



Indian society is in the process of a speedy transformation from a traditional to a modern one. Changes have also been taking place in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. A judicious and coherent system is essential for the sustenance of the society. To ensure social justice, all people should have equal opportunity for their development without any discrimination on the basis of caste, sex, race etc.

'Social Justice' includes two words. The first word 'Social' relates to all people living in a society. The word 'Justice' is related to independence, equality and rights. Social justice is meant for ensuring individual independence, equality and protecting individual rights. Thus the aim of social justice is to reconstruct the society.

Social Inequality

Social inequality refers to the situation where there is inequality in terms of enjoying the individual rights and access to opportunities. In our country, inequality in terms of education, employment, income, sex, caste etc. is observed. Earlier, sex-based discrimination was practiced by paying unequal amount of wages to males and females for the similar kind of work. By and large, discrimination was also practiced in upbringing of sons and daughters and educating them. In general, following reasons can be held responsible for social inequality :

- People remain deprived of social benefits for lack of education.
- Some times, the lack of knowledge about laws also leads to the situation of social inequality.
- The evil practices prevalent in the society obstruct the social development of the people of certain communities.
- The social development is also obstructed by prevalence of conservative beliefs under the influence of which people do not accept new ideas or changes.

The Efforts to Attain Social Justice

Certain provisions have been made in the Constitution of India for protection, welfare and development of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, nomadic communities, socially and economically backward classes and minorities :

- The Constitution of India confers social, economic and political justice equally to all the citizens of the country.
- It has been stated in the Constitution that each citizen is entitled for equal opportunity and status.
- Through Constitutional rights, people of backward classes are given equal opportunity, justice and status.
- Specific provisions have been made for people of these classes in Five Year Plans too.

Social Inequality and Economic Condition

Perceiving someone as superior or inferior is a common practice followed by human beings. When this practice slowly gets rooted, discrimination surfaces in the society. This results in people helping only those belonging to their class and a dislike towards the people of other classes. Such a situation may lead to class conflict with serious impact on the society. Due to this, some times a certain class of the society lags behind in progress.

Such deprived class does not have any access to facilities for its development. Their ability or capacity to raise their voice against the injustice also diminishes. So they remain exploited and deprived and become a victim of lineal poverty.



With the awareness that has arisen in the present time, development of backward classes is perceived to be the responsibility of the whole society. This necessitates efforts for social change. The government has also implemented a number of schemes to help the people of these classes in getting justice.

Activity

- For which classes of the society development oriented efforts are needed ? Get information from the experts / people.

Government Schemes for Social Justice

After independence, the government of India has implemented several schemes to ensure equality and equal opportunity for all citizens. Following are some of the examples :

- In the Parliament and the state legislature and Panchayat certain constituencies are kept reserved for the classes needing social justice. By doing so the representation of such classes is maintained and they can also have a voice.
- Seats are reserved in educational institutions for certain classes with the aim of increasing literacy among them and thereby changing their social status.
- In order to make socially backward classes self-sufficient, interest-free or low-interest loans are given for small occupations, cottage industries and for small industries. There is also a provision for loan for people of these classes for purchase of vehicles such as rickshaw. This provision helps them in becoming economically self-sufficient.

Along with these, there are many other schemes which have been implemented to protect backward classes. These schemes contribute significantly to the field of social justice.

