

INDIA- A WELFARE STATE

L.No	Title of Lesson	SKILLS	Activity
17	India- A Welfare State	Empathy, Critical Thinking, Coping with Emotion, Problem Solving	To Understand how India is a Welfare State.

Meaning

India is described as a Welfare State. The question arises what a welfare State is? It is a concept of government in which the State plays a key role in the protection and promotion of economic and social well-being of its citizens. A Welfare State is based on the principles of equality of opportunity and equitable distribution of wealth. Under this system, the welfare of citizens is the responsibility of the State.

The Constitution of India has extensive provisions to ensure social and economic welfare of the people in the form of Fundamental Rights and the other as Directive Principles of State policy.

The Fundamental Rights act as a guarantee that all Indian citizens can and will enjoy civil liberties and basic rights. These civil liberties take precedence over any other law of the land. Some of these important rights are: equality before law, freedom of speech and expression, freedom to form associations and peaceful assembly, freedom of religion and the right to constitutional remedies for the protection of all these civil rights.

Directive Principles of State Policy

The founding fathers of the Constitution were aware that even if all the Fundamental Rights are truly enforced, the goals of Indian Democracy would not be realised unless the people of India could avail of social and economic rights. This was done by including a separate chapter as Part IV known as the Directive Principle of State Policy.

Important Characteristics of Directive Principles

- Inclusion of Directive Principles in the Constitution was inspired by the Constitution of Ireland and the Gandhian Philosophy.
- These are guidelines for the State and are non-justiceable
- The aim of these principles is to create such conditions where all citizens should be able to lead a good life.
- These principles are meant to establish social and economic democracy.

Types of Directive Principles

The Directive Principles stated in the Constitution are of different types and may be classified under the following specific categories:

- Principles promoting social and economic equality:
The State should ensure
 - (i) adequate means of livelihood
 - (ii) fair distribution of material resources
 - (iii) equal pay for equal work for both men and women
 - (iv) free and compulsory education to children upto the age of 14 years
 - (v) protection of children, men and women against exploitation.
- Gandhian Principles: To promote a non-violent social order, welfare of all and prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.
- Principles related to International Peace and Security: These principles seek to have good relations with the neighbouring countries and to solve the international disputes through negotiations or peaceful means.
- Miscellaneous Principles : These principles includes (i) protection of historical monuments (ii) safeguard the forests and wildlife (iii) uniform civil code for all citizens.

Relation between Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Rights

The Directive Principles aim at establishing a Welfare State. The aim of Fundamental Rights is also the same; but there are some basic differences between the two. First Directive Principles are Non- Justiciable while Fundamental Rights are Justiciable and enforceable. Second, these Principles are only guidelines, instructions or directions for the State to frame policies and to implement them as a step towards realising the goals of a Welfare State. Fundamental Rights have been ensured by the Constitution and the State is bound to protect the rights of all its citizens. Directive Principles are different from Fundamental Rights; but both are complementary to each other.

Implementation of Directive Principles of State policy

“Sarva Siksha Abhiyan”, a massive programme of Central Government is being implemented in all the States. Similarly “Right to Education Act 2009” passed by the Indian Parliament is another serious effort being made to implement the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Equal pay for equal work has been ensured, Panchayati Raj has been given constitutional status.

The Central and State Governments have been implementing these Directive Principles, but much more needs to be done to realise the goals of a Welfare State.

Evaluate Yourself

- Q. What is the purpose of Directive Principles of State Policy?
- Q. How are Directive Principles of State Policy different from Fundamental Rights? Explain.
- Q. Describe any three Directive Principles of State Policy which have been implemented by the Government.