

Unit -1

Unit I: Introduction: Meaning and Definitions of Human Rights – Characteristics and Importance of Human Rights – Evolution of Human Rights – Formation, Structure and Functions of the UNO - Universal Declaration of Human Rights – International Covenants – Violations of Human Rights in the Contemporary Era.

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In the present chapter a brief introduction of the genesis of human rights will be taken into consideration. The historical background, the definition of human rights, the characteristics and nature of human rights will be dealt briefly. The landmarks in the development of human rights will be traced so as to know about the evolution of such rights. Further the classification of human rights will also be studied briefly.

1. Introduction

Human rights belong to each and every one of us equally.

Human rights are standards that recognize and protect the dignity of all human beings. Human rights govern how individual human beings live in society and with each other, as well as their relationship with the State and the obligations that the State have towards them.

Human rights law obliges governments to do some things, and prevents them from doing others. Individuals also have responsibilities: in using their human rights, they must respect the rights of others. No government, group or individual person has the right to do anything that violates another's rights.

Universality and inalienability

Human rights are universal and inalienable. All people everywhere in the world are entitled to them. No one can voluntarily give them up. Nor can others take them away from him or her.

Indivisibility

Human rights are indivisible. Whether civil, political, economic, social or cultural in nature, they are all inherent to the dignity of every human person. Consequently, they all have equal status as rights. There is no such thing as a 'small' right. There is no hierarchy of human rights.

Inter-dependence and inter-relatedness

The realization of one right often depends, wholly or in part, upon the realization of others. For instance, the realization of the right to health may depend on the realization of the right to education or of the right to information.

Meaning of Human Rights

In general terms Human Rights are entitlements due to every man, women and child because they are human. In other words certain inherent and inalienable rights are due to human beings simply of being human. The concept of human rights derives from human dignity and the inherent worth of a human being. Therefore, it is suggested that whatever adds to human dignity and the fundamental freedom of humans is a human right. In other words Human Rights are what each human being is entitled to as human being to live a dignified, secure life of his/her choice. All human being are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. This assumption is derived from the natural rights theory according to which the right to liberty and equality is man's birthright and cannot be alienated; and that because man is a rational and moral being he is different from other creatures on earth and therefore entitled to certain rights and

freedoms which other creatures may not enjoy. Formally Human Rights are proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organizations on 10 December 1948 and put into legal form in a number of international acts and treaties. However, there are differences of opinion with regard to meaning, nature, and content of Rights. It is a concept very much contested not only between the East (Representing former socialist States) and the West (representing liberal-democratic States) but also between developed and developing countries. Each group of nations has a different perception of human rights.

The so-called first world countries of the West believed in the supremacy of the individual, while the Communist countries of East focused on the community and the unconditional priorities of class interest. Hence, the individual benefited from these group rights, as his/her rights were better provided for, within the community. The Communists gave priority to economic, social and cultural rights and insisted that they could not be separated from the class character of society in which they existed, while the Liberal-democratic States of the West asserted the primacy of civil and political rights. This debate of priority of one set of rights over another continued to occupy the agendas of national and international governance during major part of the 20th century.

The newly emerging States of the Third World, while adopting the Eastern or Western model of human rights paradigms in their constitutions, or a combination of both, focused on solidarity or group rights such as right to self-determination of peoples, including sovereignty over their natural resources, the right to development, the right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment, the right to peace and the right to ownership of the common heritage of mankind. They also insist on interdependence and indivisibility of civil and political rights to economic and social rights.

Thus, the modern concept of human rights is comprehensive in its nature and content. It includes three types of rights: civil and political, economic, social and cultural and the emerging collective or group rights. In fact, the catalogue of rights is expanding everyday. Moreover, it must be noted that no catalogue elaborating specific human rights will ever be exhaustive or final. Its content goes hand in hand with the state of moral consciousness, or development of civilization at any given time in history.

In short as per Indian constitution concern Human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. These are moral claims which are inalienable and inherent in all individuals by virtue of their humanity alone, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, and place of birth, sex, cultural difference or any other consideration. These claims are articulated and formulated in what is today known as human rights. Human rights are sometimes referred to as fundamental rights, basic rights, inherent rights, natural rights and birth rights.

Definitions of Human Rights

Dr. **Justice Durga Das Basu** defines "Human rights are those minimal rights, which every individual must have against the State, or other public authority, by virtue of his being a 'member of human family' irrespective of any consideration. Durga Das Basu's definition brings out the essence of human rights.

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, 1948, defines human rights as "rights derived from the inherent dignity of the human person." Human rights when they are guaranteed by a written constitution are known as "Fundamental Rights" because a written

constitution is the fundamental law of the state.

In the words of **Bernard Bosanquet**, "we have a right to the means that are necessary to the development of our lives in the direction of the highest good of the community of which we are a part".

2.Characteristics and Importance of Human Rights

Following are the characteristics of human rights:

Human Rights are Inalienable - Human rights are conferred on an individual due to the very nature of his existence. They are inherent in all individuals irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, sex and nationality. Human rights are conferred to an individual even after his death. The different rituals in different religions bear testimony to this fact.

Human Rights are Essential and Necessary - In the absence of human rights, the moral, physical, social and spiritual welfare of an individual is impossible. Human rights are also essential as they provide suitable conditions for material and moral upliftment of the people.

Human Rights are in connection with human dignity - To treat another individual with dignity irrespective of the fact that the person is a male or female, rich or poor etc. is concerned with human dignity. For eg. In 1993, India has enacted a law that forbids the practice of carrying human excreta. This law is called Employment of Manual Scavengers and Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act.

Human Rights are Irrevocable: Human rights are irrevocable. They cannot be taken away by any power or authority because these rights originate with the social nature of man in the society of human beings and they belong to a person simply because he is a human being. As such human rights have similarities to moral rights.

Human Rights are Necessary for the fulfillment of purpose of life: Human life has a purpose. The term "human right" is applied to those conditions which are essential for the fulfillment of this purpose. No government has the power to curtail or take away the rights which are sacrosanct, inviolable and immutable.

Human Rights are Universal – Human rights are not a monopoly of any privileged class of people. Human rights are universal in nature, without consideration and without exception. The values such as divinity, dignity and equality which form the basis of these rights are inherent in humannature.

