WELCOME TO THE EXHIBITION

Embark with us on a journey — exploring Bhartiya wisdom on civilisational jurisprudence.

FROM ANCIENT TREATISES TO THE MODERN REPUBLIC.

Along the way, a challenge awaits you:

▶ TAP TO WIN FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS ALONG THE JOURNEY

MODERN CONSTITUTIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

A Constitution is the supreme and fundamental law of a country. It is the source of the government's power — and the document that places restrictions on that power.

193

Member states of the United Nations

Almost all govern under a written constitution

1

Does not — the United Kingdom

Remarkably, the country whose Empire left written constitutions behind in every colony it departed, never wrote one of its own.

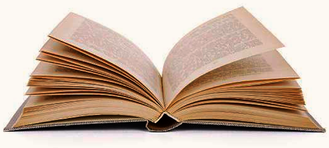
AN ARCHITECT WHO NEVER BUILT HIS OWN HOME.

▶ TAP HERE TO EXPLORE THE BLUEPRINTS OF CONSTITUTIONS

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

A Constitution is not a temporary law.
It is designed to endure for the ages.

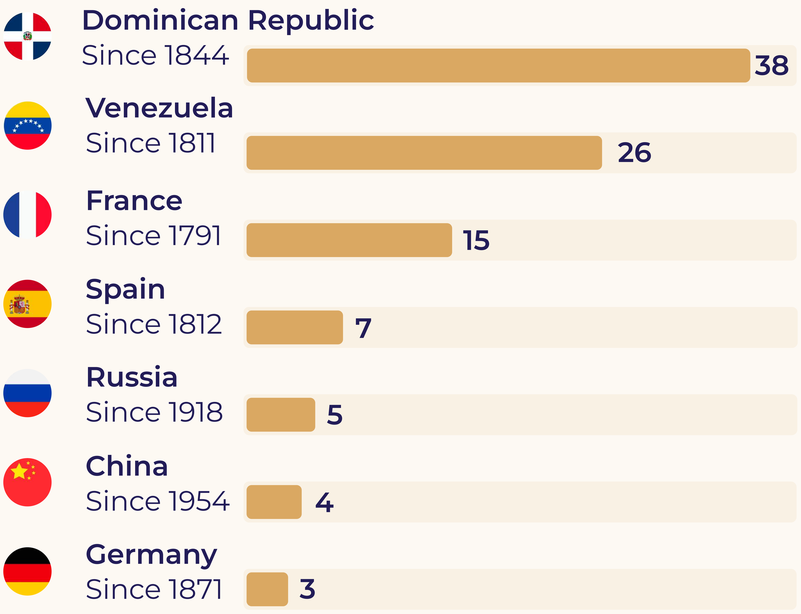
However, records tell a different story.



Across the world since 1789, the average life of a written constitution has been approximately **17** YEARS

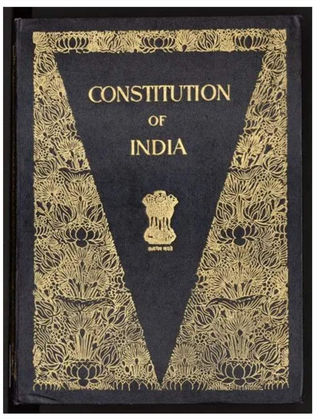
A document drafted for the ages has not been able to last even for the generation that wrote it.

Some countries which have rewritten their constitutions multiple times:



