Constituent Assembly of India

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Why in news?

79 years ago, on December 9th the Constituent Assembly held its first meeting.

- **Proposed in–** 1st proposed in 1934 by ***M.N. Roy***, a pioneering figure in the Indian Communist movement.
- **Established in line with –** Guidelines set forth by the ***Cabinet Mission Plan*** on 1946.
- **Purpose –** Formulate a Constitution for facilitating appropriate transfer of sovereign power from British authorities to Indian hands.
- **1st Session –** On ***December 9, 1946***, met in the Constitution Hall in New Delhi, which is now known as the Central Hall of Parliament House.
- ***Dr. Sacchidananda Sinha*** was elected as the temporary Chairman of the Assembly.
- On 11th December, 1946 - Elected President (Rajendra Prasad) & Vice-Presidents (VT Krishnamachari & HC Mookerji).
- **Structure –** It incorporating both ***elected and nominated members:***
    - **Elected Members** - Representatives from the existing provincial legislatures were elected through a system of proportional representation.
    - **Nominated Members** - The various princely states appointed their representatives directly, resulting in nominated members for their seats.
- **Diverse representation** – Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsi, Anglo-Indian, Indian Christians, SCs/ STS, Backward Classes, and women belonging to all of these sections.
- **Composition –** Total membership of the Constituent Assembly is 389
    - 292 members elected by the Provincial Legislative Assemblies.
    - 93 members representing the Indian Princely States.
    - 4 members representing the Chief Commissioners' Provinces.

- **Partition Impact –** By June 1947, the Mountbatten Plan led to the formation of a ***separate Constituent Assembly for Pakistan*** and the final tally for the Indian Constituent Assembly was ***reduced to 299***.
- **Duration –** It took almost **3 years (2 years, 11 months, and 17 days)** to draft the Constitution of India.
    - It held **11** sessions covering a total of 165 days, of these, 114 days were spent on the consideration of the Draft Constitution.
- **Key leaders –** Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr BR Ambedkar, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Acharya JB Kripalani, Dr Rajendra Prasad and Sarojini Naidu, etc.
- **Adoption –** Finally, the Constitution was adopted on ***November 26, 1949*** with a Preamble, 395 Articles, and 8 Schedules.
- The Constitution came into force from ***January 26, 1950*** which is celebrated as the Republic Day.

References

1. Indian Express | 79 years of first meeting of Constituent Assembly
2. Digital Sansad | Constituent Assembly

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