Human Rights are never absolute – Man is a social animal and he lives in a civic society, which always put certain restrictions on the enjoyment of his rights and freedoms. Human rights as such are those limited powers or claims, which are contributory to the common good and which are recognized and guaranteed by the State, through its laws to the individuals. As such each right has certain limitations.

Human Rights are Dynamic - Human rights are not static, they are dynamic. Human rights go on expanding with socio-eco-cultural and political developments within the State. Judges have to

interpret laws in such ways as are in tune with the changed social values. For eg. The right to be cared for in sickness has now been extended to include free medical treatment in public hospitals under the Public Health Scheme, free medical examinations in schools, and the provisions for especially equipped schools for the physically handicapped.

Rights as limits to state power - Human rights imply that every individual has legitimate claims upon his or her society for certain freedom and benefits. So human rights limit the state's power. These may be in the form of negative restrictions, on the powers of the State, from violating the inalienable freedoms of the individuals, or in the nature of demands on the State, i.e. positive obligations of the State. For eg. Six freedoms that are enumerated under the right to liberty forbid the State from interfering with the individual.

Importance of Human Rights

Values of tolerance, equality and respect can help reduce friction within society. Putting human rights ideas into practice can help us create the kind of society we want to live in.

In recent decades, there has been a tremendous growth in how we think about and apply human rights ideas. This has had many positive results - knowledge about human rights can empower individuals and offer solutions for specific problems.

Human rights are an important part of how people interact with others at all levels in society - in the family, the community, schools, the workplace, in politics and in international relations. It is vital therefore that people everywhere should strive to understand what human rights are. When people better understand human rights, it is easier for them to promote justice and the well-being of society. The importance of human rights is given below:

1: **Human rights ensure people have basic needs met**

Everyone needs access to medicine, food and water, clothes, and shelter. By including these in a person's basic human rights, everyone has a baseline level of dignity. Unfortunately, there are still millions of people out there who don't have these necessities, but saying it's a matter of human rights allows activists and others to work towards getting those for everyone.

2: **Human rights protect vulnerable groups from abuse**

The Declaration of Human Rights was created largely because of the Holocaust and the horrors of WWII. During that time in history, the most vulnerable in society were targeted along with the Jewish population, including those with disabilities and LGBT. Organizations concerned with human rights focus on members of society most vulnerable to abuse from power holders, instead of ignoring them.

3: **Human rights allow people to stand up to societal corruption**

The concept of human rights allows people to speak up when they experience abuse and corruption. This is why specific rights like the right to assemble are so crucial because no society is perfect. The concept of human rights empowers people and tells them that they deserve dignity from society, whether it's the government or their work environment. When they don't receive it, they can stand up.

4: **Human rights encourage freedom of speech and expression**

While similar to what you just read above, being able to speak freely without fear of brutal reprisal is more expansive. It encompasses ideas and forms of expression that not everybody

will like or agree with, but no one should ever feel like they are going to be in danger from their government because of what they think. It goes both ways, too, and protects people who want to debate or argue with certain ideas expressed in their society.

5: Human rights give people the freedom to practice their religion (or not practice any)

Religious violence and oppression occur over and over again all across history, from the Crusades to the Holocaust to modern terrorism in the name of religion. Human rights acknowledge the importance of a person's religion and spiritual beliefs, and let them practice in peace. The freedom to not hold to a religion is also a human right.

6: Human rights allows people to love who they choose

The importance of freedom to love cannot be understated. Being able to choose what one romantic life looks like is an essential human right. The consequences of not protecting this right are clear when you look at countries where LGBT people are oppressed and abused, or where women are forced into marriages they don't want.

7: Human rights encourage equal work opportunities

The right to work and make a living allows people to flourish in their society. Without acknowledging that the work environment can be biased or downright oppressive, people find themselves enduring abuse or insufficient opportunities. The concept of human rights provides a guide for how workers should be treated and encourages equality.

8: Human rights give people access to education

Education is important for so many reasons and is crucial for societies where poverty is common. Organizations and governments concerned with human rights provide access to schooling, supplies, and more in order to halt the cycle of poverty. Seeing education as a right means everyone can get access, not just the elite.

9: Human rights protect the environment

The marriage between human rights and environmentalism is becoming stronger due to climate change and the effects it has on people. We live in the world, we need the land, so it makes sense that what happens to the environment impacts humanity. The right to clean air, clean soil, and clean water are all as important as the other rights included in this list.

10: Human rights provide a universal standard that holds governments accountable

When the UDHR was released, it had a two-fold purpose: provide a guideline for the future and force the world to acknowledge that during WWII, human rights had been violated on a massive scale. With a standard for what is a human right, governments can be held accountable for their actions. There's power in naming an injustice and pointing to a precedent, which makes the UDHR and other human right documents so important.

3. Evolution of Human Rights

The evolutions of human rights have taken place over centuries. Man had to struggle hard in order to achieve the ultimate goal – living with dignity – which still has to be realized in various societies. India itself is an example where women, children, dalits, bonded labourers, etc, is trying hard to be a part of mainstream. In spite of all these, the world recognized the U.N. Charter of 1945 which states that human rights are an inalienable aspect of mankind. The origin of human rights may be traced to the theory of Natural Rights derived from the concept of Natural Law, as

propounded by ancient Greek Stoic Philosophers and further developed by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. The American and French Revolution gave further impetus to the struggle of human rights. The evolution and development of human rights in the international context can be traced to the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights followed by the French Declaration and the American Bill of Rights.

The twentieth century witnessed the crystallization of the philosophy of Human Rights when the United Nations adopted the UN Charter, 1945, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 and the International Covenants on Human Rights with further emphasis to protection of rights of Women, Abolition of Slavery, Racial Discrimination, Civil and Political Rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and most importantly the Rights of children.

In India the drafters of Constitution took care to incorporate Human Rights for its own citizens as well as for the aliens.

The important landmarks in the progress of human rights are as follows:

The Magna Carta, 1215.

The Magna Carta, also known as the Great Charter, of 1215 is the most significant constitutional document of all human history. The main theme of it was protection against the arbitrary acts by the king. The 63 clauses of the Charter guaranteed basic civic and legal rights to citizens, and protected the barons from unjust taxes. The English Church too gained freedom from royal interferences. King John of England granted the Magna Carta to the English barons on 15th June 1215. The king was compelled to grant the Charter, because the barons refused to pay heavy taxes unless the king signed the Charter.

The English Bill of Rights, 1689.