▶ TAP HERE TO WATCH CONSTITUTIONS RISE AND FALL

THE INDIAN STORY



106 Amendments

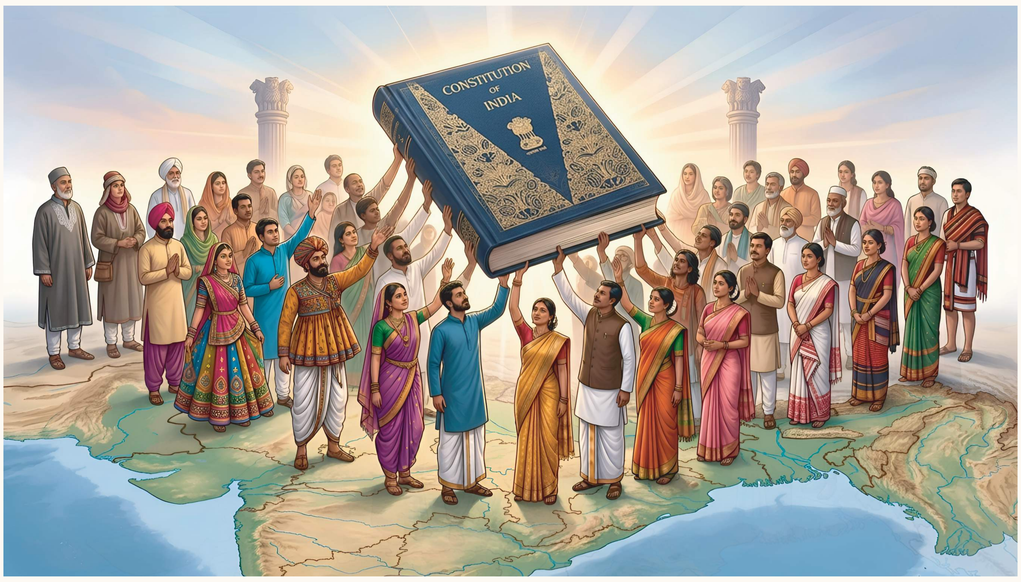
75 Years

1 Constitution

While the world has kept rewriting its constitutions, India has only revised its one own.

THIS IS NOT LUCK

It is the people who carried something older with them — a civilisational ethos of tolerance, resilience and accommodation. A nation of many languages, many faiths and many cultures would have otherwise not lived under one constitution for 75 years.



CIVILISATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

India did not begin its life as a republic. It is a civilisation that has been governing itself for millennia.

Although we had no official Constitution, we had something older.

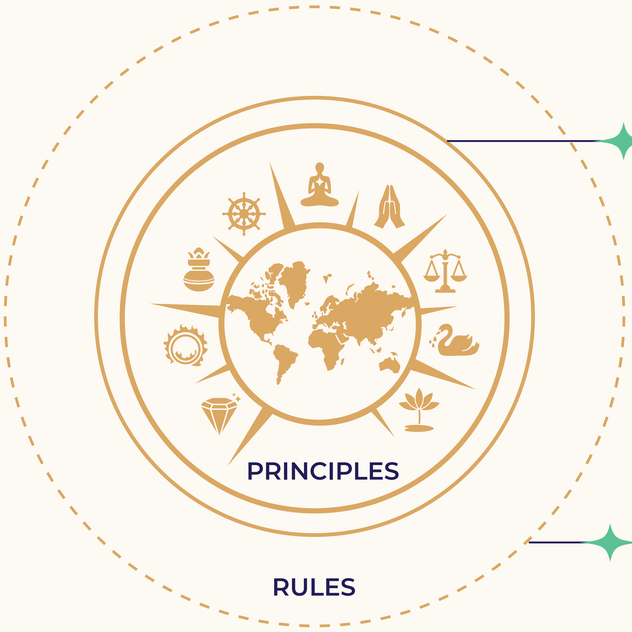
अर्थशास्त्र Arthaśāstra	याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति Yājñavalkyasmṛti	शान्तिपर्व • महाभारत Santiparva of the Mahābhārata
शुक्रनीति Sukranīti	बार्हस्पत्य Bārhaspatya	औशनस Auśanasa

These are not relics. They are working manuals of statecraft — taxation and trade, land and inheritance, justice and punishment, the duties of the king and the limits of his power.

AS ANCIENT AS THE CIVILISATION THAT WROTE THEM. STILL RELEVANT. STILL APPLICABLE TODAY.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ENDURANCE

The ancient texts endured by a deliberate design.



THE CORE
The timeless principles of governance remained at the core.

THE RULES & BY-LAWS
The administrative rules and by-laws, built on those principles, remained on the surface.

THE PRINCIPLES WERE ETERNAL. THE RULES FLEXED WITH CIRCUMSTANCE

The principles were such that they did not age with time. They were all-time relevant. The principles were universal. They held for any country, any people. The rules changed as the times changed.

