

The Four Fundamental Principles of the Constitution

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The four governing principles of Bangladesh's constitution are :

- Nationalism,
- Socialism,
- Democracy and
- Secularism

Establishing the rights of oppressed and exploited Bengalis was the primary motivation behind the foundation of Bangladesh. The four principles listed above were included in the constitution at the time by the previous government in order to prevent any future repeat of the Pakistani governing organization's actions.

1. Nationalism:

The first principle is Nationalism. As a nation we are Bengalis and our language is Bangla. This unity among all is the basis of Bengali nationalism (Sen, 1974).

The culture and language of the Ashraf class (then elite class) were imposed on the Bengalis under the pretext of Islamic nationalism. They said that Bengalis were not Muslims because they practiced Hindu culture. As a result, they started feeling an existential crisis under the pressure of these two sides. And from here the spirit of Bengali nationalism first arose.

That caused the language movement and later the independence war during the Pakistani era, Bengali nationalism was accepted in independent Bangladesh. We are all Bengalis, which was the primary argument.

However, this nationalism debate is ongoing even after 50 years of Bangladesh's independence. Saeed Iftekhar Ahmed, a political analyst and professor at the American Public University Systems, believes that the debate between 'Bengali' and 'Bangladeshi' nationalism has created a divided society today.

2.Socialism:

Socialism is a system in which each person in the community has an equal share in the various elements of production, distribution and exchange of resources. Such ownership is granted through democratic governance (Sen,1974).

The idea of socialism was drafted into the constitution in order to plan economic changes that would make the disadvantaged majority of the population satisfied. According to Ali (2016), Bangladesh has worked under a mixed system ever since it gained freedom, never entirely accepting capitalism or socialism. America wanted to make Pakistan a "Model Capitalist Country". The main criteria of capitalism are to invest in the most profitable sectors as much as possible ignoring the profitless sector.

After the liberation war, Bangabandhu adopted socialism to develop all areas equally and ensure there would be no class division. But it was really tough. As a result, Bangladesh fell into a great famine in 1974 where 1,00,000 to 4,50,000 people died.

However, Bangladesh is currently primarily a commercial nation with signs of socialism. In the modern world, neither an honest communist nor a pure capitalist nation exist. Bangladesh is now a capitalist nation as a result of the present situation.

3.Democracy:

Democracy is a system of government in which all members or citizens have equal rights in making policy or electing representatives (Sen, 1974).

In the Pakistan period, army personnel kept becoming rulers. So there was no way to be out of autocracy.

In the post period of the war of independence, it was quite challenging for Bangabandhu to avoid repeating the same ruling scenario. To set up an honest governance, Bangabandhu held elections in 1973. The Awami League succeeded with 73.20% of the vote.

At present, Bangladesh's democracy system is rapidly breaking down into a complete failure.

Ahmed (2019) claims that after the 10th National Parliament election in 2014, it was clear that democracy had begun to move in the wrong direction.

4.Secularism:

All religions should be given equal recognition, and assistance from the government, according to the secularism principle (Sen,1974).

"At that time, religious preference was used to decide who received which benefits. Additionally, despite the fact that East Pakistanis were also Muslims, West Pakistani Ashraf class people kept mistreating them.Facilities were extremely limited for the Hindus and other communities. The West Pakistani upper class received all of the government posts and authority.” (Bhuiyan,2017)

Later,Bangladesh was the first country in South Asia to have secularism enshrined in its constitution. "Article 8 enshrines secularism as one of the fundamental principles of state policy. Article 12 elaborates further on secularism and freedom of religion." (Bhuiyan,2017)

Nowadays, Bangladesh's political parties have been accused of abusing religion. A hypocrisy exists among our politicians.They refer to it as a secular state at times and a Muslim state at other times. As a result, minorities are under pressure.

Firstly,Bangladesh's Constitution's nationalism concept stands for the country's union and authority. It shows the vision of a Bangladeshi country and the dedication of the government to the wellbeing and development of its people.The socialism enshrined in Bangladesh's Constitution represents the nation's dedication to advancing social justice, equality, and the wellbeing of its people. Democracy establishes a foundation for the orderly transition of power and guarantees that the government is still answerable to the people.The importance of secularism is found in its capacity to encourage regard and respect for faith difference. It establishes a foundation for the peaceful relationship of people from various countries, religions, and philosophical perspectives.

To conclude,the Constitution of Bangladesh is the highest law of the nation and sets out the guiding ideals and principles for its government.Together, these fundamental values create a thorough foundation for national governance and represent Bangladeshis' ideals. Nevertheless, a number of elements, including political division, religious extremism, and corruption, frequently make it difficult to put these ideas into implementation. Though in today’s reality, Bangladesh is facing a lot of difficulties to maintain these four pillars in the national activities,the people of Bangladesh are still motivated and led by these ideals as they work for a fair and equal society as a whole.

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