Reviving a Sense of Fraternity

This editorial is based on **The challenge of reviving a sense of fraternity** which was published in The Hindu on 27/04/2023. It talks about inclusion of the principle of fraternity in the Preamble to the Constitution of India and the idea of fraternity.

For Prelims: Preamble, **42nd Amendment Act**, **Fundamental Duties**, Constituent Assembly

For Mains: Meaning of Fraternity, Challenges of Achieving ideals of Fraternity

Fraternity **means a sense of common brotherhood** of all Indians, which **gives unity and solidarity** to social life.

The **idea of fraternity** is closely linked to that of social solidarity, which i**s impossible to accomplish without public empathy.**

Acharya Kripalani pointed out that the contents of the **Preamble** were **not only legal and political principles** but **also had a moral, spiritual and mystical** content.

It became an official demand of the Indian National Congress in 1935 and was officially adopted in the Lucknow session in April 1936 presided by Jawaharlal Nehru, who also drafted the Objectives Resolution.

In the concluding session of the Constituent Assembly, **B.R. Ambedkar pointed out** the **absence of recognition of the principle of fraternity** in the Constitution. He stated that **without fraternity, equality and liberty would be no deeper than coats of paint.**

The Constitution of India was drafted by the Constituent Assembly, recognizing the **need for fraternity as one of the fundamental principles.** However, the concept of **fraternity is not sufficiently understood**, and its duties are not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution.

What are the Challenges in Achieving Fraternity?

- **Social and Cultural Differences:**
  - The diversity of cultures and traditions among different communities can lead to **misunderstandings and conflicts.**
  - This can create social and cultural barriers that hamper the spirit of brotherhood.
  - For instance, religious or caste-based differences can lead to mistrust, discrimination, and even violence. This can result in the erosion of fraternity and the polarization of society.
- **Economic Disparities:**
  - The vast **economic divide between different sections** of society can lead to resentment and **feelings of discrimination, leading to a lack of trust** and cooperation

among citizens.
- When people feel that they are being treated unfairly or that their economic status is a barrier to their success, they are less likely to cooperate and work together for the common good.
- This can lead to a breakdown in social cohesion, which is a fundamental aspect of fraternity.
- **Political Differences:**
  - Political ideologies can create deep divides in society and **impede cooperation and dialogue.**
  - Political differences **also lead to polarization**, where people become deeply divided along political lines.
  - This can **create an atmosphere of hostility and intolerance**, where people are unwilling to engage in constructive dialogue or work towards common goals.
- **Lack of Trust:**
  - A lack of trust and mutual understanding among different groups can undermine the spirit of brotherhood.
  - When people do not trust each other or have **misunderstandings, it becomes difficult to work together** towards a common goal.
- **Failure of Constitutional Morality:**
  - **Constitutional morality**, which is based on the **values enshrined in the Indian Constitution,** is critical to maintaining fraternity.
  - The failure of constitutional morality **can lead to a loss of confidence in institutions and the rule of law.**
  - This can create a climate of uncertainty and instability, which can ultimately undermine the spirit of brotherhood and social cohesion in society.
- **Inadequate Moral Order:**
  - A functioning moral order in society is essential for the success of democracy. This includes adherence to **ethical values, social responsibility, and a sense of social justice.**
  - Any failure in this area can lead to the erosion of the spirit of brotherhood.
  - For instance, if individuals are not held accountable for unethical actions, it can lead to a breakdown in trust among citizens, resulting in social and cultural barriers that hinder fraternity.

What are the Constitutional Provisions Related to Fraternity?

- **Preamble:**
  - The principle of fraternity was added to the principles in the Preamble along with liberty, equality, and justice.
- **Fundamental Duties**:
  - **Article 51A** on **Fundamental Duties,** added to by the **42nd Amendment** in 1976 and further amended by 86th Amendment (2002).
  - **Article 51A(e)** generally refers to the duty of every citizen 'to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India.'

What are the Measures can be Taken to Achieving Fraternity in Indian Context?

- **Promote Interfaith Dialogue:**
  - India is a diverse country with a rich cultural and religious heritage. Encouraging dialogue and understanding between different faiths can help foster a sense of fraternity.
- **Celebrate Diversity:**
  - India is home to people from various religions, castes, and communities. Celebrating the differences and embracing the diversity can help bring people closer and create a sense of fraternity.
- **Educate People About Constitutional Values:**
  - The Indian Constitution lays down several values such as equality, liberty, and fraternity. Educating people about these values can help inculcate a sense of fraternity among them.
- **Encourage Volunteering:**

- Volunteering for social causes can bring people from different backgrounds together and help them work towards a common goal, fostering a sense of fraternity.
  - **Support Social Initiatives:**
    - Supporting social initiatives that promote inclusivity and equality can help create a sense of fraternity in society.
  - **Foster a Sense of National Pride:**
    - Promoting patriotism and national pride can bring people together, fostering a sense of fraternity and unity.

Conclusion

- Fraternity is an essential principle that requires collective action and public empathy. The Constitution recognizes the importance of fraternity, but its implications and duties require further discussion and understanding. B.R. Ambedkar drew attention to a lacuna in the draft of the Constitution and stated that fraternity is a difficult thing to achieve.
- A distinction has to be made between the psychological fact of common emotion and the political principle of fraternity or co-operation. By excavating the moral values embedded in the Constitution, the sense of fraternity in India can be revived.

Drishti Mains Question:

Analyse the concept of fraternity in the Indian Constitution and discuss the challenges of reviving a sense of fraternity in India today.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Question (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q. Which one of the following objectives is not embodied in the Preamble to the Constitution of India? (2017)

(a) Liberty of thought
(b) Economic liberty
(c) Liberty of expression
(d) Liberty of belief

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- Preamble to the Constitution of India 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 twentysixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.
- The Preamble does not embody the economic liberty.
- Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer

Mains

Q. Discuss each adjective attached to the word 'Republic' in the 'Preamble'. Are they defendable in the

present circumstances? **(2016)**

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