

Atmanirbhar Bharat : A Political Perspective

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The Indian constitution and democracy play a crucial role in fostering political self-sufficiency in modern India. The Constitution of India was drafted by the Constituent Assembly of India during a span of two years, eleven months, and eighteen days. The Constitution was finalized on November 26, 1949 and then ratified by the members of the constituent Assembly on January 24, 1950. The preamble of the constitution affirms the supreme authority of the people of India and emphasizes that they are not subordinate to any external power. The preamble characterizes India as a Socialist, Secular Republic. In a socialist system, there is a guarantee of equal opportunities for all citizens. Secular refers to a state that does not have an official religion and treats all religions as equal. A republic is a form of government in which the leader of the state is chosen through an electoral process. In India, the president is chosen as the head of state and exercises executive powers. The Indian constitution has implemented the parliamentary system of government at both the Union and

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state levels, which includes ministerial duty to the lower house. The Indian constitution bestows essential rights upon its citizens. Political self-reliance in India begins with the establishment of the constitution. Political self-reliance in India began with the creation of the constitution. India is commemorating 75 years of independence but our neighboring countries continue to lack a stable democratic system.

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I. Introduction

The greatest factors facilitating India's political autonomy after independence are the country's constitution and democracy. A state's fundamental law is its constitution. The demand that, the Indians themselves should determine Mahatma Gandhi had put India's political destiny forward as early as in 1922. An effort was made by the Swaraj Party in 1924. The idea of a constituent assembly was first proposed by Mr. Manabendra Nath Rai in 1927. In an effort to overhaul the Indian government, the Act of 1935 followed. In his 1942 proposal, Mr. Cripps stated that a constituent assembly would be chosen following the end of World War II. Following World War II, a cabinet mission was dispatched by the Labour Party government of England.

It was the Provincial Legislature that established India's Constituent Assembly in July 1946. The 9th of December 1946 marked the beginning of the first session of the Constituent Assembly. Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha presided over the session, which had 207 members in attendance. As of December 11th, Dr. Rajendra Prasad has been officially named the Constituent Assembly's permanent president. After the Indian Independence Act of 1947 was passed, the constituent assembly of India assumed full sovereignty and power, succeeding the plenary authority and jurisdiction of the British parliament.

The constituent assembly comprised several significant committees, including the union powers committee, committee on fundamental rights and minorities, steering committee, Provincial Constitution committee, committee on union constitution, and drafting committee. The drafting committee was established on August 29, 1947. The committee consisted of seven members, with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar serving as its president. The committee entrusted with the task of formulating a constitution for India. Undoubtedly, it

was a challenging task. The initial draft was presented to the public for their input, and around eight months later, on November 4, 1948, the constituent assembly commenced deliberations on the proposed constitution. Consequently, individuals were allotted a significant duration for the establishment of its constitution. During the period from November 15, 1948 to October 17, 1949, as many as 2473 resolutions out of 7635 tabled for amendment were considered. The constituent assembly reconvened on November 14, 1949 for the third reading. The draft was completed on November 26, 1949, after the third reading. In a span of two years, eleven months, and eighteen days, the constituent assembly successfully developed a constitution. The constitution was further completed on November 26, 1949 and finally signed by members of the constituent assembly on January 25, 1950, the last day of the assembly. Appointment of Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the first president of India was made during the last session of the constituent parliament.

With immediate effect from the 26th of November 1949, the provisions of citizenship elections, provisional parliament, interim and transitional provisions were made available. The rest of the constitution came into force on the 26th January 1950 and this date referred to in the constitution as the Date of its commencement.

The preamble serves as the constitution's key and is present in the Indian Constitution. The preamble lays out the goals and purposes of the constitution. The preamble has seen few revisions since the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976. Following this change, the preamble now reads as : "WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens; JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation.

In our constituent Assembly this twenty sixth day of November 1949, do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this constitution."

