



Government of India Act 1935

1935 CHAPTER 2

PART IX

THE JUDICATURE.

CHAPTER I

THE FEDERAL COURT.

200 Establishment and constitution of Federal Court.

- (1) There shall be a Federal Court consisting of a Chief Justice of India and such number of other judges as His Majesty may deem necessary, but unless and until an address has been presented by the Federal Legislature to the Governor-General for submission to His Majesty praying for an increase in the number of judges, the number of puisne judges shall not exceed six.

- (2) Every judge of the Federal Court shall be appointed by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual and shall hold office until he attains the age of sixty-five years :

Provided that—

- (a) a judge may by resignation under his hand addressed to the Governor-General resign his office;
 - (b) a judge may be removed from his office by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual on the ground of misbehaviour or of infirmity of mind or body, if the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, on reference being made to them by His Majesty, report that the judge ought on any such ground to be removed.
- (3) A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a judge of the Federal Court unless he—
- (a) has been for at least five years a judge of a High Court in British India or in a Federated State; or

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- (b) is a barrister of England or Northern Ireland of at least ten years standing, or a member of the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland of at least ten years standing; or
- (c) has been for at least ten years a pleader of a High Court in British India or in a Federated State or of two or more such Courts in succession:

Provided that—

- (i) a person shall not be qualified for appointment as Chief Justice of India unless he is, or when first appointed to judicial office was, a barrister, a member of the Faculty of Advocates or a pleader: and
- (ii) in relation to the Chief Justice of India, for the references in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this subsection to ten years there shall be substituted references to fifteen years.

In computing for the purposes of this subsection the standing of a barrister or a member of the Faculty of Advocates, or the period during which a person has been a pleader, any period during which a person has held judicial office after he became a barrister, a member of the Faculty of Advocates or a pleader, as the case may be, shall be included.

- (4) Every person appointed to be a judge of the Federal Court shall, before he enters upon his office, make and subscribe before the Governor-General or some person appointed by him an oath according to the form set out in that behalf in the Fourth Schedule to this Act.

201 Salaries, &c, of judges.

The judges of the Federal Court shall be entitled to such salaries and allowances, including allowances for expenses in respect of equipment and travelling upon appointment, and to such rights in respect of leave and pensions, as may from time to time be fixed by His Majesty in Council:

Provided that neither the salary of a judge nor his rights in respect of leave of absence or pension shall be varied to his disadvantage after his, appointment.

202 Temporary appointment of acting Chief Justice.

If the office of Chief Justice of India becomes vacant, or if the Chief Justice is, by reason of absence or for any other reason, unable to perform the duties of his office, those duties shall, until some person appointed by His Majesty to the vacant office has entered on the duties thereof, or until the Chief Justice has resumed his duties, as the case may be, be performed by such one of the other judges of the court as the Governor-General may in his discretion appoint for the purpose.

203 Seat of Federal Court.

The Federal Court shall be a court of record and shall sit in Delhi and at such other place or places, if any, as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the Governor-General, from time to time appoint.

204 Original jurisdiction of Federal Court.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Federal Court shall, to the exclusion of any other court, have an original jurisdiction in any dispute between any two or more of

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the following parties, that is to say, the Federation, any of the Provinces or any of the Federated States, if and in so far as the dispute involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends:

Provided that the said jurisdiction shall not extend to—

- (a) a dispute to which a State is a party, unless the dispute—
 - (i) concerns the interpretation of this Act or of an Order in Council made thereunder, or the extent of the legislative or executive authority vested in the Federation by virtue of the Instrument of Accession of that State; or
 - (ii) arises under an agreement made under Part VI of this Act in relation to the administration in that State of a law of the Federal Legislature, or otherwise concerns some matter with respect to which the Federal Legislature has power to make laws for that State; or
 - (iii) arises under an agreement made after the establishment of the Federation, with the approval of His Majesty's Representative for the exercise of the functions of the Crown in its relations with Indian States, between that State and the Federation or a Province, being an agreement which expressly provides that the said jurisdiction shall extend to such a dispute;
 - (b) a dispute arising under any agreement which expressly provides that the said jurisdiction shall not extend to such a dispute.
- (2) The Federal Court in the exercise of its original jurisdiction shall not pronounce any judgment other than a declaratory judgment.