The next source and avenue of the development of the philosophy of human rights is the English Bill of Rights, enacted on December 16, 1689, by the British Parliament. The British Parliament declared its supremacy over the Crown in clear terms. The English Bill of Rights declared that the king has no overriding authority. The Bill of Rights codified the customary laws, and clarified the rights and liberties of the citizens.

It lays down the twin foundations, viz., the supremacy of the law, and the sovereignty of the nation, upon which, the English constitution rests.

American Declaration of Independence, 1776.

The first colonies to revolt against England were the thirteen States of America. These states declared their independence from their mother country on 4th July 1776. The declaration charges the king with tyranny and affirms the independence of the American colonies. The declaration of independence has great significance in the history of mankind as it justified the right to revolt against a government that no longer guaranteed the man's natural and inalienable rights.

The U.S. Bill of Rights, 1791.

The U.S. Constitution was enacted on 17th September 1787. The most conspicuous defect of the original constitution was the omission of a Bill of Rights concerning private rights and personal liberties. Madison, therefore proposed as many as twelve amendments in the form of Bill of Rights. Ten of these were ratified by the State legislatures. These ten constitutional amendments came to be known as the Bill of Rights. The overall theme of the Bill of Rights is that the citizen be protected against the abuse of power by the officials of

the States.

The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789

The fall of Bastille and the abolition of feudalism, serfdom and class privileges by the National Assembly ushered France into a new era. On 4th August 1789, the National Assembly proclaimed the Rights of Man and of the Citizens. The Rights were formulated in 17 Articles.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen has far reaching importance not only in the history of France but also in the history of Europe and mankind. The declaration served as the death warrant for the old regime and introduced a new social and political order, founded on the noble and glittering principles. Further the declaration served as the basis for many Constitutions, framed in different countries, where the framers gave top priority to human rights.

Declaration of International Rights of Man, 1929.

After World War I, questions about human rights and fundamental freedoms began to be raised. In 1929, the Institute of International Law adopted the Declaration of International rights of Man. The Declaration declared that fundamental rights of citizen, recognized and guaranteed by several domestic constitutions, especially those of the French and the U.S.A constitutions, were in reality meant not only for citizens of the states but for all men all over the world, without any consideration.

The UN Charter, 1945.

The United Nations Charter was drafted, approved and unanimously adopted by all the delegates of the 51 states, who attended the United Nations Conference at San Francisco. The UN Charter contains provisions for the promotion and protection of human rights. The importance of the Charter lies in the fact that it is the first official document in which the use of 'human rights' is, for the first time traceable and which also recognized the respect for fundamental freedom.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10th December, 1948. The Declaration consists of thirty Articles and covers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all men, women and children. The declaration however is not a legally binding document. It is an ideal for all mankind.

4. Formation Structure and Functions Of United Nation Organisation

The United Nations officially succeeded in existence on 24 October 1945, when the UN Charter had been ratified by a majority of the original 51 Member States. The day is now celebrated each year around the world as United Nations Day. The purpose of the United Nations is to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people. It allows

countries to balance global interdependence and national interests when addressing international problems.

There are currently 193 members of the United Nations. They meet in the General Assembly, which is the closest thing to a world parliament. Each country, large or small, rich or poor, has a single vote; however, none of the decisions taken by the Assembly is binding. Nevertheless, the Assembly's decisions become resolutions that carry the weight of world governmental opinion.

Structure

The work of the United Nations is carried out almost all over the world and is done by six main organs:

1. General Assembly
2. Security Council
3. Economic and Social Council
4. Trusteeship Council
5. International Court of Justice
6. Secretariat

i. General Assembly (GA)

This is the main decision-making and representative Assembly in the UN. It is responsible for upholding the principles of UN through its policies and recommendations. It is composed of all member states, headed by a President, elected from the member states and meets from **September to December** of each year.

It is expected to vote on important issues on the basis of 2/3 majority of those present. These include election of members to the organization, admission, suspension, expulsion of members, and budgeting. All other issues are based on majority vote. It can make recommendations on any matter, except issue bothering on peace and security, which are under the purview of the United Nations Security Council.

ii. Security Council (UNSC)

It is the executive organ of the UN and so the most powerful of all the other organs. It is expected to take decisions quickly and effectively so as to bring into operation the enforcement measures of Chapter vii of the UN Charter whenever international peace and security is threatened. Therefore, it has power to authorize deployment of UN troops to area where there is a breach of international peace. It can mandate a cease-fire during conflicts and can enforce penalties on any country that did not comply with its directives. It has five permanent members¹³ and ten rotating members.¹⁴ The ten members hold their seats for two year term, with member states voted in by the General Assembly on a regional basis.

In respect of the veto, the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security lies on the five permanent members and so has the final right on how the responsibility is to be exercised. The five permanent members hold veto over UN Resolution and this allows a permanent member to block adoption of any resolution.

The ten other members otherwise known as non-permanent members are elected for two years by the General Assembly and are not immediately eligible for re-election. The election is to be based on geographical distribution, i.e., five from Afro-Asia, one from Eastern Europe, two from Latin America and two from Western Europe and others. In addition, the General Assembly¹⁶, Secretary General, member states and non-member states can submit disputes to it.

iii. International Court of Justice (ICJ)

It is located in The Hague, Netherlands, and it is responsible for judicial matters that are brought to it by any of its members. This Court was supposed to continue with the work of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) which was already in existence under the Covenant of the former League of Nations. Therefore, ICJ is the principal organ of the UN in matters relating to conflict resolutions of international disputes. By Article 93(1) of the Charter, all UN members are ipso facto parties to the Statute of the ICJ. Under Article 38 of the ICJ Statute, the function of the Court is to decide any dispute that is brought to it in accordance with international law. In the case of Northern Cameroon's case, it was held that the court can only interpret the law as it is and then give its advisory opinion, though, at times, it gives a binding judgment on the parties before it.

The court is composed of fifteen judges who serve for nine terms and they are appointed by the General Assembly. It has decided cases related to war crimes, illegal state interference, ethnic cleansing, and offer advisory opinions. On account of this, the court has performed well in adjudicating cases brought before it by the member nations.

iv. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

It helps the General Assembly in promoting international economic and social cooperation and development. It has 54 members that are elected by the General Assembly for a three year term. The president is elected for a one year term. Its functions include information gathering, advising member nations and making recommendations. Its subsidiaries are United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues, UN Forum on forests, UN Statistical Commission, Commission on Sustainable Development.

v. Secretariat

It is headed by the Secretary General who is assisted by other supporting staff. It provides studies, information and other data when needed by the UN bodies for their meetings. It carries out other duties as may be directed by the Security Council, General Assembly, ECOSOC and others.

