



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the significance of the Directive Principles of State Policy in promoting social justice in the Indian Constitution. **(250 Words)**

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Approach

- Begin the answer by introducing the Directive Principles of State Policy.
- Discuss the significance of the Directive Principles of State Policy in promoting social justice.
- Conclude as per the requirement of keywords.

Introduction

The Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) are a set of guidelines laid down in Part IV of the Indian Constitution. Though non-justiciable, they serve as a crucial instrument for promoting social justice in India.

Body

- **Framework for Social Welfare Policies:**
 - DPSP provide a framework for formulating laws and policies aimed at promoting social justice.
 - For instance, **Article 39 directs the state to ensure equal pay for equal work**, which has led to the implementation of minimum wage laws and labor welfare schemes, thereby reducing economic disparities.
- **Eradicating Social Inequalities:**
 - Articles like 38 and 39 aim to minimize inequalities in income, status, and opportunities.
 - Policies such as reservation in education and employment for socially disadvantaged groups like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes are examples of efforts to address historical injustices and promote social equality.
- **Promotion of Educational Opportunities:**
 - **Article 45 mandates the state to provide free and compulsory education** for children up to the age of 14.
 - This provision has led to the establishment of schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Right to Education Act, ensuring access to education for marginalized sections of society, thereby promoting social inclusion.
- **Empowerment of Weaker Sections:**
 - DPSP emphasize the protection and empowerment of weaker sections of society.
 - Articles 46 and 47 stress the need for special care and attention towards the socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalized communities.
 - Initiatives like affirmative action policies and poverty alleviation programs aim to uplift these sections and bridge social gaps.
- **Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice:**
 - Articles such as **48A highlight the importance of environmental protection** and sustainable development.

- Environmental degradation often disproportionately affects vulnerable communities.
- Policies promoting sustainable development not only ensure environmental justice but also safeguard the interests of marginalized populations dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods.
- **Welfare Measures for Labor:**
 - DPSP advocate for the welfare of laborers and protection of their rights.
 - Articles 42 and 43 stress the provision of just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.
 - Implementation of labor laws, establishment of minimum wage standards, and initiatives like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aim to improve the socio-economic conditions of laborers, thereby contributing to social justice.
- **Strengthening Social Cohesion:**
 - DPSP play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and harmony.
 - Articles like 44 emphasize the promotion of a uniform civil code to eliminate discriminatory practices based on religion, gender, or caste.
 - Such measures promote the idea of a pluralistic society where every individual enjoys equal rights and opportunities, irrespective of their background.
- **Judicial Activism and DPSP:**
 - Although non-justiciable, DPSPs have influenced judicial decisions, leading to the evolution of socio-economic rights jurisprudence.
 - The judiciary has often invoked DPSP while interpreting fundamental rights, thereby expanding the scope of social justice.
 - Landmark judgments like Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala and Minerva Mills v. Union of India illustrate the symbiotic relationship between DPSP and fundamental rights.

Conclusion

The Directive Principles of State Policy serve as a cornerstone for promoting social justice in the Indian Constitution. Through their multidimensional approach encompassing economic, social, environmental, and political dimensions, DPSP lay the groundwork for a more equitable and inclusive society.

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