THIS PAIRING OF ETERNITY AND FLEXIBILITY IS WHAT ALLOWED THESE TREATISES TO ENDURE FOR MILLENIA.

THE TIMELESS PRINCIPLES

Six among many — principles drawn from the ancient texts
that have not aged with the passage of time.

01 Economics sees no free lunch.

न केनचिद् याचितव्यः कश्चिद् किंचिदनापदि ।
इति व्यवस्था भूतानां पुरस्तान्मनुना कृता ॥
सर्वे तथा न जीवेयुर्न कुर्युः कर्म चेदिह ।
सर्व एव इमे लोका न भवेयुरसंशयम् ॥

— Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva 89.16-17

No one should ask anything of anyone unless distress prevails. Manu himself in days of yore has laid down this injunction regarding all men. If the people cease to make effort, the nation itself will perish.

02 Taxation during emergency.

कोशं च जनयेद् राजा निर्जलेभ्यो यथा जलम् ।
कालं प्राप्यानुगृह्णीयादेष धर्मः सनातनः ।
उपायधर्मं प्राप्येमं पूर्वैराचरितं जनैः ॥

— Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva 130.13

In crisis, the king may draw revenue from sources that would not otherwise be touched. But when the crisis passes, he must return what he has taken, in beneficence to those from whom he took. This is the eternal duty of just kings.

03 Fundamental duties of the State.

दुष्टस्य दण्डः सुजनस्य पूजा न्यायेन
कोषस्य च सम्प्रवृद्धिः ।
अपक्षपातोधिषु राष्ट्ररक्षा पञ्चैव
यज्ञाः कथिता नृपाणाम् ॥

— Atri Saṃhitā 28

The civilisational tradition named them precisely. Punishment of the wicked. Honour and protection of the good. The treasury enriched by just means. Impartiality between litigants. The defence of the realm. These are the five duties of the ruler — and they are called yajñas.

04 There is no absolute sovereignty. The ruler is bound by Rājadharma and Rājanīti.

धर्मेण हि महीपालश्चिरं पालयते महीम् ॥

— Mahābhārata, Sāntiparva
[Book 12. Chapter 69, verse 68]

It is by Rajdharma alone that a king protects the earth for long. Sovereignty endures not by the ruler's will, but by the duties that bind it.

05 Law is only a means to justice.

केवलं शास्त्रमाश्रित्य न कर्तव्यो विनिर्णयः ।
युक्तिहीनविचारे तु धर्महानिः प्रजायते ॥

-Yajnavalkyasmrti

Law is not an end in itself. It is the means by which justice is reached. A judgment that follows the words of the law without the work of reasoning misses the end for which the law was made.

06 Citizenship is based on loyalty.

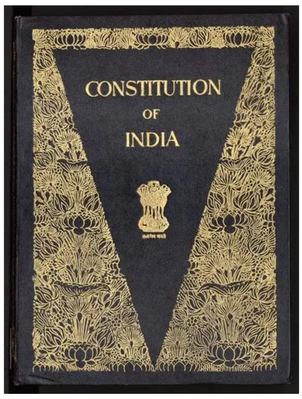
राजद्विट् ... राष्ट्राद् विवासयेत् ।

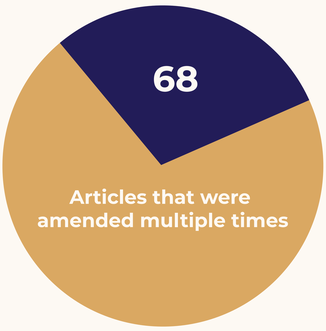
— Śukranīti 4.1.100, 107

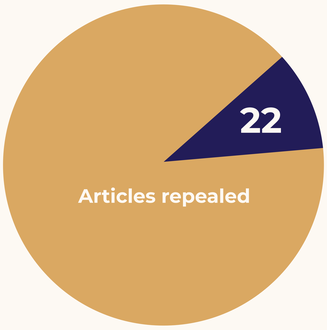
Loyalty is the substance of citizenship itself. One who turns against the realm has, by that act, placed himself outside it.