Functions of UNO

Peace and Security

Maintaining Peace and Security: By sending peacekeeping and observer missions to the world's trouble spots over the past six decades, the United Nations has been able to restore calm, allowing many countries to recover from conflict.

Preventing Nuclear Proliferation: For over the five decades, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has served as the world's nuclear inspector. IAEA experts work to verify that safeguarded nuclear material is used only for peaceful purposes. To date, the Agency has safeguards agreements with more than 180 States.

Supporting Disarmament: UN treaties are the legal backbone of disarmament efforts:

- the Chemical Weapons Convention-1997 has been ratified by 190 States,
- the Mine-Ban Convention-1997 by 162,
- and the Arms Trade Treaty-2014 by 69.

At the local level, UN peacekeepers often work to implement disarmament agreements between warring parties.

Preventing genocide: The United Nations brought about the first-ever treaty to combat

genocide—acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.

The 1948 Genocide Convention has been ratified by 146 States, which commits to prevent and punish actions of genocide in war and in peacetime. The UN tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, as well as UN-supported courts in Cambodia, have put would be genocide perpetrators on notice that such crimes would no longer be tolerated.

Economic Development

Promoting Development: Since 2000, promoting living standards and human skills and potential throughout the world have been guided by the Millennium Development Goals.

- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) supports more than 4,800 projects to reduce poverty, promote good governance, address crises and preserve the environment.
- The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 150 countries, primarily on child protection, immunization, girls' education and emergency aid.
- The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) helps developing countries make the most of their trade opportunities.
- The World Bank provides developing countries with loans and grants, and has supported more than 12,000 projects in more than 170 countries since 1947.

Alleviating Rural Poverty: The International Fund for Agricultural

Development (IFAD) provides low-interest loans and grants to very poor rural people.

Focusing on African Development: Africa continues to be a high priority for the United Nations. The continent receives 36 per cent of UN system expenditures for development, the largest share among the world's regions. All UN agencies have special programmes to benefit Africa.

Promoting Women's Well-being: UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Fighting Hunger: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) leads global efforts to defeat hunger. FAO also helps developing countries to modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices in ways that conserve natural resources and improve nutrition.

Commitment in Support of Children: UNICEF has pioneered to provide vaccines and other aid desperately needed by children caught in armed conflict. The Convention on the Rights of the Child-1989 has become law in nearly all countries.

Tourism: The World Tourism Organization is the UN agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

Its Global Code of Ethics for Tourism seeks to maximize the benefits of tourism while minimizing its negative impact.

Global Think Tank: The United Nations is at the forefront of research that seeks solutions to global problems.

- The UN Population Division is a leading source of information and research on global population trends, producing up-to-date demographic estimates and projections.
- The UN Statistics Division is the hub of the global statistical system, compiling and disseminating global economic, demographic, social, gender, environment and energy statistics.

- The United Nations Development Programme's annual Human Development Report provides independent, empirically grounded analyses of major development issues, trends and policies, including the groundbreaking Human Development Index.
- The United Nations World Economic and Social Survey, the World Bank's World Development Report, the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook and other studies help policymakers to make informed decisions.

Social Development

Preserving Historic, Cultural, Architectural and Natural Sites: The UNESCO has helped 137 countries to protect ancient monuments and historic, cultural and natural sites.

- It has negotiated international conventions to preserve cultural property, cultural diversity and outstanding cultural and natural sites. More than 1,000 such sites have been designated as having exceptional universal value - as World Heritage Sites.

Taking the lead on global issues:

- The first United Nations conference on the environment (Stockholm, 1972) helped to alert world public opinion on the dangers faced by our planet, triggering action by governments.
- The first world conference on women (Mexico City, 1985) put women's right, equality and progress on the global agenda.
- Other landmark events include the first international conference on human rights (Teheran, 1968), the first world population conference (Bucharest, 1974) and the first world climate conference (Geneva, 1979).
- Those events brought together experts and policymakers, as well as activists, from around the world, prompting sustained global action.
- Regular follow-up conferences have helped to sustain the momentum.

Human Rights

UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

- It has helped to enact dozens of legally binding agreements on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights.
- UN human rights bodies have focused world attention on cases of torture, disappearance, arbitrary detention and other violations.

Fostering Democracy: The UN promotes and strengthens democratic institutions and practices around the world, including by helping people in many countries to participate in free and fair elections.

- In the 1990s, the UN organized or observed landmark elections in Cambodia, El Salvador, South Africa, Mozambique and Timor-Leste.
- More recently, the UN has provided crucial assistance in elections in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Sudan.

Ending Apartheid in South Africa: By imposing measures ranging from an arms embargo to a convention against segregated sporting events, the United Nations was a major factor in bringing about the downfall of the apartheid system.

- In 1994, elections in which all South Africans were allowed to participate on an equal basis led to the establishment of a multiracial Government.

Promoting Women's Rights: The 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women, ratified by 189 countries, has helped to promote the rights of women worldwide.

Environment

Climate change is a global problem that demands a global solution. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which brings together 2,000 leading Climate change scientists, issues comprehensive scientific assessments every five or six years.

- IPCC was established in 1988 under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization for the purpose of assessing “the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant for the understanding of the risk of human-induced climate change.
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides foundation for UN members to negotiate agreements to reduce emissions that contribute to climate change and help countries adapt to its effects. (UNFCCC-1992 is an international environmental treaty adopted and opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992.)
- Global Environment Facility, which brings together 10 UN agencies, funds projects in developing countries.

Protecting the Ozone Layer: The UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) have been instrumental in highlighting the damage caused to Earth's ozone layer.

- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer-1985 provided the framework necessary to create regulatory measures for international reductions in the production of chlorofluorocarbons. Convention provided foundation for Montreal protocol.

International Law

Prosecuting War Criminals: By prosecuting and convicting war criminals, the UN tribunals established for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda have helped to expand international humanitarian and international criminal law dealing with genocide and other violations of international law.

The International Criminal Court is an independent permanent court that investigates and prosecutes persons accused of the most serious international crimes—genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes—if national authorities are unwilling or unable to do so.

