

Article 24 of Indian Constitution, Provisions, Case Laws, Amendments

March 9, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Article 24 of Indian Constitution is a key safeguard placed in Part III of the Constitution under the Right Against Exploitation. It directly protects children from hazardous labour and reflects the commitment of the framers to secure childhood from physical and moral harm. This provision ensures that children below fourteen years are not pushed into dangerous industries. It complements the broader constitutional vision of dignity, health, safety and equal opportunity for young citizens.

Article 24 of Indian Constitution

Article 24 of Indian Constitution clearly states that no child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory, mine or in any other hazardous employment. Originally introduced as Draft Article 18 in 1948, it was later renumbered as Article 24 in the Constitution of 1950. The article strictly focused on protecting children from harmful industrial and mining activities.

Article 24 of Indian Constitution Provisions

Article 24 of Indian Constitution creates a constitutional ban on hazardous child labour below fourteen years.

- **Constitutional Location:** Article 24 is placed in Part III under **Fundamental Rights**, making it directly enforceable through constitutional remedies against violations by both State authorities and private employers.
- **Age Threshold:** The Article fixes fourteen years as the maximum age below which employment in specified dangerous sectors is completely prohibited without any exception.
- **Scope of Prohibition:** The ban specifically covers factories, mines and all forms of hazardous employment that may endanger health, safety or physical development of children.
- **Public Health Objective:** The provision aims to protect the physical strength and tender age of children from abuse and industrial exploitation.
- **Link with Directive Principles:** Article 24 operates alongside Article 39(e) and Article 39(f), which direct the State to prevent abuse of children and ensure healthy development with dignity.
- **Horizontal Application:** Judicial interpretation clarified that this prohibition applies not only against the government but also against private individuals and contractors.

Article 24 of Indian Constitution Amendments

Article 24 of Indian Constitution text remains unchanged, but supporting constitutional and statutory reforms strengthened its implementation. Since 1950, Article 24 has not been altered, maintaining the original prohibition drafted in 1948. Other significant initiatives and laws had strengthened the article as highlighted below:

- **Eighty-Sixth Constitutional Amendment, 2002:** This amendment inserted Article 21A, making free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen a fundamental right, indirectly reinforcing Article 24.
- **Factories Act, 1948:** This law fixed fourteen years as the minimum age for factory work and was amended in 1954 to bar children below seventeen years from night shifts.
- **Mines Act, 1952:** Section 40 and Section 45 prohibit employment of persons below eighteen years in mines and mining-related operations for safety reasons.
- **Child Labour Act, 1986:** This Act defined a child as a person below fourteen and prohibited employment in 13 occupations and 57 processes considered hazardous.
- **Amendment Act, 2016:** The 2016 amendment completely banned employment of children below fourteen in all occupations, while restricting adolescents aged fourteen to eighteen from hazardous work.
- **Stricter Penalties:** The 2016 reform enhanced punishments for employers violating child labour laws to strengthen enforcement.
- **Amendment Rules, 2017:** These rules provided a structured framework for prevention, rescue and rehabilitation and clarified safeguards for family enterprises and child artists.
- **Beedi and Cigar Workers Act, 1966:** This legislation prohibits employment of children below fourteen in beedi and cigar manufacturing units due to harmful working conditions.
- **Rehabilitation Framework:** Judicial directions led to the creation of welfare funds and structured rehabilitation schemes for rescued child labourers.
- **Child Labour Amendment, 2016:** This reform expanded protection by banning child labour in all occupations except limited family-based activities and artistic roles under safeguards.

- **Adolescent Protection:** The 2016 amendment introduced the concept of adolescents between fourteen and eighteen years and barred them from hazardous occupations and processes.
- **Enhanced Enforcement Mechanism:** The 2017 Rules operationalised monitoring systems, specified working conditions and established clearer administrative responsibility for rescue and rehabilitation.