205 Appellate jurisdiction of Federal Court in appeals from High Courts in British India.

- (1) An appeal shall lie to the Federal Court from any judgment, decree or final order of a High Court in British India, if the High Court certifies that the case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of this Act or any Order in Council made thereunder, and it shall be the duty of every High Court in British India to consider in every case whether or not any such question is involved and of its own motion to give or to withhold a certificate accordingly.
- (2) Where such a certificate is given, any party in the case may appeal to the Federal Court on the ground that any such question as aforesaid has been wrongly decided, and on any ground on which that party could have appealed without special leave to His Majesty in Council if no such certificate had been given, and, with the leave of the Federal Court, on any other ground, and no direct appeal shall lie to His Majesty in Council, either with or without special leave.

206 Power of Federal Legislature to enlarge appellate jurisdiction.

- (1) The Federal Legislature may by Act provide that in such civil cases as may be specified in the Act an appeal shall lie to the Federal Court from a judgment decree or final order of a High Court in British India without any such certificate as aforesaid, but no appeal shall lie under any such Act unless—
 - (a) the amount or value of the subject matter of the dispute in the court of first instance and still in dispute on appeal was and is not less than fifty thousand rupees or such other sum not less than fifteen thousand rupees as may be

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specified by the Act, or the judgment decree or final order involves directly or indirectly some claim or question respecting property of the like amount or value; or

(b) the Federal Court gives special leave to appeal.

(2) If the Federal Legislature makes such provision as is mentioned in the last preceding subsection, consequential provision may also be made by Act of the Federal Legislature for the abolition in whole or in part of direct appeals in civil cases from High Courts in British India to His Majesty in Council, either with or without special leave.

(3) A Bill or amendment for any of the purposes specified in this section shall not be introduced into, or moved in, either Chamber of the Federal Legislature without the previous sanction of the Governor-General in his discretion.

207 Appellate jurisdiction of Federal Court in appeals from High Courts in Federated States.

(1) An appeal shall lie to the Federal Court from a High Court in a Federated State on the ground that a question of law has been wrongly decided, being a question which concerns the interpretation of this Act or of an Order in Council made thereunder or the extent of the legislative or executive authority vested in the Federation by virtue of the Instrument of Accession of that State, or arises under an agreement made under Part VI of this Act in relation to the administration in that State of a law of the Federal Legislature.

(2) An appeal under this section shall be by way of special case to be stated for the opinion of the Federal Court by the High Court, and the Federal Court may require a case to be so stated, and may return any case so stated in order that further facts may be stated therein.

208 Appeals to His Majesty in Council.

An appeal may be brought to His Majesty in Council from a decision of the Federal Court—

(a) from any judgment of the Federal Court given in the exercise of its original jurisdiction in any dispute which concerns the interpretation of this Act or of an Order in Council made thereunder, or the extent of the legislative or executive authority vested in the Federation by virtue of the Instrument of Accession of any State, or arises under an agreement made under Part VI of this Act in relation to the administration in any State of a law of the Federal Legislature, without leave; and

(b) in any other case, by leave of the Federal Court or of His Majesty in Council.

209 Form of judgment on appeal.

(1) The Federal Court shall, where it allows an appeal, remit the case to the court from which the appeal was brought with a declaration as to the judgment, decree or order which is to be substituted for the judgment, decree or order appealed against, and the court from which the appeal was brought shall give effect to the decision of the Federal Court.