Helping to Resolve Major International Disputes: By delivering judgments and advisory opinions, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has helped to settle international disputes involving territorial questions, maritime boundaries, diplomatic relations, State responsibility, the treatment of aliens and the use of force, among others.

Stability and Order in the World's Oceans:

- The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which has gained nearly universal acceptance, provides the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas.
 - It also includes mechanisms for settling disputes.

Combating International Crime: The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) works with countries and organizations to counter transnational organized crime by providing legal and technical assistance to fight corruption, money-laundering, drug trafficking and smuggling of migrants, as well as by strengthening criminal justice systems.

- It has played a key role in brokering and implementing relevant international Treaties,

such as the UN Convention against Corruption-2005 and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime-2003.

- It works to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs under the three main UN conventions on drug control:
- the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954 (amended 1972),
- the Convention on Psychotropic Substances-1971,
- and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances-1988

Encouraging Creativity and Innovation: The World Intellectual Property

Organization (WIPO) promotes the protection of intellectual property rights and ensures that all countries are in a position to harness the benefits of an effective intellectual property system.

Humanitarian Affairs

Assisting refugees: Refugees fleeing persecution, violence and war have received aid from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

- UNHCR seeks long-term or "durable" solutions by helping refugees repatriate to their homelands, if conditions warrant, or by helping them to integrate in their countries of asylum or to resettle in third countries.
 - Refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons, mostly women and children, are receiving food, shelter, medical aid, education, and repatriation assistance from the UN.

Aiding Palestinian Refugees: UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), a relief and human development agency, has assisted four generations of Palestinian refugees with education, health care, social services, microfinance and emergency aid.

§ Reducing the Effects of Natural Disasters: The World Meteorological

Organization (WMO) has helped to spare millions of people from the calamitous effects of natural and man-made disasters.

- Its early warning system, which includes thousands of surface monitors, as well as satellites,
- has made it possible to predict with greater accuracy weather-related disasters,
- has provided information on the dispersal of oil spills and chemical and nuclear leaks and has predicted long-term droughts.

Providing Food to the Neediest: The World Food Programme (WFP) is fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.

Health

Promoting Reproductive and Maternal Health: United Nations Population

Fund (UNFPA) is promoting the right of individuals to make their own decisions on the number and spacing of their children through voluntary family planning programmes.

Responding to HIV/AIDS: United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) coordinates global action against an epidemic that affects some 35 million people.

Wiping Out Polio: Poliomyelitis has been eliminated from all but three countries—Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan—as a result of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Eradicating Smallpox: A 13-year effort by the World Health Organization (WHO) resulted in smallpox being declared officially eradicated from the planet in 1980.

5. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). It establishes the rights and freedoms of all members of the human race.

It was accepted by the UNGA as per Resolution 217 during the session on December 10, 1948. Among the United Nations members at the time, 48 voted in favour, none against, 8 abstained and 2 did not vote.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Overview

The UDHR consists of 30 articles detailing an individual's "basic rights and fundamental freedoms". It is universally applicable for all human beings of varying race, religions and nationality.

It directly inspired the development of international human rights law, and was the first step in the formulation of the International Bill of Human Rights, which was completed in 1966 and came into force in 1976.

Even though the Universal Human Rights Declaration is not legally binding, its contents has been elaborated and incorporated into subsequent international treaties, regional human rights and instruments and in the legal codes of various countries

At least one of the 9 binding treaties of the UDHR has been ratified by all 193 member states of the United Nations, with the majority ratifying four or more.

History of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The United Nations was founded by 51 countries in October 1945, two months after World War II ended. Two world wars, the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and a global refugee crisis had led to fears of a destructive World War II.

The UN was founded to avoid such a disaster, as well as to address human rights. Out of all the people who wanted such notions to become a reality, it was Eleanor Roosevelt – the wife of the late United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt – who would play a crucial role in the formulation of the Universal Human Rights Declaration

President Harry Truman appointed Eleanor Roosevelt to the US delegation to the United Nations in 1945. She was well known throughout the world as a champion of poverty allegations and universal civil rights. It was in April 1946, after becoming chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights, that she took on the task of drafting a human rights declaration for the world.

Eleanor's ideals about human rights and desire for global peace were influenced by her experiences of both the world wars where she had worked with shell-shocked soldiers undergoing psychological treatments during World War I while she had visited the devastated cities of Europe during the second world war.

Drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was not at all an easy task. For starters:

Both the United States and the Soviet Union had their own definition of human or to put it simply could not agree on what human rights were.

Many conservative US politicians were not fond of supporting the economic and social rights of the UDHR because in their eyes such rights were 'communist' in their nature and scope.

However, Eleanor with her charm and diplomacy managed to gather enough support for the UDHR to be passed in a resolution.

Hansa Mehta, a UN delegate from the newly independent country of India and the only other woman on the Commission on Human Rights was crucial in shaping the declaration. It was she who changed the original declaration's first article from "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal".

Even though the declaration isn't binding or enforceable. It would serve as a model for legislation in many countries.

After the draft was presented to the United Nations General Assembly, it was adopted on December 10, 1946.

December 10, the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration, is celebrated annually as World Human Rights Day or International Human Rights Day.

Structure of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The structure of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was influenced by a set of laws formulated by Napoléon Bonaparte centuries before, collectively known as the Code Napoléon.

Its final structure took form in the second draft prepared by French jurist René Cassin, who worked on the initial draft prepared by Canadian legal scholar John Peters Humphrey.

The Declaration consists of the following:

The preamble gives details about the social and historical reasons that led to the formation of the UDHR.

It contains a total of 30 articles:

Articles 1 – 2 -The basic concepts of dignity, liberty and equality are established.

Articles 3 – 5 -Details of individual rights, such as the right to life and prohibition of slavery are explained in detail.

Articles 6 – 11 -Refers to the fundamental rights as well as the remedies for their violation.

Articles 12 – 17- Set forth the rights of the individual towards the community, including freedom of movement and residence within each state, the right of property and the right to a nationality.

Articles 18 – 21- These sets of articles refer to the rights of the individual towards the community, including freedom of movement, thought, opinion, expression, religion, peaceful association and ideas through any media.

Articles 22 – 27- Sanctions an individual's economic, social and cultural rights including healthcare. It also upholds the right to a better standard of living and makes a special mention of care given to motherhood or childhood.

