

Loksewa Notes: Parliament, Courts and Constitutional Bodies of Nepal

Polity questions in Loksewa are mostly about structure: who makes laws, who runs government, who judges disputes, and which independent bodies keep them honest. This note is a compact map of that structure under the Constitution of Nepal (2015). For the bigger story, read our full article on the constitution; here the aim is fast revision.

Seat numbers and terms below are the general constitutional arrangement. Amendments and new laws can change details, so check the current text for anything marks depend on.

The three organs of the state

Organ	Job	Who
Legislature	Makes laws, approves the budget, watches the government	Federal Parliament, provincial assemblies, local assemblies
Executive	Runs the country and carries out laws	President (head of state), Prime Minister and Council of Ministers; provincial and local executives
Judiciary	Settles disputes and interprets the constitution	Supreme Court, High Courts, District Courts

Federal Parliament

- It has two houses: the **House of Representatives** (lower house) and the **National Assembly** (upper house).
- **House of Representatives:** 275 members. 165 are elected by first-past-the-post from constituencies and 110 by proportional representation. Normal term: 5 years.
- **National Assembly:** 59 members. 56 are elected by provincial assemblies and local-level heads and deputies (8 from each province), and 3 are nominated by the President on the government's recommendation. Term: 6 years, with one third retiring every two years, so it is a permanent house.
- The government is formed from the House of Representatives; the Prime Minister must have its confidence.

Provinces and local levels

- Each of the 7 provinces has a provincial assembly (550 seats across the country: 330 first-past-the-post and 220 proportional), a Chief Minister and a Province Head appointed by the

President.

- Each local level has its own assembly and an elected head and deputy (mayor and deputy mayor, or chair and vice-chair). Local governments make local laws within their powers.
- The constitution lists federal, provincial, local and shared powers in its Schedules.

Judiciary

- **Supreme Court:** the highest court; led by the Chief Justice. It can interpret the constitution and strike down laws that contradict it.
- **High Courts** sit at the provincial level, and **District Courts** hear cases in each district.
- The **Judicial Council** recommends judicial appointments and handles discipline. The Constitutional Council recommends heads of several constitutional bodies.

Constitutional bodies

These are independent bodies set up by the constitution itself so that important work does not depend on the government of the day.

Body	Main job
Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA)	Investigates corruption and abuse of power by public office holders
Office of the Auditor General	Audits government accounts
Public Service Commission (Loksewa Aayog)	Recruits for the civil service and advises on service matters
Election Commission	Conducts and supervises elections
National Human Rights Commission	Protects and promotes human rights
National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission	Recommends how revenue and natural resources are shared among the three levels
Commissions for women, Dalits, inclusion, Indigenous nationalities, Madhesi, Tharu and Muslim communities	Protect rights and promote inclusion of those groups

Heads and members of the main bodies generally serve a fixed term of six years; this is a favourite exam fact, so confirm the exact arrangement for each body in the constitution.

Tips for answering polity questions

1. Learn each body with a number (seats, term) and a verb (investigates, audits, recruits).
2. Do not mix the two houses: the House of Representatives is directly elected and can topple a government; the National Assembly is permanent.

3. Make a one-page chart yourself from this note; the act of drawing it is revision.

Practice questions

1. How many members does the House of Representatives have, and how are they elected?
2. Which body audits the accounts of government offices?
3. Which house is a permanent house, and why?
4. Which body investigates corruption by public office holders?

Answers: 1) 275; 165 by first-past-the-post and 110 by proportional representation. 2) The Office of the Auditor General. 3) The National Assembly, because one third of its members retire every two years. 4) The CIAA.

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