ONE HUNDRED AND SIX AMENDMENTS

Although India has held to one Constitution, it has had to make changes within that Constitution 106 times.







The Constitution of today is not the Constitution that was originally written.

What required so many changes?

THE 106 AMENDMENTS SERVED TWO BROAD PURPOSES.

AMENDMENTS THAT CHANGED THE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The Indian Constitution is the longest written constitution in the world. It is long because it contains a great deal of administrative detail — provisions on procedure, qualifications, composition, salaries, and institutional machinery — that in other constitutions is left to ordinary law.

Even Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, chairman of the Drafting Committee, acknowledged this openly in the Constituent Assembly:

> "What I am sorry about is that the provisions taken from the Government of India Act, 1935, relate mostly to the details of administration. I agree that administrative details should have no place in the Constitution. I wish very much that the Drafting Committee could see its way to avoid their inclusion in the Constitution."

— Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, in the Constituent Assembly on 4 November 1948

Details of this kind cannot escape change. As the times change, the details must change with them. And because they were placed in the Constitution itself, every such change required an amendment.

Roughly two-thirds of the Constitution's articles prescribe administrative detail.

Article 334 alone — on the duration of reservations of seats in state legislative assemblies — has been amended seven times.

At least 35 of 106 amendments applied to a single state or territory, not to the constitutional order as a whole.

AMENDMENTS THAT EXPANDED POWER

The second purpose moved the constitutional order in a single direction — concentrating authority in the state. This was not the housekeeping of administration. This was the reshaping of the constitutional order itself.

POWER RISING

41 Expanding the power of Parliament with over 41 amendments.

16 Expanding the power of the Centre over the States with atleast 16 amendments.

Legislative

22 Curtailing the power of the Courts with at least 22 amendments.

21 Amendments made to nullify court verdicts with atleast 21 amendments.

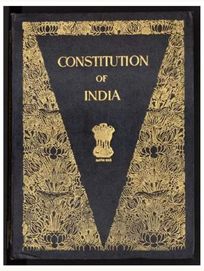
Judiciary

POWER CURTAILING

AND IT BEGAN WITH THE VERY FIRST AMENDMENT – IN 1951.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND ARTICLE 31B

1950



This was a promising year for India. Not just because it gave itself a Constitution — but because that Constitution came with **fundamental rights** packed within it.

The First Amendment, took a departure from that promise.

1951

Article 31B was inserted, which enabled:

- The Parliament to make any law that violates any fundamental right.
- The Parliament to revive any law that a court had struck down as invalid.

ARTICLE 31B

All that needed to be done was to insert that law in a list at the end of the Constitution.

THE NINTH SCHEDULE

THE BOUNDARY THAT WAS NOT DRAWN

The First Amendment added a new restriction on the freedom of speech. Citizens would not be allowed to speak in a manner that would disturb India's relations with foreign states.

But not every foreign state was treated the same.

By an order issued by the Governor-General in 1950, every country within the Commonwealth was declared not to be a foreign State — and this included Pakistan.