Articles 28 – 30- It establishes the general means of exercising these rights, the areas in which the rights of the individual cannot be applied.

Significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The UDHR is widely regarded as a ground breaking document that provides a comprehensive and universal set of principles in a secular, apolitical document that is beyond cultural,

religious and political ideologies The Declaration was the first instrument of international law to use the phrase “rule of law”, thereby establishing the principle that all members of all societies are equally bound by the law regardless of the jurisdiction or political system.

In International law, a declaration is different from a treaty in the sense that it generally states aspiration or understanding among the parties, rather than binding obligations. For this reason, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a fundamental constitutive document of the United Nations and, by extension, all 193 parties of the UN Charter.

6. International Covenants

United Nations (UN) on December 16, 1966 adopted two covenants in its Resolution 2200 A (XXI): The International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), these were made in pursuance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Post the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it gave the work to a committee to prepare a Covenant for the enforcement of such rights. This also led to debates between the capitalist and communist states, with countries such as the USA pressing the need for Liberty Rights, whereas other communist states insisting on economic, social and cultural rights. The deadlock in the interests between these led the UN to direct the committee to make two different Covenants.

1. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights

The ICESCR is a multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966 as part of the larger resolution on Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It aspires to provide non-self-governing and trust territories and individuals, labour rights, right to health, right to education and the right to an adequate standard of living.

2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The ICCPR is a multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations on December 16, 1966, and came into force on March 23, 1976. The Covenant commits parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, which includes, right to freedom of speech and expression, right to freedom of religion, Freedom of assembly, electoral rights, due process and a fair trial.

Objective

The international human rights movement was strengthened when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948; this combined with the ICCPR and the ICESCR form the International Bill of Human Rights. The major objective of these Covenants is to ensure that each person is guaranteed these rights without any discrimination.

Human rights protect human beings and their dignity in war and in peacetime. These rights are protected under international law and it is the duty of states to ensure they are respected, protected and fulfilled. To this end, the United Nations has developed a body of binding conventions, all stemming from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

There are basically three distinct types of human rights:

- civil and political rights, e.g. the right to life, peaceful assembly and religious freedom
- economic, social and cultural rights, e.g. the right to work, to education, and to social security
- rights of the third generation, e.g. the right to development and to a clean and healthy environment

United Nations Conventions

Principal United Nations conventions on human rights:

UN Covenant I

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) covers human rights in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

UN Covenant II

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) contains important guarantees for the protection of civil and political rights.

Racial discrimination

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) is explicitly directed at discrimination based on race, colour, descent, as well as national and ethnic origin.

Discrimination against women

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) sets out in concrete terms the prohibition of discrimination of women in all stages of life.

Torture

The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) obliges the states parties to prevent and punish acts of torture.

Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provides a comprehensive guarantee of the human rights of children and young people under 18 years of age.

People with disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) ensures that people with disabilities enjoy all human rights and participate in public, economic and social life.

Enforced disappearance

The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED) aims to punish and combat the grave human rights violation of enforced disappearance.

7. Human Rights Violation

Human rights advocates agree that, seventy four years after its issue, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is still more a dream than reality. Violations exist in every part of the world. For example, Amnesty International's 2009 World Report and other sources show that individuals are:

- Tortured or abused in at least 81 countries
- Face unfair trials in at least 54 countries
- Restricted in their freedom of expression in at least 77 countries

Not only that, but women and children in particular are marginalized in numerous ways, the press is not free in many countries, and dissenters are silenced, too often permanently. While some gains have been made over the course of the last six decades, human rights violations still plague the world today.

Types of human rights violations

Human rights breaches are committed by states either directly or indirectly. Violations might be committed by the state on purpose or as a consequence of the state's failure to prevent the violation. Various players, including the police, judicial ministers, attorneys, government officials, and others, can be involved when a state violates human rights. Physical violence, such as police harassment, is one type of violation, but other rights, such as the right to receive a fair trial, can also be infringed without the use of direct physical violence.

When there is a disagreement between people or groups within a society, the second form of violation occurs: the state's failure to protect individuals from human rights violations. The state is complicit in the abuses if it does nothing to intervene and safeguard vulnerable persons and groups. When lynchings happened often across the United States, the state was unsuccessful in protecting black Americans. Because many of those involved in the lynchings were also state actors (such as the police), this acts as an example of two sorts of breaches occurring simultaneously.

Forms of human rights violations

Caste-based discrimination and violence

The caste system in India is possibly the world's oldest social structure. It is a complicated system of social groupings based on ceremonial purity. A person is regarded as a component of the caste into which he is born and stays a member of that caste until death, albeit the status of that caste may change through time and between locations. The four major varnas, or main caste categories, have been used to characterize this more than 2,000-year-old structure in traditional learning. The Brahmins i.e the teachers and the priests are listed first. Then

come the Kshatriyas i.e. the fighters and rulers, then the Vaishyas i.e. the merchants and traders, and then the Shudras i.e. artisans and labourers. Lastly, the “untouchables” or Dalits, who are typically given jobs too ritually filthy to deserve membership in the conventional varna system, make up a fifth category that exists outside of the varna system.

Despite its formal prohibition in 1950, the phenomenon of “untouchability”—the imposition of societal disadvantages on people based on their caste—remains very much alive in rural India. Different facilities are provided for separate caste-based neighbourhoods, reinforcing “untouchability.” If they get anything at all, Dalits usually get the worst of whatever resources are available. The state authority provides power, sewage facilities, and water pumps in upper-caste sections of numerous villages, but neglects to do so in the segregated Dalit sections. Medical services and superior housing facilities are only found in regions of upper-caste settlement, as are basic utilities like water taps and wells. Civil rights of individuals get majorly restricted in the following domains owing to the caste dynamics in India:

Caste impacting marriage

Strict bans on marriage or other forms of social connection between castes are frequently used to impose stringent societal values of purity and contamination. While economic and social indices other than caste have grown in importance, permitting intermarriage among upper castes, major societal obstacles to marriage between higher and lower castes exist in many nations. This generally triggers violence between communities and may also lead to honour killings in severe cases.

Caste impacting labour

One of the core aspects of many caste systems is the allocation of work based on caste, with lower castes often relegated to duties and vocations regarded as too filthy or polluting for higher-caste populations.

