
CONSTITUTION OF INDIA:

THE HIGHEST CASTLE THAT NEEDS THE MOST EFFECTIVE KNIGHTS

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*"The Indian Constitution is first and foremost
a social document."*

-Granville Austin

INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India is one of the most prominent, detailed, and inclusive constitutions in the world. It serves as an important guardian that protects the rights, liberties, and dignity of individuals while governing the largest democratic population in the world. The Indian Constitution not only guarantees rights to citizens but also extends certain protections to foreign nationals residing within the country. The Constitution is vast and elaborate. At present, it contains **25 Parts, 12 Schedules, and 448 Articles**, reflecting the vastness of the Indian society and governance. The framers of the Constitution **adopted ideas from various constitutional traditions of the world, such as parliamentary democracy, fundamental rights, and judicial review**. Many provisions were also inspired by **the Government of India Act, 1935**, which provided the administrative framework during the colonial period. The Constitution has undergone numerous amendments, practicing its ability to remain flexible and responsive to changing political, social, and economic realities. Along with that, the most significant quality of the Constitution lies in its *spirit of diversity and inclusivity*.

It attempts to balance individual liberty with social justice to create harmony. From protecting the fundamental rights of individuals to promoting the welfare of communities, the Constitution strives to create a system where liberty, equality, and justice coexist. In a country as diverse as India, with multiple languages, religions, cultures, and traditions, the Constitution acts as a unifying set of rules or guide that provides a common vision for governance and nation building.

THE HIGHEST CASTLE

The Indian Constitution, metaphorically, could be seen as the highest and strongest castle built by the collective will of the people. Unlike castles representing monarchy which mostly dominate their subjects, this castle has been constructed by the people themselves to safeguard their freedom and democratic aspirations. The authority of the Constitution ultimately lies in the hands of the Indians. Through it, they have vested their rights, hopes, and expectations for a just and democratic society. It represents the ideals of liberty, equality, justice, and fraternity, the principles that guide the functioning of the Indian state. The Constitution not only establishes institutions of governance, but it



sets the moral and philosophical foundation for the nation. Through this, the Constitution empowers both the state and the citizens. It gives individuals the assurance that their rights are recognised and protected by law. Through provisions such as **Fundamental Rights**, **Directive Principles of State Policy**, and various constitutional safeguards, citizens are given the opportunity to participate meaningfully in democratic life. It is this framework that allows individuals to pursue their aspirations and strive towards what *A. Maslow* describe as “**self-actualisation.**” However, even the strongest castle requires effective guardians. Laws and constitutional provisions alone cannot guarantee justice unless they are implemented sincerely and protected by responsible individuals and institutions.

THE DUBBING OF THE KNIGHTS

If you may wonder who the Constitution actually “dubs” with the title of a knight. *It is often said that the Judiciary, and particularly the Supreme Court, is the guardian of the Constitution.* This statement is true to an extent because the judiciary protects constitutional principles, and even the Supreme Court is called the Guardian Of The Constitution. However, if the Constitution is imagined as the highest castle, should it be protected by only one knight? Certainly not.

The Constitution derives its authority from the people. It is the citizens who empower the Constitution, and therefore, they also share the responsibility of protecting it. In this sense, the judiciary may be seen as the last line of defence, the knight who steps forward when constitutional values are threatened. But before that stage arrives, it is the citizens who act as the frontline warriors, safeguarding the Constitution through their everyday actions, beliefs, and commitments. A constitution cannot survive only as a written document stored within the pages of a book. It comes to life when its spirit is practiced in society. The values it represents, justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity, must be reflected in the conduct of people and institutions. When citizens remain aware of their rights and duties, question injustice, and uphold fairness in their

interactions with others, they strengthen the foundations of the constitutional order. The Indian Constitution is deeply connected to the history and sacrifices of the freedom struggle.

For nearly about 200 years and more, India endured colonial domination where the dignity and rights of Indian people were often disregarded. Many individuals sacrificed their lives, their comfort, and their personal aspirations so that future generations could live in a free and democratic nation. The Constitution stands as a memory of that struggle, and it also ensures that such injustices are never repeated. Therefore, it can be said that the Constitution of India is a culmination of the ideals and sacrifices of the Indian freedom struggle, reflecting the aspirations of a nation emerging from colonial subjugation. Therefore, protecting the Constitution is not merely a legal obligation; it is also a moral responsibility. Citizens must make conscious efforts to preserve their spirit; they must stand for justice, promote liberal and democratic values, support social welfare,

and encourage fraternity among different communities. In a country that is as diverse as India, with multiple languages, religions, and cultures, the spirit of inclusivity becomes even more important. Also, what makes human beings different from other living creatures is our ability to act according to conscience. When citizens act with conscience, they naturally protect the values of the Constitution. In doing so, they ensure that the “highest castle” remains strong and that the dream of a just and democratic India continues to flourish.

NATURE OF THE THREAT – EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL?

Throughout its history, the Constitution of India has faced several threats and challenges. These threats have sometimes arisen due to political ambitions, struggles for power. However, one of the most concerning realities is that the Constitution is sometimes threatened not by external enemies, but by elements within the system itself. In certain instances, individuals or institutions driven by the hunger for power attempt to manipulate or even undermine constitutional principles for personal or political gain. Yet, despite these pressures, the Constitution has repeatedly demonstrated its resilience. It continues to prevail because it is rooted in the will of the people and supported by democratic institutions. Interestingly, the framework of freedom and empowerment that the Constitution provides also gives people the space to question authority and challenge the functioning of the state. This openness is a sign of the strength of a democratic system. Therefore, as manifested by former Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, quoted “The Constitution is not a mere lawyer’s document, it is a vehicle of life, and its spirit is always the spirit of the age.” At times, those who misuse authority forget an important principle that the power ultimately flows from

No individual or institution can stand above it. The authority enjoyed by political leaders, public officials, and institutions exists because the Constitution grants and regulates that power. Therefore, undermining the Constitution is essentially an attempt to weaken the very foundation that provides legitimacy to governance. Another important feature of the Indian Constitution is its flexibility and adaptability. Unlike rigid constitutional systems that resist change, the Indian Constitution allows for amendments so that it can respond to contemporary challenges. Over the years, amendments have addressed social justice, economic development, administrative reforms, and the protection of rights. This capacity for change enables the Constitution to remain relevant in a rapidly evolving and changing society. The continuous process of constitutional flexibility helps maintain harmony within the nation. It tries to balance relationships between the centre and the states, between institutions of governance, and most importantly between the state and the individual citizens. By adjusting itself to new social, economic, and humanitarian realities, the Constitution ensures that democracy remains meaningful and responsive to the needs of the people. In this way, while threats may arise from both external circumstances and internal ambitions, the Constitution possesses a remarkable ability to endure and adapt. Its strength lies not only in its legal provisions but also in the commitment of citizens and institutions to uphold its values.

CONCLUSION

The Constitution of India stands as the highest castle of the republic, which is built upon the struggles, sacrifices, and aspirations of its people. It not only provides a framework for governance but also protects the *values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity*

that guide the nation. However, the strength of the nation forward. “If the people who are this castle lies not only in its written provisions elected are capable and men of character and but in the commitment of those who guard it. integrity, they would be able to make the best When people remain aware, responsible, and even of a defective Constitution.”- Rajendra guided by conscience, they ensure that the Prasad spirit of the Constitution continues to live and guide

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