



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the various ethical values enshrined in the Indian Constitution? (150 words)

14 May, 2020 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- In the introduction define ethical values and briefly explain how Indian constitution is based on ethical values.
- In the body, discuss in detail some of the constitutional ethical values and mention the related articles or part of the constitution associated with it.
- End the answer with a valid conclusion.

Introduction

Ethical values are those values that determine what is right and wrong in different situations. Institutional ethical values like **integrity, transparency, accountability, impartiality, public welfare and equity** are guiding principles of the Indian Constitution.

These values are lucidly visible in the preamble which mentions the nature of the state as **sovereign, socialist, democratic and republic** and the objectives of the Indian state as **liberty, equality, justice and fraternity**.

Body

Some of the constitutional ethical values can be discussed as following

- **Liberty:** The Constitution provides every citizen a number of liberties and freedoms under Article 19 to 21, 21A, and 22. Some of these liberties are provided with reasonable restrictions so that the ethical obligations under rule of law are also maintained.
- **Justice:** In the Preamble this value embraces three distinct forms: Social, economic and political, secured through various provisions of the Fundamental rights and Directive Principles:
 - Article 20 provides protection in respect of conviction for offenses.
 - Article 21 deals with Protection of life and personal liberty.
 - Equal justice and free legal aid under Article 39A.
 - The constitution aims equitable distribution of wealth, equal social status, equal pay for equal work for both men and women under Article 39.
 - It also seeks political justice where all citizens have equal rights in political participation for which Indian Constitution provides for universal adult suffrage and equal value for each vote in Article 326.
- **Equity:** The Constitution states that all citizens are equal before the law and the government should ensure that the social inequalities on the grounds of caste, religion, and gender is eliminated. Article 15, 16 and 17 guarantee the same with some provision for positive discrimination like reservation to uplift the backward sections of our society.
- **Impartiality:** Following the principle of mutual respect, minorities and weaker sections of society have been safeguarded by constitutional values of secularism and socialism. Such as:

- Article 17 provides for abolition of Untouchability
- Article 21 guarantees protection of life and personal liberty.
- Article 21A states that that state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6-14 years.
- Article 25 gives freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion.
- Article 26 deals with freedom to manage religious affairs.
- Under Articles 29, 30, 350A and 350B religious minorities have been given rights to protect their language and culture.
- **Transparency and accountability:** The constitution makes the government the representative of the public interest and guardian of public resources. Constitutional bodies like the Finance Commission and Comptroller and Auditor General have been created for the same purpose.
- **Public welfare:** Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV of Indian constitution aim to create social and economic conditions under which the citizens can lead a good life. They also direct the governments to adopt social and economic democratic value in their conduct to make India a welfare state such as:
 - Promotion of education and economic interests of SC, ST, and other weaker sections under Article 46.
 - Article 45 has provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years.
 - Article 48A endeavours to protect and improve the environment and safeguarding of forests and wildlife.
 - Article 39 directs the state to strive to provide adequate means to livelihood, equal work for both men and women
 - Article 51A enjoins upon citizens of India to realise their fundamental duties towards the state.
- **Fraternity:** It is mentioned in the Preamble. This value seeks to promote common brotherhood in India. It endeavours to treat all its citizens as members of a family, no one is inferior or superior, all are equal and have the same rights and duties.
 - The Constitution also strives for international peace and security under article 51.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be certainly said that the values enshrined in the Indian Constitution are based on a strong ethical foundation. Moreover, these values of the Indian constitution endeavour and inspire to make the Indian society more ethical and promote the spirit of tolerance and respect towards unity in diversity of India.