



JK PUBLIC SCHOOL

CLASS: 8TH

SUBJECT: Civics (Social and Political Life)

Formative Assessment: I

SESSION: 2024-2025

Understanding Secularism

Summary of the chapter:

This chapter discusses secularism which is one of the important features of the Indian constitution. The most prevalent definition of secularism is that it refers to the separation between Religion and the State. The chapter uses this definition as the foundation and then proceeds to explain two complicated ideas: why this separation is important and the peculiarities of the Indian secularism.

1. List the different types of religious practices that you find in your neighbourhood. This could be different forms of prayer, worship of different gods, sacred sites, different kinds of religious music and singing etc. Does this indicate freedom of religious practice?

Ans: We live in a place where people of different faiths and religions live together. We believe in peace and harmony. No doubt, Muslims are in majority in our area, but they never try to dominate the other religious communities. Religious freedom is practised in letter and spirit. Masjid, Temple, Gurudwara and Church is located in our city and each community practices its religion with full religious freedom. Every religious community celebrates its religious festivals like Eid, Diwali, Holi, Guru purab, Christmas with full religious zeal and spirit. People distribute sweets and greet each other on such occasions.

2. Will the government intervene if some religious group says that their religion allows them to practice infanticide? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans: In this case, the government has the right to intervene in religion in order to end a social practice that it believes discriminates or violates the fundamental rights of a person. As infanticide is the clear violation of “Right to life” and no sensible person or society will accept it. So government is justified, if it intervenes in the religious matters of a community to stop this inhuman practice.

3. Complete the following table

Objective	Why is this important	Example of a violation of this objective
One religious community does not dominate another.	It promotes harmony and brotherhood among different communities and stops discrimination of religious minorities.	The persecution of religious minorities and curbing their religious freedom and attacking their religious places e.g. demolition of Babri Masjid.
The state does not enforce any particular religion nor takes away the freedom of individuals.	It prevents domination of one religious community and	Uniform civil code and triple talaq.

	discrimination of religious minorities.	
That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community	To strengthen religious bond among the members of a particular community.	Domination of upper caste Hindus in every sphere of life and marginalization of lower castes.

4. Look at the annual calendar of holidays of your school. How many of them pertain to different religions? What does this indicate?

Ans: Though majority of the students and teaching staff belongs to the Muslim community, but the students of other religious communities like Hindus, Sikhs and Christians study in our school. Infact, some of the teaching staff belongs to other religious communities like Hindus and Sikhs. To promote religious tolerance and harmony among students and teaching staff, all the important religious festivals of all the religious communities are celebrated as holidays. Apart from Muslim festivals like Eid, the other festivals like Diwali, Christmas, Gurupurab, Baisakhi are also celebrated as holidays.

5. Find out some examples of different views within the same religion.

Ans: Almost all the major religions of the world like Islam, Christianity and Hinduism are divided into different sects.

- Christianity is divided between Catholics and Protestants.
- Muslims are divided into sunnis and shias
- Similarly Hinduism is divided into Shaivism and Vaishnavism.
- The Protestants have differences with certain religious practices and rituals of Roman Catholic Church.
- Buddhists are divided into Mahayan and Hinyan.

These differences are secondary in nature and are not a threat to the very existence of a particular religion.

6. The Indian state both keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea can be confusing. Discuss this once again in class using examples from the chapter as well as those that you might have come up with.

Ans: The separation of religion from the politics has prevented the tyranny of the majority religious community, which could result in the discrimination, coercion and at times the killing of religious minorities. The acts of religious discrimination take more easily when one religion is given official recognition by the state at the expense of other religions. The Indian constitution has given religious freedom to all its citizens, without interfering into their religious matters. Keeping this thing in mind; India has separated religion from politics.

At the same time the Indian state is intervening in religious matters in order to end a social practice that it believes discriminates or violates the fundamental rights of a citizen. The intervention of the state can also

be in the form of support. It provides financial support to religious communities to set up their own schools and colleges.

7. The poster (on book) alongside highlights the need for 'Peace'. It says, "Peace is a never ending process...it cannot ignore our differences or overlook our common interests." Write in your own words what you think the above sentences are trying to convey? How does it relate to the need for religious tolerance?

Ans: Peace is not merely the absence of war, but in reality it is equality, liberty and justice and religious tolerance that promote peace. These ideals promote feeling of oneness among the people despite being religiously different from one another. Religious tolerance is important because it helps us to honour and appreciate the differences between our religious practices. Religions sometimes separate us in terms of practices, but at the same time it keeps us together. Religious tolerance is the road to world peace.

