power** lies with the PM & Council of Ministers, whose **advice** the President is **bound** to follow
- **Qualifications**: **citizen of India**; at least **35 years**; qualified to be a member of the **Lok Sabha**
- **Civil servants** = govt employees who do **not belong** to any political party
- Serve in the Indian Administrative (**IAS**), Foreign (**IFS**) & Police (**IPS**) Services; selected via **UPSC** exam & interviews; work at **central & state** levels

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