

Q. What are the basic principles which India stands for?

India is a huge country that got its independence in 1947. After independence, she adopted democratic form of government. She was faced with many problems. To overcome the problems, certain principles were taken into consideration. The basic principles on which India stands for are as follows:

- (a) **DEMOCRACY:** India has a democratic form of government. All the citizens have equal rights. Everyone irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex has a right to vote. All the citizens can fight elections and have equal opportunities to hold any public office.
- (b) **SOCIALISM:** India believes in Socialism where all the people have economic equality, every citizen can strive to become wealthy. The Indian state believes in rightful distribution of national wealth.
- (c) **SECULARISM:** India is a secular state. There is no state religion. Every citizen can practice the religion of his own choice. Nobody is discriminated on the basis of religion. Any citizen of India can hold the highest post in any office. That is why almost people of every religion live in India and propagate their faith.

FACTORS THAT OBSTRUCT THE FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

India is considered to be the largest democracy in the world. But democracy in India is in its infancy. India has to face many challenges to keep its democracy functional. Various factors obstruct the functioning of democracy in India. The factors obstructing the functioning of democracy in India are:

- (a) **RELIGIOUS COMMUNALISM:** India is a country of many religions. Indian constitution allows equal rights to people of all faiths. But religious communalism has been a constant feature of Indian Society. It foments jealousy and hatred between various religious sects which results in riots and violence. The recent example is that of Gujarat where thousands of people were killed. Religious communalism creates intolerance and disrespect among various communities which hinder the functioning of democracy.
- (b) **CASTEISM:** The system of casteism is prevalent in the Indian Society. It is one of the great evils of our society. Casteism divides and separates people. It gives birth to untouchability and encourages the exploitation of the lower castes. Casteism has proven to be a great hindrance to the functioning of democracy in India. It encourages the people to vote on the basis of caste. It violates the principles of co-operation, unity, tolerance and the idea of equality.
- (c) **STATUS OF WOMEN:** Women perform important functions in and outside home. They have achieved high positions in all walks of political and social life. However, in spite of all these achievements there are a number of prejudices against their capabilities. They are not treated as equals. They are disregarded, maltreated and debarred from doing certain things. It is against the spirit of democracy. It deprives the society of the services of women who can play significant role in society. Women do not enjoy full freedom. But liberty is a must for democracy. And without this liberty, democracy is hindered.
- (d) **ECONOMIC INEQUALITY:** Economic inequality also hampers democracy. Economic disparity gives birth to class-struggle. This breeds rivalry and hatred among people. It leads to

the exploitation of one class by the other. It is a negation of democracy as poor cannot contribute in the functioning of democracy.

(e) **ILLITERACY:** Absence of literacy is the greatest impediment to social and economic progress. An illiterate person cannot understand the problems of the country. He cannot take correct decision. He is not in a position to make the best use of his rights. He does not know for whom to vote. Thus, an illiterate man cannot contribute much to the success of democracy.

(f) **TERRORISM:** Terrorism is the phenomenon which is threatening the democratic fabric of India. India is faced with this challenge in many states where people have resorted to terror tactics to attain political gains. This hampers the smooth functioning of democracy in India.

SOCIAL EVILS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Indian society is beset with many social evils. This has led to corruption, nepotism and backwardness. Some of the social evils prevalent in the India society are:

(a). **DOWRY SYSTEM:** The dowry system is spreading day by day. It is eating into the vitals of our society. This evil has forced many girls to commit suicide. It has degenerated the women folk. They have to suffer humiliation. The parents of the bride have to borrow huge amounts to pay as dowry. They are never in a position to pay back. Hence, the parents too are forced to suffer the after effects of their daughter's marriage. Accepting offering of dowry should be banned by law and the defaulters should be punished.

(b) **BRIBERY:** A large number of people in India try to get undue favours by bribing the officials. Many anti-social elements also carry out their nefarious activities by resorting to bribery. Such a thing reduces the efficiency of the administration and causes frustration among the common masses. The entire society thus gets corrupted. Administration becomes inefficient. National development is seriously retarded.

(c) **HOARDING:** Big traders hoard essential goods and do not make them available in the open market. The result is that there is an upward swing in prices. Traders make illicit gains through such manipulation. The common man suffers because he has to buy at higher prices.

(d) **SMUGGLING:** Smuggling leads to artificial scarcity. Some anti-national elements smuggle many things in and out of the country without paying any tax.

(e) **DRUG ABUSE:** Many people resort to taking banned drugs like charas, cocaine, heroine etc. Anyone who tastes it once gets hooked to it. The addict then keeps out of any purposeful activity. These people often resort to illegal practices and crimes. Thus, intoxicants are obstacles in the way of social and economic progress.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment means a state of being unemployed. It is one of the gravest problems faced by India. The number of the unemployed is increasing gradually. The population of India is increasing at an alarming rate which is adding to the problem. The vast population neutralises all the plans and projects of development. A rapid migrating person from rural areas to urban areas also has created a lot of unemployment. The village people now do not want to work in the fields and opt for jobs which are not there. India, being a poor country, doesn't have enough capital to give employment. There is inadequate provision for general, technical and industrial education.

In order to curb unemployment, industry in the country should be developed. Special attention should be paid to small scale industry and cottage industry. Youths should be given

all facilities for self-employment. New techniques should be made known to the agriculturists and every financial assistance should be rendered to them.

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

By economic inequality we mean uneven distribution of wealth. It denotes an atmosphere where there are a few rich and more poor. It creates social distinction and tension. Economic inequality gives birth to class struggle and also results in the exploitation of one class by the other.

Economic inequality is caused by the following reasons:

- a) *Disparity in the ownership of land:* In India, despite the land reforms, ownership of land is one of the major causes of economic inequality. The big farmers own all the land and the tenants are paid less.
- b) *Illiteracy:* Illiterate farmers and labourers fall a prey to the cunning people who take them for a ride.
- c) *Bonded Labour:* It is the worst kind of oppression. Many people have been working for years to get rid of the debts taken by their fathers.
- d) *Unemployment:* The rising population has given rise to the problem of unemployment which causes economic inequality. Moreover, people are now becoming educated and want jobs which are not available.
- e) *Black Money:* The rich are getting still richer while poor go from bad to worse because of black money.

CHIEF CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT:

Unemployment is one of the main problems of India. The problem of unemployment, particularly in urban areas, is due to the following main reasons:

- a) Industry is under-developed in our country. It is more so in case of small scale and cottage industries.
- b) There is also shortage of capital. Firstly, it is quite difficult to arrange capital and if one is able to arrange that, the interest rates are too high.
- c) In India, there is lack of general as well as industrial education. Very few technical institutions are there to train our youths in different technical fields as such they roam about unemployed.
- d) The population in India is fast increasing. It neutralizes all the progress made in different directions.