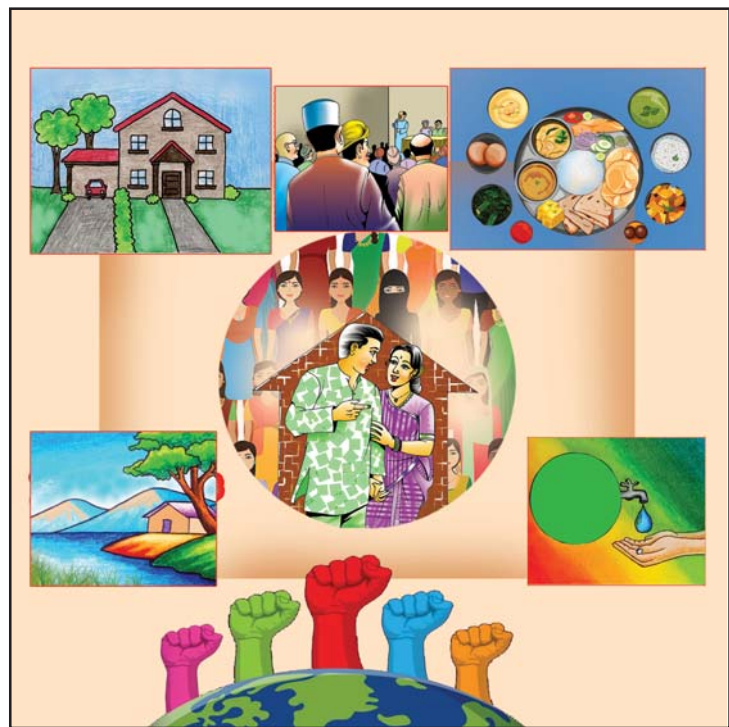
Activity

- State the schemes meant for providing social justice other than those mentioned here.

Human Rights

Human Rights are essential for a person to live with dignity. They are congenital rights for all human beings. Each person has the right to live with dignity and without facing any discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, language, nationality etc. Following are the Human Rights declared by the United Nations :

- Right to adequate food, housing, water and hygiene
- Right to work and remuneration
- Right to education
- Right to freedom of expression
- Right to property
- Right to privacy



Human Rights

Know This

Every year, 10th December is celebrated as 'Human Rights Day'.

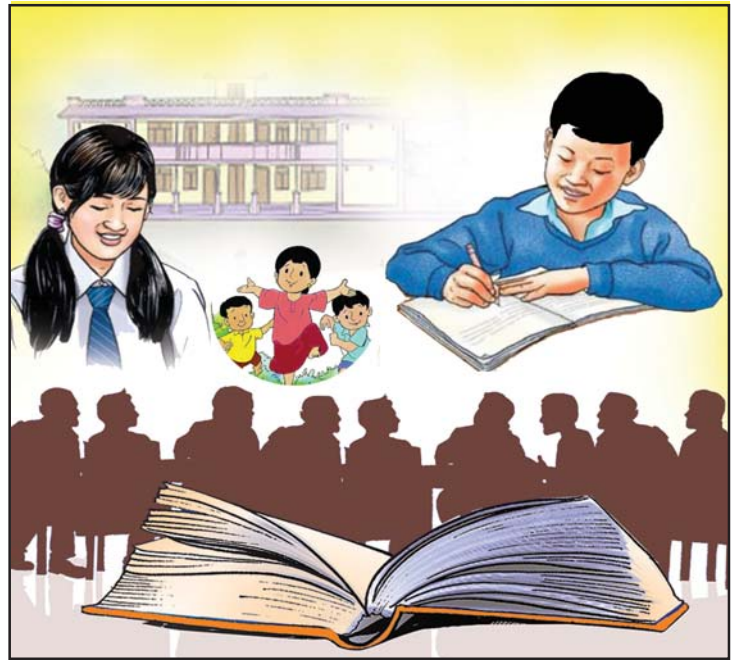
Activity

- Get information about Human Rights Commission.
- Know about the activities carried out by Human Rights Commission and discuss them.

Child Rights

Development of any nation relies on the overall development of its children. It should be our priority to develop their physical, mental and intellectual energies in order to make them healthy and responsible citizens. Following are the child rights declared by the United Nations for development and welfare of children :

- Right to live without discrimination of caste, colour, gender, language, religion or nationality.
- Right to adequate nurturing by parents
- Right to education for personal development
- Right to a healthy life
- Right to live in one's own religious community and preserve the culture
- Right to freedom of expression
- Right to protection against mental or physical harassment, exploitation and agony
- Right to social security and proper standard of living



Child Rights

Things to Know

'Child Rights Day' is celebrated every year on 20th November.

Activity

- If you have noticed children being exploited, make a note of it.
- Note down the details of different rights that may help in abolishing social anomaly.

Exercise

1. Answer the following questions :

- (1) What is meant by social justice ?
- (2) What is meant by the situation of social inequality ?
- (3) How are human rights useful to an individual ?

2. Answer the following questions concisely :

- (1) What are the impacts of social inequality on economic status ?
- (2) What is meant by child rights ? What rights are granted to children ?

3. Think and Write :

- (1) Social evil practices lead to social inequality. Explain with an example.
- (2) Is it right to employ a 14 year old child in a restaurant ? Why ?
- (3) What problems will an illiterate person face ?