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- (2) Where the Federal Court upon any appeal makes any order as to the costs of the proceedings in the Federal Court, it shall, as soon as the amount of the costs to be paid is ascertained, transmit its order for the payment of that sum to the court from which the appeal was brought and that court shall give effect to the order.
- (3) The Federal Court may, subject to such terms or conditions as it may think fit to impose, order a stay of execution in any case under appeal to the Court, pending the hearing of the appeal, and execution shall be stayed accordingly.

210 Enforcement of decrees and orders of Federal Court and orders as to discovery, &c.

- (1) All authorities, civil and judicial, throughout the Federation, shall act in aid of the Federal Court.
- (2) The Federal Court shall, as respects British India and the Federated States, have power to make any order for the purpose of securing the attendance of any person, the discovery or production of any documents, or the investigation or punishment of any contempt of court, which any High Court in British India has power to make as respects the territory within its jurisdiction, and any such orders, and any orders of the Federal Court as to the costs of and incidental to any proceedings therein, shall be enforceable by all courts and authorities in every part of British India or of any Federated State as if they were orders duly made by the highest court exercising civil or criminal jurisdiction, as the case may be, in that part.
- (3) Nothing in this section—
 - (a) shall apply to any such order with respect to costs as is mentioned in subsection (2) of the last preceding section; or
 - (b) shall, as regards a Federated State, apply in relation to any jurisdiction exercisable by the Federal Court by reason only of the making by the Federal Legislature of such provision as is mentioned in this chapter for enlarging the appellate jurisdiction of the Federal Court.

211 Letters of request to Federated States.

Where in any case the Federal Court require a special case to be stated or re-stated by, or remit a case to, or order a stay of execution in a case from, a High Court in a Federated State, or require the aid of the civil or judicial authorities in a Federated State, the Federal Court shall cause letters of request in that behalf to be sent to the Ruler of the State, and the Ruler shall cause such communication to be made to the High Court or to any judicial or civil authority as the circumstances may require.

212 Law declared by Federal Court and Privy Council to be binding on all courts.

The law declared by the Federal Court and by any judgment of the Privy Council shall, so far as applicable, be recognised as binding on, and shall be followed by, all courts in British India, and, so far as respects the application and interpretation of this Act or any Order in Council thereunder or any matter with respect to which the Federal Legislature has power to make laws in relation to the State, in any Federated State.

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213 Power of Governor-General to consult Federal Court.

- (1) If at anytime it appears to the Governor-General that a question of law has arisen, or is likely to arise, which is of such a nature and of such public importance that it is expedient to obtain the opinion of the Federal Court upon it, he may in his discretion refer the question to that court for consideration, and the court may, after such hearing as they think fit, report to the Governor-General thereon.
- (2) No report shall be made under this section save in accordance with an opinion delivered in open court with the concurrence of a majority of the judges present at the hearing of the case, but nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to prevent a judge who does not concur from delivering a dissenting opinion.

214 Rules of court, &c.

- (1) The Federal Court may from time to time, with the approval of the Governor-General in his discretion, make rules of court for regulating generally the practice and procedure of the court, including rules as to the persons practising before the court, as to the time within which appeals to the court are to be entered, as to the costs of and incidental to any proceedings in the court, and as to the fees to be charged in respect of proceedings therein, and in particular may make rules providing for the summary determination of any appeal which appears to the court to be frivolous or vexatious or brought for the purpose of delay.
- (2) Rules made under this section may fix the minimum number of judges who are to sit for any purpose, so however that no case shall be decided by less than three judges:

Provided that, if the Federal Legislature makes such provision as is mentioned in this chapter for enlarging the appellate jurisdiction of the court, the rules shall provide for the constitution of a special division of the court for the purpose of deciding all cases which would have been within the jurisdiction of the court even if its jurisdiction had not been so enlarged.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of any rules of court, the Chief Justice of India shall determine what judges are to constitute any division of the court and what judges are to sit for any purpose.
- (4) No judgment shall be delivered by the Federal Court save in open court and with the concurrence of a majority of the judges present at the hearing of the case, but nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to prevent a judge who does not concur from delivering a dissenting judgment.
- (5) All proceedings in the Federal Court shall be in the English language.