2. Ideas Embodied in the Preamble

The following ideas are embodied in the preamble of Indian Constitution:

1. **Sovereign** : The Preamble declares that India is an autonomous nation. The term 'sovereign' denotes that India possesses autonomous authority and is neither subordinate or reliant on any external power like a dominion or dependent state. The Indian Legislature possesses the authority to promulgate legislation inside the country, albeit with significant restrictions set by the Constitution.
2. **Socialist** : 'Socialist' was introduced to the Preamble by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment in 1976. The democratic attainment of socialist goals is what we mean when we talk about socialism. 'Democratic Socialism' is the new economic and political system of India. A mixed economy, in which the public and private sectors coexist, is central to democratic socialism. Abolition of poverty, illiteracy, illness, and opportunity disparities is its stated goal.
3. **Secular** : The term 'Secular' was added to the Preamble through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment in 1976. In the Constitution of India, the term secular signifies that all religions in India are accorded equal reverence, safeguarding, and assistance by the state. Freedom of Religion is safeguarded as a Fundamental Right under Articles 25 to 28 in Part III of the Constitution.
4. **Democratic** : The term "Democratic" denotes a political system that derives its power from the electorate, as stated in the Constitution. The Preamble states that India would be a democratic nation. So, the people are the ultimate arbiters of power. Political, economic, and social democracies are all referred to as "democracies" in the Preamble. Indian democracy is characterized by a responsible representative government, adult suffrage, a meritocratic electoral process, a neutral judiciary, and many more elements.
5. **Republic** : The head of state in a republic is chosen by the people, either directly or indirectly, through the process of election. In the country of India, the President serves as the head of state. The people of India elect their President in a roundabout way, which means that they do it through their representatives in the Parliament and the State Assemblies. In addition, the people, rather than a monarch, are the ones who hold the power to make political decisions in a federal republic.

6. **Justice :** The phrase “Justice” in the Preamble encompasses three diverse forms: Social, economic, and political. These forms are safeguarded through several laws outlined in the Fundamental and Directive Principles. The inclusion of social justice in the Preamble signifies the Constitution’s aim to establish a fairer society founded on the principle of equal social standing. Economic justice refers to the fair allocation of wealth among all members of society, ensuring that it is not excessively concentrated in the hands of a few individuals. Political justice refers to the principle that every citizen is entitled to equal rights and opportunities for political engagement. The Indian Constitution guarantees the right to vote to all adult citizens and ensures that each vote holds equal significance.
7. **Liberty :** The freedom from slavery, serfdom, incarceration, dictatorship, and other forms of oppression is what we mean when we talk of liberty. Freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly are guaranteed in the Preamble.
8. **Equality :** Equality refers to the state in which there are no privileges or discriminatory practices targeting any particular group within society. The Preamble ensures that all individuals in the nation have equal position and opportunities. The Constitution aims to ensure parity in social, economic, and political spheres within the nation.
9. **Fraternity :** Fraternity refers to the sense of camaraderie and kinship. The primary objective of the Preamble is to foster a sense of brotherhood among the citizens, while also guaranteeing the respect and worth of each individual, as well as the cohesion and wholeness of the country.
10. **Unity & Integrity :** Being united at all times is what we mean when we talk about unity in integrity. It means that people of all different cultures, religions, castes, and ethnicities may coexist peacefully and lovingly. This is the most effective strategy for combating racism and discrimination, among other societal ills. A little over eight decades ago, our founding fathers understood this, and that is why it is in the Preamble to our Constitution.

3. Conclusion

India is commemorating and celebrating *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, an initiative of the Government of India, in order to honor

and commemorate 75 years of progressive India as well as the wonderful history of its people, culture, and accomplishments. This *Mahotsav* is devoted to the people of India, who have played a significant role in bringing India to this point in its evolutionary journey over the course of its history. The *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav* is a manifestation of everything that is progressive regarding India's socio-cultural, political, and economic identity. Our neighboring countries do not yet have a stable constitution and democracy.

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