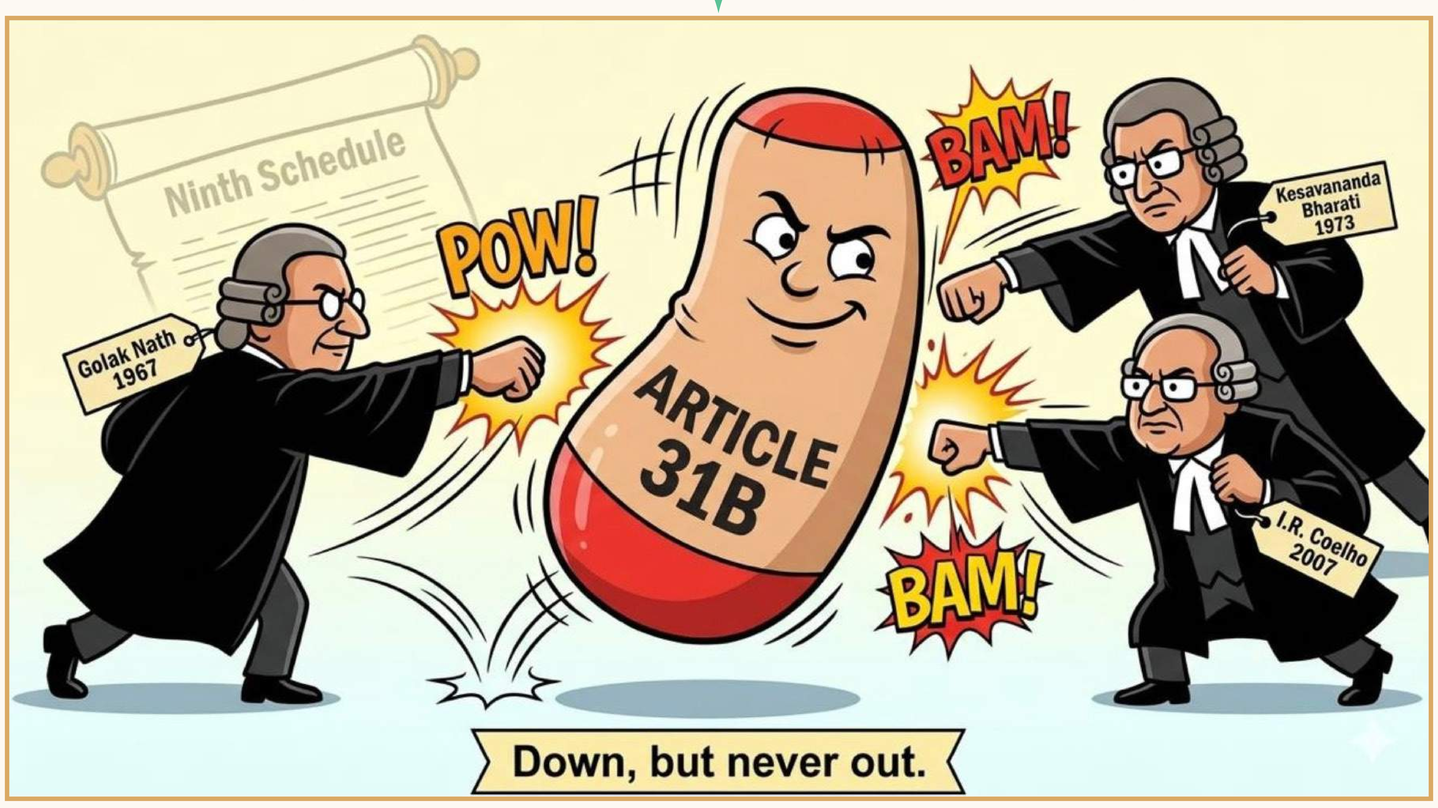
A citizen could be prosecuted for criticising France.

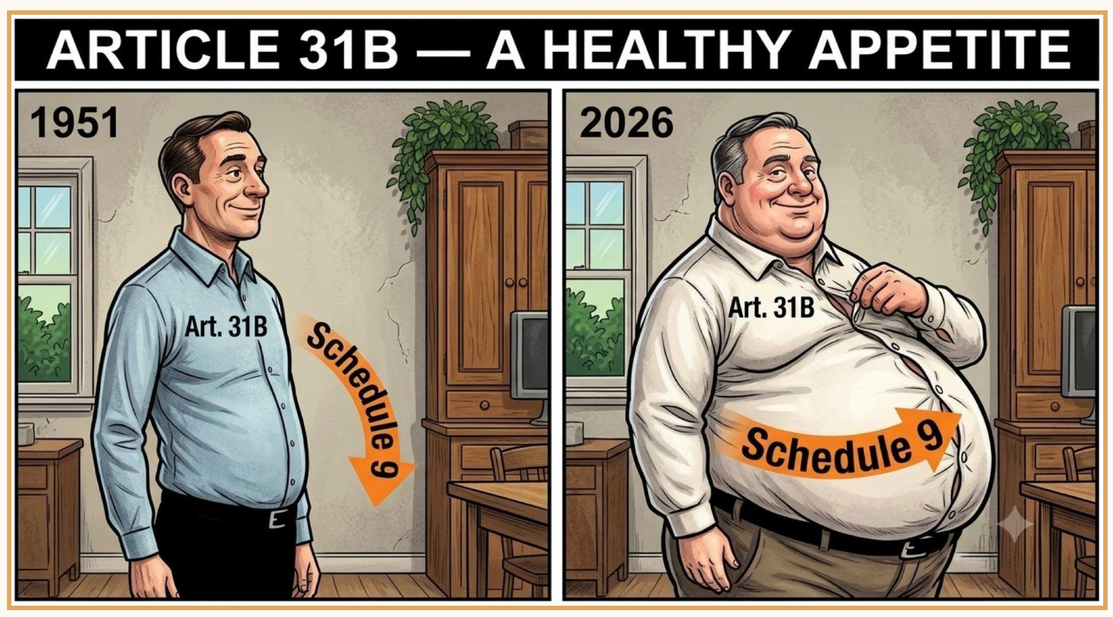
But not for speaking against Pakistan.