215 Ancillary powers of Federal Court.

The Federal Legislature may make provision by Act for conferring upon the Federal Court such supplemental powers not inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act as may appear to be necessary or desirable for the purpose of enabling the court more effectively to exercise the jurisdiction conferred upon it by or under this Act.

216 Expenses of Federal Court.

- (1) The administrative expenses of the Federal Court, including all salaries, allowances and pensions payable to or in respect of the officers and servants of the court, shall be

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charged upon the revenues of the Federation, and any fees or other moneys taken by the court shall form part of those revenues.

- (2) The Governor-General shall exercise his individual judgment as to the amount to be included in respect of the administrative expenses of the Federal Court in any estimates of expenditure laid by him before the Chambers of the Federal Legislature.

217 Construction of references to High Courts in States.

References in any provision of this Part of this Act to a High Court in a Federated State shall be construed as references to any court which His Majesty may, after communication with the Ruler of the State, declare to be a High Court for the purposes of that provision.

218 Savings.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as conferring, or empowering the Federal Legislature to confer, any right of appeal to the Federal Court in any case in which a High Court in British India is exercising jurisdiction on appeal from a court outside British India, or as affecting any right of appeal in any such case to His Majesty in Council with or without leave,

CHAPTER II

THE HIGH COURTS IN BRITISH INDIA.

219 Meaning of " High Court ".

- (1) The following courts shall in relation to British India be deemed to be High Courts for the purposes of this Act, that is to say, the High Courts in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Allahabad, Lahore, and Patna, the Chief Court in Oudh, the Judicial Commissioner's Courts in the Central Provinces and Berar, in the North-West Frontier Province and in Sind, any other court in British India constituted or reconstituted under this chapter as a High Court, and any other comparable court in British India which His Majesty in Council may declare to be a High Court for the purposes of this Act:

Provided that, if provision has been made before the commencement of Part III of this Act for the establishment of a High Court to replace any court or courts mentioned in this subsection, then as from the establishment of the new court this section shall have effect as if the new court were mentioned therein in lieu of the court or courts so replaced.

- (2) The provisions of this chapter shall apply to every High Court in British India.

220 Constitution of High Courts.

- (1) Every High Court shall be a court of record and shall consist of a chief justice and such other judges as His Majesty may from time to time deem it necessary to appoint:

Provided that the judges so appointed together with any additional judges appointed by the Governor-General in accordance with the following provisions of this chapter

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shall at no time exceed in number such maximum number as His Majesty in Council may fix in relation to that court.

- (2) Every judge of a High Court shall be appointed by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual and shall hold office until he attains the age of sixty years :

Provided that—

- (a) a judge may by resignation under his hand addressed to the Governor resign his office ;
 - (b) a judge may be removed from his office by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual on the ground of misbehaviour or of infirmity of mind or body, if the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, on reference being made to them by His Majesty, report that the judge ought on any such ground, to be removed.
- (3) A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a judge of a High Court unless he—
- (a) is a barrister of England or Northern Ireland, of at least ten years standing, or a member of the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland of at least ten years standing; or
 - (b) is a member of the Indian Civil Service of at least ten years standing, who has for at least three years served as, or exercised the powers of, a district judge; or
 - (c) has for at least five years held a judicial office in British India not inferior to that of a subordinate judge, or judge of a small cause court; or
 - (d) has for at least ten years been a pleader of any High Court, or of two or more such Courts in succession:

Provided that a person shall not, unless he is, or when first appointed to judicial office was, a barrister, a member of the Faculty of Advocates or a pleader, be qualified for appointment as Chief Justice of any High Court constituted by letters patent until he has served for not less than three years as a judge of a High Court.

