

Polity Class 06

25th May, 2023 at 9:00 AM

DISCUSSION ON DOUBTS FROM THE TOPICS DISCUSSED IN THE PREVIOUS CLASS. (12:00 AM)

SOCIALIST (09:16 AM)

- In a capitalist economy market forces are at play and the state plays the role of a regulator.
- In communism, there will be **no private ownership**.
- Socialism is somewhere in between capitalism and communism. It is a **softer version of communism**.
- In a socialist economy, the state controls the majority of production in the economy, and the private sector has a very small role to play.
- India decided to adopt the socialist approach. The state was given a major role in production.
- **Post 1991**, we witnessed the **retreat of the state or the withdrawal of the state**.
- Thus we witnessed the **increased role of the private sector**.
- The word socialism in its conventional context implies an economic system where major means of production in the economy are in the hands of the state.
- The private sector on the other hand has a minimal role in economic production.
- After independence, India adopted a socialist pattern of the economy but the Constitution makers refrained from inclusion of the word socialist in the Preamble.
- The Constitutional makers did not want to **tie down future generations to a specific economic system**.
- After 1991, India dismantled the socialist economic system and the role of the Private sector has increased considerably in the Indian economy.
- Therefore the term socialist does not apply to India in its original context today.
- The **Supreme Court** has stated that socialism should be seen in a different context in India, it should refer to a state that should take measures to promote the **Welfare of its citizens and prevent the concentration of economic resources** in the hands of few people as a part of redistributive justice.
- Some of the provisions of the Constitution reflect this socialist nature of the Indian State from the commencement of the Constitution itself, e.g. provisions such as Article 39(b), 39 (c), 41, 42, 43, etc.

SECULARISM (09:54 AM)

- The state **shall not** discriminate against any religion.
- The state shall not favour any religion.
- The state shall not have any religion.
- Every person shall have a **right to choose his/her faith**.
- The state may interfere in matters of religion for the purpose of social welfare and reforms.
- The state shall try to prevent **interreligious and intra-religious** domination.
- A secular state is a state that maintains a strict separation from the **Church or religion**.
- This concept has Western origin and in other words, it means the state cannot interfere in religion and vice-versa.
- In India, we did not use the word secular to describe the Indian state as it may have conveyed a wrong meaning derived from the West.
- The constitution maker knew that in India the state may need to interfere in matters of religion for the purpose of social welfare and social reforms and therefore Indian state was not described as secular in the conventional context.
- Indian society has always been multi-religious in comparison to the Western society that largely practiced one faith and therefore India had to evolve its own unique model of secularism.
- According to the Indian concept of secularism Indians are free to choose their faith and religious beliefs but at the same time, certain special protections have been provided to minorities.
- Indian secularism not an end in itself, but rather a means to **achieve a peaceful coexistence** of various communities.
- The Indian state has the responsibility of preventing inter-religious and **intra-religious domination**.
- The Indian concept of secularism is a positive concept driven by a **philosophy of Sarvadharmā Sambhava** that ensures equal respect for all religions and sects.

THE CONCEPT OF SECULARISM IN FRANCE (11:20 AM)

- France follows the most strict form of secularism highlighted in the policy of **Laïcité**, it was an attempt to protect the state and individuals from the excessive interference of the Church.
- As per this policy, public officials are strictly prohibited from showing their religious values and beliefs.
- Not only that even private individuals are discouraged from showing their religious values and symbols in public spaces.
- In 2004, a law was enacted that **banned school-going children from wearing overt signs and symbols to school** that would show their religious affiliation.
- The policy has been criticized because it was meant for a homogenous society and is not relevant for a **multi-religious** one.
- Not only that it has also been perceived as a threat to an individual's right to freedom of religion.
- Therefore it has resulted in the **Isolation of religious minorities aggravating their concerns**.
- It is often believed that the French can learn a lot from the Indian concept of secularism by nurturing the religious sentiments of various communities rather than strictly practicing secularism in its traditional form.

OBJECTIVE ON CONSTITUTION OF INDIA (11:45 AM)

- The term justice in the Indian constitution focuses on addressing the inequalities prevalent in India for time immemorial.
- The constitution makers deliberately put justice as the first objective in the preamble as without its attainment achieving the other objectives would be impossible.
- **Social Justice:** It means the absence of social privileges and classes in society.
- It implies the absence of discrimination against any citizens based on religion, race, caste, sex, etc.
- Various provisions in the Indian constitution aim at eliminating social exploitation and injustice.
- Some of these provisions are **Articles 17, 18, 23, and 24**.
- The Constitution also tries to address the historic injustice by making special provisions for the weak and downtrodden.
- It refers to the elimination of discrimination on the basis of income or wealth.
- Additionally, it focuses on the idea of redistribution of wealth and resources to prevent the concentration of economic resources in the hands of a few. For example, **Articles 39**

(b) and 39 (c) cast a duty on the Indian state to minimize the inequality in income and distribute the resources of the community to serve the common interest.

- **Political Justice:** It means equal and fair opportunities for the people to participate in the political processes.
- It stands for granting equal political rights to all people without any discrimination based on caste, race, religion, etc.
- For example **Article 326** grants voting rights to all citizens of India on the basis of adult franchise.

The topic for the next class discussion: The preamble will be continued