Slavery and debt bondage

Poor pay for manual scavenging, agricultural work, and other low-caste jobs sometimes force families of lower castes into bonds. In most of the nations affected, the absence of enforcement of appropriate legislation outlawing debt bondage permits the practice to continue uninterrupted.

Disparities in caste and socio-economic status

Low literacy and lack of access to health care and education are common problems among lower-caste communities. Caste-based employment is perpetuated and its hereditary character is maintained through a lack of formal education or vocational training, as well as discrimination that effectively excludes them from many sorts of employment opportunities accompanied by the non-enforcement of protective legislation.

Access to educational opportunities

Low literacy and high dropout rates among lower-caste communities have been defined overly simplistically as inevitable results of underdevelopment and widespread poverty. However, these rates are partially due to low-caste children's desire to support their family's salaries via labour. Moreover, the biased and abusive treatment that low-caste children experience at the hands of their instructors and other pupils is more subtle and less well-documented but is a major factor impacting the education of these children.

Land availability

The majority of Dalit abuse victims in India are landless agricultural labourers, who constitute the backbone of our country's agrarian economy. Despite decades of land reform laws, more than 86% of Dalit households are landless or near landless today. Landowners frequently possess very little. In rural places, land is the most valuable possession that affects a person's level of life and social standing. Lack of access to land renders Dalits economically vulnerable and majorly dependent on upper and middle castes for monetary assistance. Subsequently, their dependence is abused by upper and middle caste landlords, allowing many crimes, like begar, to go unpunished.

Political rights and political representation

The Union formulated a policy of "reservations," or caste-based quotas, as an attempt to correct historical injustices associated with low-caste status. The constitution reserves federal government positions, seats in state legislatures, the national legislature, and educational institutions for scheduled castes and tribes to provide for proportional representation in national and state affairs. However, this policy has not yet been effectively applied and the representation of the lower castes in the mainstream functioning of a nation is still skewed.

Physical and economic punishment

The utilisation of social and economic factors is a key weapon in maintaining Dalits' low status in India. For refusing to perform various caste-based activities, Dalits are physically assaulted and threatened with social and economic exclusion from society. Any attempt to change village practices, oppose the social order or seek land, higher salaries, or political rights is met with violent and economic reprisal by those who stand to lose the most, i.e. the upper castes. Dalit communities as a whole are harshly punished for individual violations. During social boycotts, Dalits are deprived of communal land and jobs, Dalit women are majorly targeted, and the law to protect their rights is rarely implemented.

Communal and ethnic violence

India has more ethnic and religious groupings than almost any other country on the planet. There are eight mainstream faiths, 15 languages spoken in diverse dialects across 22 states and 9 union territories, and a large number of tribes and sects, in addition to the well-known 2000-odd castes. Three ethnic or religious wars have recently risen to prominence: two happened in the states of Assam and Punjab, while the third, the more well-known Hindu-Muslim conflict, is still ongoing. The Assam problem is essentially ethnic, the Punjab problem is mostly religious and regional, and the Hindu-Muslim conflict is primarily

religious.

Ethnic conflict in Assam

Assam has received the most recent attention in the three disputes discussed. Since India's division in 1947, there have never been so many people slain or displaced as a result of ethnic or sectarian conflict. It caused tens of thousands of persons to become victims of the mob violence which claimed thousands of lives, displaced lakhs of people, and drove a considerable number of people to flee the state for safety. Three culturally distinct groups have clashed in Assam: the Assamese, the Bengalis (both of which include Hindu and Muslim portions), and the tribals, who are small communities. This has majorly been a result of a large influx of migrants into northeast India, adversely impacting the natural habitat, livelihood and self-sufficiency of the local communities of the area. These conflicts had resurfaced in recent times during the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 (CAA) controversy.

Hindu-Sikh conflict in Punjab

Since August 1980, rising sectarian tensions between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab have resulted in violent conflicts. Punjab had the greatest per capita income at the time of the conflict. It was the epicentre of India's Green Revolution, which benefited the affluent Sikh peasants the most. Sikhs are the majority in Punjab, while Hindus are the minority. Demand for greater radio time for religious broadcasts over government-controlled radio and a separate legislative act for Sikh gurudwaras were raised. Although religious symbols were used to mobilise Sikhs, and the separatist slogan of Khalistan (a sovereign state of Sikhs) was raised, the Sikh charter of demands had strong political and economic components.

Hindu-Muslim conflicts

History has put the greatest shadow over Hindu-Muslim relations of all the religious and ethnic conflicts in modern India. The partition of 1947 was the most crucial contemporary period in this history. Despite the fact that a Muslim sovereign state of Pakistan was founded amid horrific communal strife, virtually as many Muslims remained in India for varying motives. The division did not resolve the Hindu-Muslim conflict. Rather, it worsened the status of Hindu-Muslim relations in India, causing perpetual tension to exist between the two groups. Even 75 years after independence, the situation persists. Riots and conflicts between Hindus and Muslims continue to take place across the nation.

Violation of freedom of speech and expression

The spirit of free speech is the capacity to think and speak freely, as well as to learn from others via publications and public debate, without fear of being regulated or suppressed by the government. The first requirement of emancipation is freedom of expression. It is believed that the freedom to express one's opinions, thoughts and feelings acts as the guardian of all other rights since it has a prominent and crucial position in the hierarchy of liberty.

The right to freely express one's thoughts by words, writing, printing, photographs, or any other methods is known as freedom of speech and expression. In recent years, it has become commonly understood that the right to free expression lies at the heart of a free society and

must be safeguarded continually. The uninterrupted flow of speech through an open medium is the primary principle of a free society. The freedom to communicate one's thoughts and beliefs without impediment, and especially without fear of punishment, is crucial to the growth of a community and, eventually, a state. It is one of the most basic fundamental rights protected from government restriction or control.

In India, Article 19 of the Indian Constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression to all citizens of India. It consists of the freedom of the press, the right to silence, the right to report and broadcast, as well as the right to be informed. It is a qualified right and is subject to certain restrictions to ensure it doesn't violate others' fundamental rights or the security of the state. Freedom of speech can be curbed to the extent that it does not adversely impact the sovereignty and integrity of India, security of the State, maintenance of friendly relations with foreign states, decency and morality, or cause a contempt of court or defamation. It is essential to protect and uphold these rights to improve the democratic structure of our country and improve the accountability of the state actors. In case the right to free speech and expression is curbed without any reasonable explanation, it may cause repression of constructive criticism and the establishment of an autocratic government.