In computing for the purposes of this subsection the standing of a barrister or a member of the Faculty of Advocates, or the period during which a person has been a pleader, any period during which the person has held judicial office after he became a barrister, a member of the Faculty of Advocates, or a pleader, as the case may be, shall be included.

- (4) Every person appointed to be a judge of a High Court shall, before he enters upon his office, make and subscribe before the Governor or some person appointed by him an oath according to the form set out in that behalf in the Fourth Schedule to this Act.

221 Salaries, &c, of judges.

The judges of the several High Courts shall be entitled to such salaries and allowances, including allowances for expenses in respect of equipment and travelling upon appointment, and to such rights in respect of leave and pensions, as may from time to time be fixed by His Majesty in Council:

Provided that neither the salary of a judge, nor his rights in respect of leave of absence or pension, shall be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.

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222 Temporary and additional judges.

- (1) If the office of chief justice of a High Court becomes vacant, or if any such chief justice is by reason of absence, or for any other reason, unable to perform the duties of his office, those duties shall, until some person appointed by His Majesty to the vacant office has entered on the duties thereof, or until the chief justice has resumed his duties, as the case may be, be performed by such one of the other judges of the court as the Governor-General may in his discretion think fit to appoint for the purpose.
- (2) If the office of any other judge of a High Court becomes vacant, or if any such judge is appointed to act temporarily as a chief justice, or is by reason of absence, or for any other reason, unable to perform the duties of his office, the Governor-General may in his discretion appoint a person duly qualified for appointment as a judge to act as a judge of that court, and the person so appointed shall, unless the Governor-General in his discretion thinks fit to revoke his appointment, be deemed to be a judge of that court until some person appointed by His Majesty to the vacant office has entered on the duties thereof, or until the permanent judge has resumed his duties.
- (3) If by reason of any temporary increase in the business of any High Court or by reason of arrears of work in any such court it appears to the Governor-General that the number of the judges of the court should be for the time being increased, the Governor-General in his discretion may, subject to the foregoing provisions of this chapter with respect to the maximum number of judges, appoint persons duly qualified for appointment as judges to be additional judges of the court for such period not exceeding two years as he may specify.

223 Jurisdiction of existing High Courts.

Subject to the provisions of this Part of this Act, to the provisions of any Order in Council made under this or any other Act and to the provisions of any Act of the appropriate Legislature enacted by virtue of powers conferred on that Legislature by this Act, the jurisdiction of, and the law administered in, any existing High Court, and the respective powers of the judges thereof in relation to the administration of justice in the court, including any power to make rules of court and to regulate the sittings of the court and of members thereof sitting alone or in division courts, shall be the same as immediately before the commencement of Part III of this Act.

224 Administrative functions of High Courts.

- (1) Every High Court shall have superintendence over all courts in India for the time being subject to its appellate jurisdiction, and may do any of the following things, that is to say,—
 - (a) call for returns;
 - (b) make and issue general rules and prescribe forms for regulating the practice and proceedings of such courts;
 - (c) prescribe forms in which books, entries and accounts shall be kept by the officers of any such courts; and
 - (d) settle tables of fees to be allowed to the sheriff, attorneys, and all clerks and officers of courts :

Provided that such rules, forms and tables shall not be inconsistent with the provision of any law for the time being in force, and shall require the previous approval of the Governor.

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- (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as giving to a High Court any jurisdiction to question any judgment of any inferior court which is not otherwise subject to appeal or revision.

225 Transfer of certain cases to High Court for trial.

- (1) If on an application made in accordance with the provisions of this section a High Court is satisfied that a case pending in an inferior court, being a case which the High Court has power to transfer to itself for trial, involves or is likely to involve the question of the validity of any Federal or Provincial Act, it shall exercise that power.
- (2) An application for the purposes of this section shall not be made except, in relation to a Federal Act, by the Advocate-General for the Federation and, in relation to a Provincial Act, by the Advocate-General for the Federation or the Advocate-General for the Province.

