

Minto-Morley Reforms 1909 aka. Indian Councils Act 1909

(viceroy) (secretary of state)

Passed in the British Parliament in March 1909; came into effect November 1909.*

Retained official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council

The Size of Imperial (Central) Legislative Council (ILC) was expanded from 16 to 60

The Size of Provincial council increased to 50 for Major Provinces (Madras, Bombay, Bengal, UP) and 30 for minor provinces (Assam, Burma and Punjab)

Introduced Non Official Majority in the Provincial Legislative Council

Indians could be part of the executive councils.
Satyendra P. Sinha became the first Indian in the Viceroy's Executive Council (Law member)

IMPERIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (1909) Total Membership 60			
37 Official members (Government Servants)		32 Non-Officials (Indians or others not in Govt. Service)	
Governor General Council (ex-officio members) (Executive – like today's Cabinet; separate from Legislature)	Nominated official members by Governor General	Nominated nonofficial member by Governor General	Elected members (Intro. of ELECTIVE principle) (indirect election)
9	28	5	27
1 Governor General			General Electorates 13 from Provincial Legislative Councils (2 each for major provinces : Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U.P.), 1 each from minor provinces (Punjab, Burma, Assam)
6 Ordinary members			Class electorates 12 1. Chamber of Commerce 2. Landholders (Zamindars) 3. Indian Commercial Community 4. Universities (Bom, Mad, Beng) 5. Miscellaneous
2 extra ordinary members – (1 Indian member and 1 commander in chief)			1 : Universities (Calcutta, Bombay, Madras combined) Special Electorate 2 : Muslim Community (Separate Electorates)

For non-official seats, an indirect election system was put in place

Separate Representation of special interest groups, Local Bodies, Presidency corporations

Introduction of Communal Representation and Separate Electorates for Muslims

Minto came to be known as Father of Communal Representation

1909 Changes in Deliberative functions* in Imperial and Provincial Legislative Council

S.N	Provision under 1909 Act	Provisions under 1909 Act (Expanded Powers)	Position under 1892 Act (Earlier Restrictions)
1	Right to move resolutions	Members (especially non-officials) could now formally move RESOLUTIONS on public matters and budget items. Resolutions could be debated and even voted upon (though not binding).	Members could only discuss matters; no power to move resolutions was given.
2	Removal of restrictions on budget discussions	Members could propose resolutions on specific budget heads and DIVIDE (vote) the house on them; real deliberation on financial issues began.	Members could only make general remarks on the budget; no resolutions or voting were allowed.
3	Right to ask supplementary questions	Members could now ask follow-up (supplementary) questions to seek clarifications from the executive.	Members could only ask initial written questions with prior notice; no supplementary questions permitted.
4	Right to discuss matters of public interest	Members could discuss ANY subject of general public importance with prior notice – education, health, famine relief, etc.	Members could discuss very limited administrative subjects , only if permitted by the presiding officer.
5	Right to move resolutions on executive acts (within limits)	Members could move resolutions criticizing executive actions in domestic administration (except reserved subjects like defense, foreign policy, princely states).	Executive acts were not open to discussion ; questioning the government's conduct was discouraged.
6	Right to divide the council (vote)	Members could demand a division (recorded vote) on resolutions and budget items – showing formal dissent.	No voting permitted. The discussion ended without any formal decision.
7	Wider participation of Indians	More Indians entered the councils through nomination and indirect elections, making debates broader and livelier.	Only a handful of nominated Indians (mostly loyalists) sat in councils; debates were limited and unrepresentative.

*The 1909 Act expanded deliberative powers but not legislative control – the Executive remained independent of the Councils.

British Government declared (1917) that its objective was the **progressive realization of responsible government** in India through gradual development of self-governing institutions."

Montague Chelmsford Reforms 1919 aka. Government of India Act 1919

(secretary of state)

(viceroy)

Came into effect in 1921

Separated **Provincial Budgets** from the **Central budget** and authorised the provincial legislatures to enact their budgets

Separated the Subjects into **CENTRAL SUBJECT** and **PROVINCIAL SUBJECT**

Introduced, for the first time, **BICAMERALISM** and **DIRECT ELECTIONS** in the country.

Indian Legislative Council

Replaced by

Upper House
(Council of State)
60 members (33
elected)

Lower House
(Legislative Assembly)
145 members (104
elected)

Dyarchy

Introduced Dyarchy in Provinces

Transferred subjects

Administered by the **Governor**
with the aid of **ministers**
responsible to the legislative
Council

Reserved subjects

Administered by Governor
and his Executive Council
without being responsible to
the legislative Council.

Majority of members must be chosen by **DIRECT ELECTION**

Limited Franchise based on **PET (Property, Education, Tax)**

Made that, **THREE members** of the Viceroy's executive Council (other than the commander-in-chief) were to be **Indians**

Extended the principle of **communal representation** by providing separate electorates beyond Muslims to include Christians (Indian), Anglo Indians, Sikhs, and Europeans.

It provided for establishment of
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

Appointed

Lee Commission on Superior Civil
Services in India (1923–24)

Established

Central Public Service
Commission 1926

Created a new office of **High Commissioner for India in London** and **transferred some functions** of Secretary of State to him.