Violence against women

Discrimination and violence against women are widespread in India, limiting educational achievement and earning capacity, as well as having substantial economic and societal consequences. With increases in the occurrence of domestic abuse during the lockdown, COVID-19 has highlighted the fault lines of gender equality. Men and boys should be educated about gender issues through social programmes, and community-level platforms such as Self-Help-Groups (SHGs) should be enhanced to give information on women's safety, sexual and reproductive health, and family planning options. There are several dynamics that gender plays with other social and economic factors:

Dynamics of gender with caste

Women from lower castes are at the bottom of the class, caste, and gender hierarchies. They always endure the burden of abuse, discrimination, and physical violence since they are largely illiterate and constantly paid less than their male coworkers across the world. Landlords and police frequently utilise sexual assault and other types of violence against women to repress rebellion and destroy dissidents in the community. In comparison to women from upper castes, lower-caste women face greater barriers to reproductive and physical health care, education, and sustenance income.

Dynamics of gender with poverty

Women are at a substantially higher risk of poverty for a variety of reasons:

Even though they have the same qualifications and work the same hours, women are paid less than males.

Women are divided into low-paying jobs, and women's occupations are low-paying.

Teaching, child care, nursing, cleaning, and waitressing are examples of “pink-collar” employment that often pays less than positions in male-dominated sectors.

Unpaid caring takes up more time for women than it does for men. Women are more likely than males to look after children, the elderly, or handicapped members of their families.

Women are more likely to shoulder the burden of child-rearing expenses. When parents do not live together, women are more likely to shoulder the financial burden of raising children.

Pregnancy has a greater impact on women’s employment and educational chances than on men’s. The financial costs of pregnancy are higher for women than they are for males. Unplanned and mistimed pregnancies, in particular, can cause women to lose their education and prevent them from obtaining and maintaining stable jobs.

Domestic and sexual abuse can lead to poverty for women. Domestic or sexual violence can result in the loss of a career, declining health, and homelessness. Many Indian women, particularly those from low-income families, are victims of intimate partner violence perpetrated by current or previous spouses or love interests. Poverty and gender inequality are thus mutually reinforcing in terms of infringing on women’s legal rights.

Violation of child rights

Across a majority of nations, a proportion of the total children end up being denied their rights, especially the girl child. Millions of children throughout the world are being held back by a range of hurdles that prevent them from fulfilling their full potential, from a lack of access to school to security and safety to safe water and basic sanitation. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has been ratified by over 190 nations, making it the most widely-adopted human rights convention in history. However, just because the treaty exists does not guarantee that children’s rights are always respected. The following are some infringements of child rights that take place across the world:

Child marriages

Girls’ rights are violated by child marriage, which often forces them to drop out of school, exposes them to abuse (sexual, physical, and emotional), and forces them into situations that their young minds and bodies are not ready for, such as childbirth. Although young boys get married off early as well, child marriage is a problem that disproportionately affects girls. The lockdown caused an increased surge in child marriages across regions in India, making it a major national concern.

Child labour

Millions of children in the world’s poorest countries work in dangerous and exploitative conditions that are harmful to their health and growth. Sex trafficking, domestic slavery, harsh physical labour such as mining or farming, and factory labour are all types of child labour.

Lack of access to education

Every kid is entitled to an education, and learning is essential for growth. It’s also one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of poverty and ensure that children are given the skills

they need to achieve their full potential. Long distances to school, a shortage of adequate washrooms, local gender conventions, and early pregnancy are just some of the obstacles that many girls experience in getting an education.

Lack of access to clean water

Millions of people around the world do not have access to safe drinking water, and more than twice as many do not have access to proper sanitation, such as toilets. Millions of children's lives are jeopardised without these necessities. Water and sanitation-related infections are one of the top causes of death in children under the age of five. Every day, hundreds of children die from avoidable diseases brought on by contaminated water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Lack of access to healthcare

Every child has the right to high-quality healthcare, yet millions of children across the world die of preterm birth problems, pneumonia, birth asphyxia, diarrhoea, malaria etc. Many of these fatalities may have been avoided if people had better access to healthcare. Furthermore, pregnancy and delivery problems are the top cause of mortality for females under the age of 15. Gender stereotypes and inequality are the most prevalent hurdles to females enjoying their rights to healthcare, just as they are with education.

Child soldiers

Separated from their families, displaced from their homes, or living in conflict zones with restricted access to schooling makes children more vulnerable to recruitment by armed forces and groups. These children are subjected to the horrors of war, a situation that not only deprives them of their innocent childhood experiences but also has negative consequences on their mental and emotional development. Every kid has the right to be shielded from the effects of conflict.

Female Genital Mutilation

Operations involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other harm to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons are termed Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). It's also a form of gender-based discrimination. The practice is common in many regions of the world, and it is usually supported by firmly rooted societal norms. FGM has been performed on millions of girls and women worldwide, with the average age of a girl undergoing the procedure being ten years old. Female Genital Mutilation is a breach of a girl's right to health, freedom from violence, life and bodily integrity, and protection against brutal, barbaric, and humiliating treatment.

Everyone has dignity and worth. Recognising and respecting people's human rights is one way we acknowledge and appreciate their intrinsic value. Human rights are a collection of ideas that deal with justice and equality. They value our autonomy in making decisions about our life and developing our human potential. They are about living without fear, harassment, or prejudice. Human rights are a collection of fundamental rights that people all around the globe have decided are necessary. These include the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the right to be free of torture and other cruel and inhuman treatment, the right to freedom of expression, the right to religious freedom, and the rights to health, education, employment

and substantial quality of life.

These fundamental rights apply to everyone regardless of gender, age, economic or social status and opinions. Human rights are universal and ubiquitous because of this. Tolerance, equality, and respect are values that can assist lessen societal conflict. Putting human rights ideals into practice can assist us in creating the society we desire. The way we think about and implement human rights principles has changed dramatically in recent decades. This has had several good outcomes: human rights education may empower individuals and provide answers to specific challenges. Human rights are fundamental to how individuals engage with one another at all levels of society, including the family, community, schools, employment, politics, and international relations. Thus, it is critical that everyone attempt to grasp what human rights are. It is simpler for people to support justice and equality in society when they have a greater understanding of human rights.