226 Jurisdiction in revenue matters.

- (1) Until otherwise provided by Act of the appropriate Legislature, no High Court shall have any original jurisdiction in any matter concerning the revenue, or concerning any act ordered or done in the collection thereof according to the usage and practice of the country or the law for the time being in force.
- (2) A Bill or amendment for making such provision as aforesaid shall not be introduced into or moved in a Chamber of the Federal or a Provincial Legislature without the previous sanction of the Governor-General in his discretion or, as the case may be, of the Governor in his discretion.

227 Proceedings of High Courts to be in English.

All proceedings in every High Court shall be in the English language.

228 Expenses of High Courts.

- (1) The administrative expenses of a High Court, including all salaries, allowances and pensions payable to or in respect of the officers and servants of the court and the salaries and allowances of the judges of the court shall be charged upon the revenues of the Province, and any fees or other moneys taken by the court shall form part of those revenues.
- (2) The Governor shall exercise his individual judgment as to the amount to be included in respect of such expenses as aforesaid in any estimates of expenditure laid by him before the Legislature.

229 Power of His Majesty to constitute or reconstitute High Court by letters patent.

- (1) His Majesty, if the Chamber or Chambers of the Legislature of any Province present an address in that behalf to the Governor of the Province for submission to His Majesty, may by letters patent constitute a High Court for that Province or any part thereof or reconstitute in like manner any existing High Court for that Province or for any part thereof, or, where there are two High Courts in that Province, amalgamate those courts.

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- (2) Where any Court is reconstituted, or two Courts are amalgamated, as aforesaid, the letters patent shall provide for the continuance in their respective offices of the existing judges, officers and servants of the Court or Courts, and for the carrying on before the reconstituted Court or the new Court of all pending matters, and may contain such other provisions as may appear to His Majesty to be necessary by reason of the reconstitution or amalgamation.

230 Extra-provincial jurisdiction of High Courts.

- (1) His Majesty in Council may, if satisfied that an agreement in that behalf has been made between the Governments concerned, extend the jurisdiction of a High Court in any Province to any area in British India not forming part of that Province, and the High Court shall thereupon have the same jurisdiction in relation to that it has in relation to any other area in relation to which it exercises jurisdiction.
- (2) Nothing in this section affects the provisions of any law or letters patent in force immediately before the commencement of Part III of this Act empowering any High Court to exercise jurisdiction in relation to more than one Province or in relation to a Province and an area not forming part of any Province.
- (3) Where a High Court exercises jurisdiction in relation to any area or areas outside the Province in which it has its principal seat, nothing in this Act shall be construed—
- (a) as empowering the Legislature of the Province in which the Court has its principal seat to increase, restrict or abolish that jurisdiction; or
 - (b) as preventing the Legislature having power to make laws in that behalf for any such area from passing such laws with respect to the jurisdiction of the court in relation to that area as it would be competent to pass if the principal seat of the court were in that area.

231 Saving and definitions.

- (1) Any judge appointed before the commencement of Part III of this Act to any High Court shall continue in office and shall be deemed to have been appointed under this Part of this Act, but shall not by virtue of this Act be required to relinquish his office at any earlier age than he would have been required so to do, if this Act had not been passed.
- (2) Where a High Court exercises jurisdiction in relation to more than one Province or in relation to a Province and an area not forming part of a Province, references in this chapter to the Governor in relation to the judges and expenses of a High Court and references to the revenues of the Province shall be construed as references to the Governor and the revenues of the Province in which the Court has its principal seat, and the reference to the approval by the Governor of rules, forms and tables for subordinate courts shall be construed as a reference to the approval thereof by the Governor of the Province in which the subordinate court is situate, or, if it is situate in an area not forming part of a Province, by the Governor-General.