Additional questions

1. Define Secularism.

Ans: Secularism refers to the separation of religion from the government, education and other public parts of the society.

2. What are the features of a secular state?

Ans: The features of a secular state are:

- a) That the state does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals.
- b) That one religious community does not dominate the other community.
- c) That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community.

3. Name some of the important religions of India.

Ans: India is a multi religious country. Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Jainism are some Important religions of India.

4. Why cannot government force Sikhs to wear a helmet?

Ans: For Sikhs wearing a pugri (turban) is very important part of the religion and in order not to interfere with this, there is an exception in the law.

5. Why cannot government schools celebrate a religious festival?

Ans: Government schools cannot promote any religion either in their morning prayers or through religious celebration, as it violates the government policy of treating all religions equally.

Understanding Laws

Summary of the chapter:

As we know that parliament is supreme legislative body of India, which is in charge of making laws. Do these laws apply to everyone? How do new laws come into being? Could there be laws that are unpopular or controversial? What should we as citizens do under such circumstances? The chapter tries to answer these questions.

1. Write in your own words what you understand by the term “Rule of law”. In your response include a fictitious or real example of a violation of the rule of law.

Ans: The rule of law states that all persons are equal before the law. The law cannot discriminate any one on the basis of their religion, caste or gender. It means that all laws are applicable to all the citizens of the country and no one is above the law. Neither a government official, nor a wealthy person nor even the president of the country is above the law. Any crime or violation of law has a specific punishment as well as a process through the guilt of the person has to be established.

Though constitution states that all people are equal before the law, but in reality it is not so. People are still being discriminated on the basis of religion, caste or color. The gap between the rich and poor is increasing with each passing day. The religious places of minorities are still attacked and no action is taken against culprits.

2. State two reasons why historians refute the claim that the British introduced the rule of law in India?

Ans: Historians have refuted this claim on several grounds.

- i) They believe that most of the colonial laws were arbitrary, harsh and anti Indian.
- ii) More importantly, it was the Indian nationalists who played a prominent role in the development of legal sphere in India, as most of them were the reputed lawyers of their time.
- iii) Some of the arbitrary laws during the colonial period include Sedition Act of 1870, Vernacular Press Act and Arms Act of 1878, Rowlatt Act of 1919. All these acts were aimed at crushing and suppressing Indians and to strengthen colonial rule in India.

1. Re-read the storyboard (on book) on how a new law on domestic violence got passed. Describe in your own words the different ways in which women`s groups worked this to make happen.

Ans: The protection of women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 was passed with an aim to protect women against any kind of violence, be it physical or verbal. Various women groups worked to make this happen by reporting multiple cases of domestic violence to the various forums. group of lawyers, law students and activists worked together for drafting the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection Bill). Other than this, various women organizations, National Commission for Women made submissions to the parliamentary standing committee. All these actions taken by women together made the Government pass the bill against domestic violence.

4. Write in your own words what you understand by the following sentence: “They also began fighting for greater equality and wanted to change the idea of law from a set of rules that they were forced to obey, to law as including idea of justice.”

Ans: Indian nationalists began protesting and criticizing the arbitrary use of authority by British. By the end of nineteenth century, the Indian legal fraternity also began emerging and demanded respect in colonial courts. During the tenure of Lord Dalhousie, Indians were made to take off their shoes when entering courts or other government institutions. They wanted Indians to be treated at par with Europeans. They also

wanted the trial of British or European persons by Indian judges and sought equality between Indian and British judges in the country. They began to use law to defend the legal rights of Indians. Indian judges also began to play a greater role in making decisions.

Additional Questions

1. Define Domestic Violence.

Ans: Domestic violence refers to injury or harm or threat of injury or harm caused by an adult male, usually the husband against his wife.

2. What was sedition Act of 1870?

Ans: Sedition Act of 1870 stated that any person protesting or criticizing the British government could be arrested without due trial.

3. When Jallianwala Bagh Massacre did take place?

Ans: 13 April 1919.

4. Where is Jallianwala Bagh located?

Ans: Amritsar (Punjab)

5. Write a short note on Rowlatt Act?

Ans: Rowlatt Act came into effect on 18 March 1919. It was a black law aimed at suppressing the Indians. It allowed the British government to imprison any Indian without due trial.

6. Define the term 'Sedition'.

Ans: This applies to anything that the government might consider as stirring up resistance or rebellion against it.