Provision/ Power	Position under 1909 Act (Morley-Minto)	Improvements under 1919 Act (Montagu-Chelmsford)
Right to move resolutions	Non-official members could move resolutions on public matters and the budget; resolutions were <i>advisory, not binding</i> .	Members could move resolutions on all matters within the jurisdiction of the government , except reserved subjects. Executive was now required to respond within a fixed time, enhancing accountability.
Discussion on budget	Members could discuss and vote (divide) on individual heads of expenditure but had no power to modify or reduce them.	Councils were given greater control over budget discussion ; they could reduce or refuse grants on transferred subjects in the provinces. (First step toward <i>financial responsibility</i> .)
Right to ask questions	Members could ask supplementary questions and seek clarifications, but answers were often discretionary.	Question Hour institutionalized — regularized procedure for asking questions; Executive obliged to give answers on provincial and central matters (except reserved subjects).
Scope of subjects for discussion	Discussions allowed only on public issues with prior permission; key policy areas (defence, foreign affairs) excluded.	Members could discuss almost all administrative matters within transferred subjects and even certain policy questions under provincial autonomy.
Nature of powers — advisory or effective?	Entirely advisory ; no power to enforce decisions or hold executive responsible.	Councils became partly effective : at the provincial level , "transferred subjects" were handled by ministers responsible to the legislature → <i>birth of partial responsible government (dyarchy)</i> .
Composition and representation	Mostly nominated and indirectly elected; limited franchise; official majority retained at the Centre and often in provinces.	Size of legislatures greatly increased (Imperial Legislative Council → Indian Legislative Assembly + Council of State). Elected members now in majority in most provinces; limited female and Indian business representation introduced .
Division of subjects	No division between executive and legislature; executive dominated both levels.	Dyarchy introduced in provinces : – <i>Transferred subjects</i> (education, health, agriculture) under Indian ministers responsible to the legislature. – <i>Reserved subjects</i> (finance, police, law and order) under British executive members.
Responsibility of Executive	Executive (Viceroy and Governors) not responsible to the legislatures.	Partial responsibility introduced at the provincial level; Indian ministers could be questioned, censured, or removed by the legislative council.
Franchise (voting rights)	Indirect, very limited; franchise restricted to property and education qualifications.	Franchise expanded — about 5 million voters enfranchised; elections held for both Central and Provincial legislatures (first time direct elections).
Legislative output	Councils could discuss bills but rarely initiate legislation; Viceroy had overriding veto.	Members could now introduce bills (except in reserved subjects). Some provincial acts passed under transferred portfolios (education, local govt).

Government of India Act 1935

A very lengthy Act with 321 Sections and 10 Schedules — intended to establish an All-India Federation and introduce **provincial autonomy**; responsible government was limited to the provinces.

Establishment of **All-India FEDERATION** of British Provinces and Princely States

Divided the powers between the Centre and units in terms of three lists

Federal List

Provincial List

Concurrent List

Reserved Subject

Transferred Subject

Residuary Subjects must be with Viceroy/Governor General

Abolished Dyarchy in Provinces

Abolished Dyarchy in Provinces and introduced **PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY** ;

Dyarchy in 1935 Act

Introduced Dyarchy in Centre

So Federal List was divided as Reserved and Transferred Subject

Introduced **responsible government in Provinces** (i.e – Governor to act based on the advice of Minister)

Introduced **Bicameralism in Provinces** - Six out of Eleven provinces became bicameral

Extended **Communal Representation** to – **Depressed Classes, Women and Labour**

It **extended franchise**. About **10 per cent** of the total population got the **voting right**.

The federal part of the Act was never implemented; only the provincial part came into force (1937–1939)."

Government of India act 1935 enabled Establishment of **THREE** institutions

Reserve Bank of India

Federal Public Service Commission and Provincial Public Service Commission

Federal Court established in 1937; first Chief Justice – Sir Maurice Gwyer

Powers of Governor General and Governor

Governor-General

- Head of the Federation (representing the Crown).
- **Controlled defence, external affairs, ecclesiastical affairs.**
- Could issue ordinances for 6 months.
- Had veto and certification powers (could pass laws without legislature).

Provincial Governors

- Retained **special responsibilities** (law and order, minorities, finance).
- Could override ministers or assume control during breakdown.

Feature	1919 Act	1935 Act
Type of Govt	Semi-responsible	Provincial autonomy; Centre still irresponsible
Dyarchy	In provinces	Abolished in provinces, introduced at Centre
Legislature	Bicameral at Centre only	Bicameral in 6 provinces; proposed federal legislature
Franchise	5 million voters	35 million voters (10%)
Electorates	Communal (limited)	Communal + special (Depressed Classes, Women, Labour)
Institutions created	PSC (provision), High Commissioner	RBI, Federal Court, FPSC, Provincial PSC
Responsible Govt	Partial (provincial level)	Provincial autonomy (ministers responsible to legislature)



Start your **UPSC** preparation from **ANYWHERE**



EDUCASIUM IAS

- ✓ Most **Affordable** UPSC course
- ✓ **Self Prepare** from home or hostel
- ✓ Prelims and Mains **full syllabus** coverage
- ✓ 100% fully **updated recorded video** classes