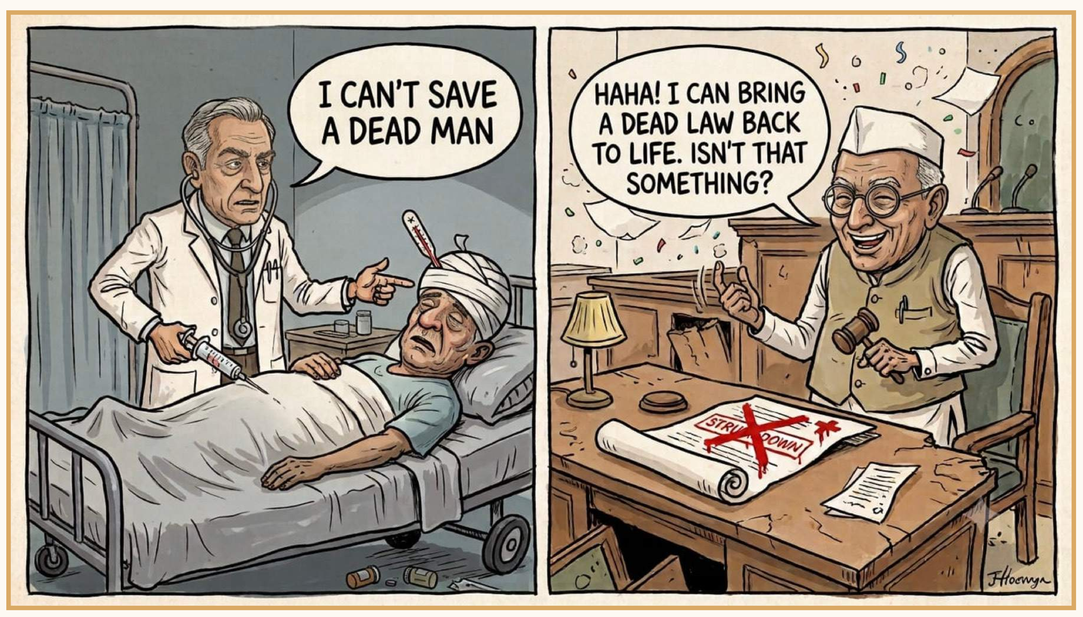
THE CONSTITUTION HAD CLAIMED INDEPENDENCE IN 1950. BUT ITS IDEA OF WHAT "FOREIGN" MEANT STILL RAN ALONG THE COLONIAL RELATIONS SET BY THE BRITISH.

