

# The Vice President of India

The Vice President of India is the **second-highest constitutional office** in the country, after the President. As a crucial part of India's governance, the Vice President has an important legislative role and stands as a key figure in the absence of the President.

## 1. Qualifications for the Vice President of India

To be eligible for the office of the Vice President, a candidate must:

- Be a **citizen of India**.
- Be at least **35 years old**.
- Be qualified to be elected as a member of the Rajya Sabha (Council of States).
- Not hold any **office of profit** under the government of India, any state government, or any public authority.

## 2. Election Process

The Vice President is elected by an **Electoral College** comprising:

- **Members of both Houses of Parliament** (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), both elected and nominated members.

The election follows a **single transferable vote** system through a secret ballot to ensure proportional representation. To win, a candidate must secure a majority of the votes cast.

## 3. Term and Removal

- The Vice President serves a **five-year term** and can be re-elected.
- The Vice President can resign by submitting a written notice to the President.
- The Vice President may also be **removed from office** by a resolution passed by a majority of all the members of the Rajya Sabha and agreed to by the Lok Sabha.

## 4. Powers and Functions of the Vice President

The Vice President of India has significant responsibilities, mainly in the legislative domain, as well as a role in succession if the President is absent.

#### a) Role as the Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha

- The Vice President is the **ex-officio Chairperson** of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Parliament. This means that the Vice President presides over the Rajya Sabha's sessions and ensures its smooth functioning.
- As Chairperson, the Vice President:
  - Maintains order during debates, ensuring rules are followed.
  - Decides on points of order and interprets parliamentary procedures.
  - Has a casting vote in case of a tie in the Rajya Sabha.

#### b) Role in Presidential Succession

- The Vice President plays a critical role in case of the **President's absence** due to resignation, death, impeachment, or incapacity.
- In such cases, the Vice President assumes the office of **Acting President** until a new President is elected or the President resumes duties.
- During this period, the Vice President temporarily takes over the President's functions, including emergency powers, appointments, and legislative duties.

#### c) Role in Legislative Procedures

- Although the Vice President is the Rajya Sabha Chairperson, they do not participate in regular voting. However, they exercise a **casting vote** in case of a tie, helping to resolve stalemates.
- The Vice President ensures that bills and resolutions in the Rajya Sabha are debated and passed in an orderly manner, upholding the legislative framework.

### 5. Powers as Acting President

When the Vice President assumes the role of Acting President, they exercise the President's powers and responsibilities, including:

- Appointing key officials (e.g., Prime Minister, Governors, Judges) upon the advice of the Council of Ministers.
- Implementing emergency powers, if necessary, to maintain order and stability.

- Presiding over ceremonial functions and representing India internationally during the President's absence.

## 6. Significance of the Office

The Vice President's role is significant for various reasons:

- **Upholding Parliamentary Functioning:** As Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, the Vice President maintains order and supports productive discussions in Parliament.
- **Symbol of National Unity:** Like the President, the Vice President represents national unity and is a respected figure in the country's governance.
- **Presidential Succession:** The Vice President's ability to act as President ensures continuity and stability in leadership during transitions or emergencies.