Article 24 of Indian Constitution Case Laws

The judiciary has actively interpreted Article 24 of **Indian Constitution** to eliminate hazardous child employment.

- **Peoples Union for Democratic Rights v. Union of India, 1982:** The Supreme Court held that construction work is hazardous and children below fourteen cannot be employed in such projects, including large public infrastructure works.
- **Horizontal Enforcement Principle:** In the same case, the Court clarified that Article 24 is enforceable against private contractors, not only against the government.
- **M. C. Mehta v. State of Tamil Nadu, 1996:** This Public Interest Litigation addressed child labour in Sivakasi firecracker factories and emphasised strict state responsibility under Article 24.
- **Compensation Direction:** The Court ordered payment of Rs. 20,000 as compensation for each illegally employed child labourer and mandated alternative employment for adult family members.
- **Child Labour Rehabilitation Welfare Fund:** The judgment directed establishment of a dedicated welfare fund for rehabilitation and educational support of rescued children.
- **Education Emphasis:** The Court linked Article 24 with the State's duty to provide free education, strengthening the constitutional goal of replacing labour with schooling.
- **Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India, 2011:** The **Supreme Court** addressed exploitation in carpet weaving and similar industries and directed comprehensive rescue and rehabilitation measures.
- **Implementation Focus:** The Court stressed systematic identification, removal and educational reintegration of children engaged in hazardous occupations across sectors.

Also Check Related Articles	
Article 167 of Indian Constitution	Article 93 of Indian Constitution
Article 141 of Indian Constitution	Article 47 of Indian Constitution
Article 84 of Indian Constitution	Article 174 Of Indian Constitution
Article 128 of Indian Constitution	Article 114 of Indian Constitution
Article 17 of Indian Constitution	Article 32 of Indian Constitution
Article 21 of Indian Constitution	Article 19 of indian constitution
Article 14 of indian constitution	Article 18 of Indian Constitution
Article 23 of Indian Constitution	Article 24 of Indian Constitution
Article 3 of Indian Constitution	Article 38 of Indian Constitution
Article 43 of Indian Constitution	Article 48 of Indian Constitution

Article 143 of Indian Constitution	Article 326 of Indian Constitution
Article 124 of indian constitution	Article 45 of Indian Constitution
Article 41 of Indian Constitution	Article 160 of Indian Constitution
Article 340 of Indian Constitution	Article 43b of Indian Constitution
Article 156 of Indian Constitution	Article 144 of Indian Constitution
Article 365 of Indian Constitution	Article 201 of Indian Constitution
Article 140 of Indian Constitution	Article 35 of Indian Constitution
Article 166 of Indian Constitution	Article 102 of Indian Constitution
Article 83 of Indian Constitution	Article 88 of Indian Constitution
Article 28 of Indian Constitution	Article 103 of Indian Constitution
Article 36 of Indian Constitution	Article 62 of Indian Constitution
Article 82 of Indian Constitution	Article 97 of Indian Constitution
Article 224 of Indian Constitution	Article 251 of Indian Constitution
Article 13 of Indian Constitution	Article 29 & 30 of Indian Constitution
Article 15 of Indian Constitution	Article 4 of Indian Constitution
Article 85 of Indian Constitution	Article 27 of Indian Constitution
Article 238 of Indian Constitution	Article 312 of Indian Constitution
Article 137 of Indian Constitution	Article 118 of Indian Constitution
Article 353 of Indian Constitution	Article 111 of Indian Constitution
Article 113 of Indian Constitution	Article 76 of Indian Constitution
Article 44 of Indian Constitution	Article 50 of Indian Constitution
Article 295 of Indian Constitution	Article 194 of Indian Constitution
Article 39 of Indian Constitution	Article 191 of Indian Constitution
Article 20 of Indian Constitution	Article 16 of Indian Constitution
Article 67 of Indian Constitution	Article 40 of Indian Constitution
Article 78 of Indian Constitution	

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/article-24-of-indian-constitution/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.