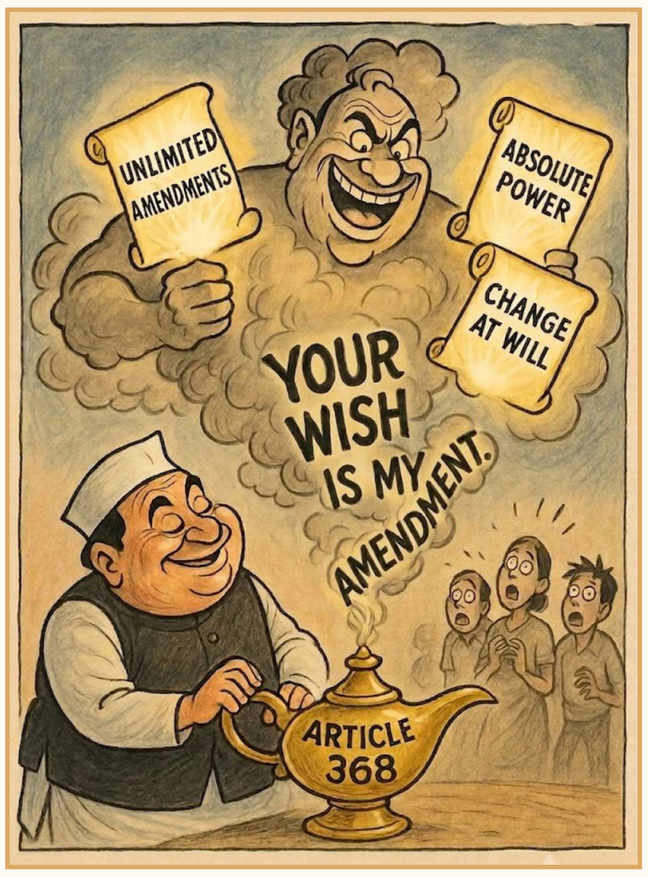
▶ TAP HERE TO TEST IT OUT YOURSELF

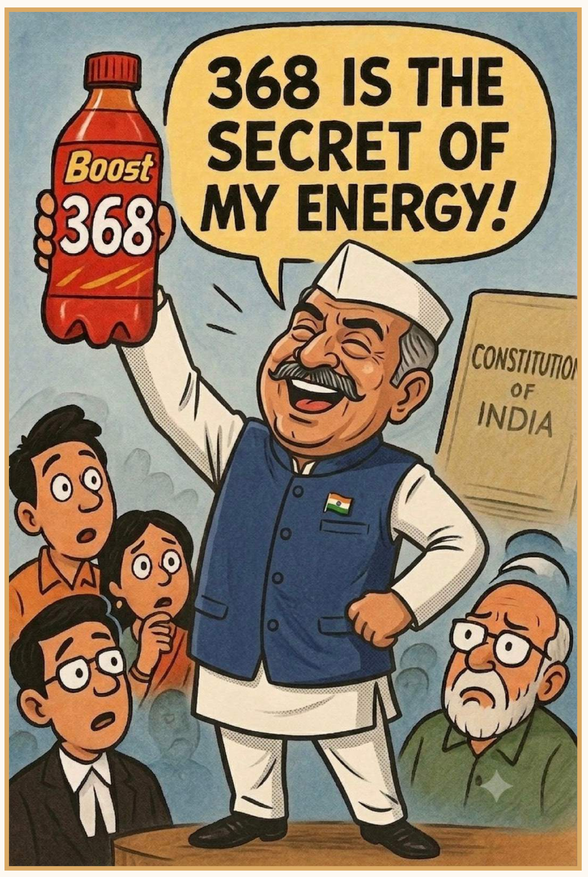
LEXTOONS


Ninth Schedule
Golak Nath 1967
POW!
ARTICLE 31B
BAM!
Kesavananda Bharati 1973
BAM!
I.R. Coelho 2007
Down, but never out.


ARTICLE 31B — A HEALTHY APPETITE
1951
Art. 31B
Schedule 9
2026
Art. 31B
Schedule 9


I CAN'T SAVE A DEAD MAN
HAHA! I CAN BRING A DEAD LAW BACK TO LIFE. ISN'T THAT SOMETHING?
STRIKE DOWN


UNLIMITED AMENDMENTS
ABSOLUTE POWER
CHANGE AT WILL
YOUR WISH IS MY AMENDMENT.
ARTICLE 368


Boost 368
368 IS THE SECRET OF MY ENERGY!
CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

AN ALTERNATE REALITY

You have seen the story as it happened.
But history always keeps
another door ajar.

WHAT IF THE SAMVIDHAN HAD BEEN WRITTEN DIFFERENTLY?

▶ CLICK HERE TO EXPLORE AN ALTERNATE REALITY