

HANDOUTS 3(3)

Acknowledgment

- 1) Reference : NCERT SOCIAL SCIENCE TEXT BOOK
- 2) Google Web page for images.

3.4 GUIDING VALUES OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

- In this book we shall study the exact provisions of the Constitution on different subjects.
- At this stage let us begin by understanding the overall **philosophy** of what our Constitution is all about. Let us see what our Constitution says about its own philosophy. This is what the preamble to the Constitution does.

The Dream and the Promise

Some of you may have noticed a name missing from the sketches of

the makers of the constitution: Mahatma Gandhi. He was not a member of the Constituent Assembly. Yet there were many members who followed his vision. Years ago, writing in his magazine *Young India* in 1931, he had spelt out what he wanted the Constitution to do .

Philosophy of the Constitution

- Values that inspired and guided the freedom struggle and were in turn nurtured by it, formed the foundation for India's democracy.
- These values are embedded in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution.
- They guide all the articles of the Indian Constitution.
- The Constitution begins with a short statement of its basic values.
- This is called the Preamble to the constitution.
- Taking inspiration from American model, most countries in the contemporary world have chosen to begin their constitutions with a preamble
- The Preamble of the Constitution reads like a poem on democracy.

- It contains the philosophy on which the entire Constitution has been built. It provides a standard to examine and evaluate any law and action of government, to find out whether it is good or bad.
- It is the soul of the Indian Constitution.

Institutional design

- A constitution is not merely a statement of values and philosophy.
- As we noted above, a constitution is mainly about embodying these values into institutional arrangements.
- Much of the document called Constitution of India is about these arrangements.
- It is a very long and detailed document. Therefore it needs to be amended quite regularly to keep it updated.
- Those who crafted the Indian Constitution felt that it has to be in accordance with people's aspirations and changes in society.

- They did not see it as a sacred, static and unalterable law. So, they made provisions to incorporate changes from time to time. These changes are called constitutional amendments.
- The Constitution describes the institutional arrangements in a very legal language.
- Like any Constitution, the Indian Constitution lays down a procedure for choosing persons to govern the country.
- It defines who will have how much power to take which decisions.
- And it puts limits to what the government can do by providing some rights to the citizen that cannot be violated.
