An Evaluative Study on Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Reference to the Constitution of India

Dr. Bhagirathsingh N. Manjaria
Assistant Professor
Department of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Laws
Saurashtra University, Rajkot
Cell No. +91 9426943999
Email: bmmanjaria@gmail.com

Abstract

After Second World War, there is no Basic rights like life, liberty, equality and dignity for people in India and other countries also. Therefor United Nation Organisation has been established by world's countries. After some times on 10th December 1948, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations. At same time when the Universal Declaration was being made, the Constitution of India was also in making. Part III Fundamental Rights and Part IV Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution were specifically created, with an interest of providing for the Human Rights in the Constitution itself and on a further comparison of the two documents, it is found that the two are similar and tend to give effect to promote the standard of the Human being as such and also to secure the rights, which are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. The word human rights are of universal concern and it cuts across all ideological, political and cultural boundaries. Respect for human rights is one of the cardinal principles for an effective operation of Constitution, Law and the Government of any country. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based on two assumptions namely, First the right to liberty and equality is man's birth right and cannot be alienated, and because man is rational and a moral being, he is different from other creations on earth and, therefore, is entitled to certain rights and freedoms which other creators do not enjoy. We can say that as per the Indian law of the protection of Human Rights act – 1993 section 2 D “Human Rights” means the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.


INTRODUCTION

We can say that Indus Valley Civilization, Indian culture has been the product of a diverse cultures and religions that came into contact with the enormous Indian sub continent over a very long time. As per Jawaharlal Nehru notes, there is an unbroken continuity between the most modern and the most ancient phases of Hindu thought extending over three thousand years. “The rights of man have been the concern of all cultures from time immemorial.” The concept of the rights of man and other fundamental rights was in existence from earlier periods. The Babylonian Laws and the Assyrian laws in the Middle East, the “Dharma” of the Vedic period in India and the jurisprudence of Lao-Tze and Confucius in China, have championed human rights throughout the history of human civilization. The Indian concept perceives the individual, the society and the universe as an organic whole, everyone is a child of God and all fellow beings are related to one another and belong to a universal family. In this context, Mahatma Gandhi remarks, “I donot want to think in terms of the whole world. My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service to India includes the services of humanity.”

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA

As per the Bhagvat Gita, “he who has no ill will to any being, who is friendly and compassionate, who is free from egoism and self sense and who is even-minded in pain and pleasure and patient” is dear to God. It also says that divinity in humans is represented by the virtues of non-violence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, aversion to fault-finding, compassion to living being freedom from covetousness, gentleness, modesty and steadiness - the qualities that a good human being ought to have. The Buddhist doctrine of non-violence in deed and thought says Nagendra Singh, “is a humanitarian doctrine par excellence, dating back to the third century B.C.” Jainism too contained similar doctrines. The historical account of ancient Bharat proves beyond doubt that human rights were as much manifest in the ancient Hindu and Islamic civilizations as in the European Christian civilizations. Ashoka, the prophet Mohammed and Akbar cannot be excluded from the genealogy of human rights.
BRITISH INDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The modern version of human rights jurisprudence may be said to have taken birth in India at tile time of the British rule. When the British ruled India, resistance to foreign rule manifested itself in the form of demand for fundamental freedoms and the civil and political rights of the people, Indians were humiliated and discriminated against by the Britishers. The freedom movement and the harsh repressive measures of the British rulers encouraged the fight for civil liberties and fundamental freedoms. Human rights and democracy were suspect and socialism was an anathema in British rule. In the Indian cultural history, the British period remains the Indian equivalent of the 'Dark Ages' The English East India Company debauched Indians from high offices and deprived them of their political, social and economic rights. The impression created in the Indian minds was that their sacred inalienable human rights and vital interests had been ignored, denied, and trampled upon for the sake of England and the English rulers. Mahatma Gandhi organized the people of India under his leadership and launched his non-violent struggle to achieve self government and fundamental rights for themselves. Lokmanya Tilak advocated that "freedom was the birth right of Indians for whichthey will have to fight. It was because of the stiff opposition from the people of India that the Charter Act of 1813 was enacted to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of India. Similarly, the Government of India Act, 1833 was passed to allow the Indians to enjoy some political rights. The proclamation of Queen Victoria on 1st November 1858 contained some principles of state policy, which were similar to fundamental rights in nature. The concrete demand for fundamental rights came logically in the wake of the nationalist movement, which coincided with the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885. The Constitution of India Bill 1895 known as the “Home Rule Document” prepared by the Indian National Congress paved the way for a constitution guaranteeing everyone of the citizens the basic human rights like freedom of expression, inviolability of one's own house, right to property and equality before law. The Government of India Act, 1915, in pursuance of the demands for fundamental rights, guaranteed equality of opportunity in public services. A series of resolutions adopted by the National Congress between 1917 and 1919 repeated the demand for civil rights and equality of status with the English.

CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE

By Adopting a ‘Declaration of Rights, in 1925 the Indian National Congress finalised the draft of Common Wealth of India.’ The Madras Session of the Congress held in the year 1927 - demanded incorporation of a 'Declaration of Fundamental Rights' in any future constitutional framework. A committee under Motilal Nehru was appointed by the National Congress to study the fundamental rights. It is interesting to note that the Constitution of the Republic of India, enacted in 1950, incorporated ten of the nineteen rights enumerated in the Motilal Nehru Committee Report, 1928. The rights emphasized by the Motilal Nehru Committee Report were: 1. Personal liberty, inviolability of dwelling place and property 2. Freedom of conscience, and of profession and practice of religion 3. Expression of opinion and the right to assemble peaceably without arms and to form associations 4. Free elementary education 5. Equality for all before the law and rights 6. Right to the writ of Habeas Corpus 7. Protection from punishment under ex-post facto laws 8. Non-discrimination against any person on grounds of religion, caste or creed in the matter of public employment 9. Equality of right in the matter of access to and use of public roads, wells etc. 10. Freedom of combination and association for the maintenance and implementation of labour and economic factors 11. Right to keep and bear arms 12. Equality of rights to man and woman The Simon Commission, appointed by the British Government in 1927, however, totally rejected the demands voiced by the Nehru Committee reports. In 1930 the Congress Working Committee gave the clarion call for the attainment of 'Purna Swaraj.' The Karachi Session of the Congress in 1931 adopted a detailed programme of fundamental rights. The Government of India Act, 1935 was passed without any bill of rights much to the disappointment of the Indian leaders. It was the ‘Sapru Committee’ of 1945 that subsequently stressed the need for a written code of fundamental rights and the Constituent Assembly raised a forceful demand for the inclusion of human rights in the Constitution.

INDIAN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Indian Constitution was framed by the Constituent Assembly of India, which met for the first time on December 9, 1946. The Constitution of India gave primary importance to human rights. As per Guha, “The demand for a declaration of fundamental rights arose from four factors.” 1. Lack of civil liberty in India during the British rule 2. Deplorable social conditions, particularly affecting the untouchables and women 3. Existence of different religious, linguistic, and ethnic groups encouraged and exploited by the Britishers 4. Exploitation of the tenants by the landlords The Constituent Assembly incorporated in the Constitution of India the substance of the rights proclaimed and adopted by the General Assembly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Further on 10th December 1948, when the Constitution of India was in the making, the General Assembly proclaimed and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which crucially influenced the framing of India’s Constitution. Viewed from the Indian standpoint, human rights have been synthesized, as it were, not as an integrated fabric by the Preambular promises and various Constitutional clause of the National Charter of 1950.
Now we can discuss on Universal Declaration of Human Rights as per below.

**THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a historic document that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its third session on 10 December 1948 as Resolution 217 at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, France. Of the then 58 members of the United Nations, 48 voted in favor, none against, eight abstained, and two did not vote. The Declaration consists of 30 articles affirming an individual’s rights which, although not legally binding in themselves, have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, economic transfers, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions, and other laws. The Declaration was the first step in the process of formulating the International Bill of Human Rights, which was completed in 1966, and came into force in 1976, after a sufficient number of countries had ratified them.

Some legal scholars have argued that because countries have constantly invoked the Declaration for more than 50 years, it has become binding as a part of customary international law. However, in the United States, the Supreme Court in *Sosa v. Alvarez-Machain* (2004) concluded that the Declaration "does not of its own force impose obligations as a matter of international law." Courts of other countries have also concluded that the Declaration is not in and of itself part of domestic law.

The underlying structure of the Universal Declaration was introduced in its second draft, which was prepared by René Cassin. Cassin worked from a first draft, which was prepared by John Peters Humphrey. The structure was influenced by the Code Napoléon, including a preamble and introductory general principles. Cassin compared the Declaration to the portico of a Greek temple, with a foundation, steps, four columns, and a pediment.

**THE DECLARATION CONSISTS OF A PREAMBLE AND THIRTY ARTICLES:**

- The preamble sets out the historical and social causes that led to the necessity of drafting the Declaration.
- Articles 1–2 established the basic concepts of dignity, liberty, and equality.
- Articles 3–5 established other individual rights, such as the right to life and the prohibition of slavery and torture.
- Articles 6–11 refer to the fundamental legality of human rights with specific remedies cited for their defence when violated.
- Articles 12–17 established the rights of the individual towards the community (including such things as freedom of movement).
- Articles 18–21 sanctioned the so-called "constitutional liberties", and with spiritual, public, and political freedoms, such as freedom of thought, opinion, religion and conscience, word, and peaceful association of the individual.
- Articles 22–27 sanctioned an individual’s economic, social and cultural rights, including healthcare. Article 25 states: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services." It also makes additional accommodations for security in case of physical debilitation or disability, and makes special mention of care given to those in motherhood or childhood.
- Articles 28–30 established the general ways of using these rights, the areas in which these rights of the individual can not be applied, and that they can not be overcome against the individual.

These articles are concerned with the duty of the individual to society and the prohibition of use of rights in contravention of the purposes of the United Nations Organisation. During World War II, the Allies adopted the Four Freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from fear, and freedom from want—as their basic war aims. The United Nations Charter "reaffirmed faith in fundamental human rights, and dignity and worth of the human person" and committed all member states to promote "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." In time of the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany, became fully apparent after World War II, the consensus within the world community was that the United Nations Charter did not sufficiently define the rights to which

3. Hurst Hannum. The universal declaration of human rights in National and International Law, p.145
5. Glendon 2002, pp. 62–64
it referred. A universal declaration that specified the rights of individuals was necessary to give effect to the Charter’s provisions on human rights. The Universal Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly as Resolution 217 on 10 December 1948 in Palais de Chaillot, Paris, as the third United Nations General Assembly was held there. Of the then 58 members of the United Nations, 48 voted in favour, none against, eight abstained and Honduras and Yemen failed to vote or abstain. The meeting record provides firsthand insight into the debate. South Africa’s position can be seen as an attempt to protect its system of apartheid, which clearly violated several articles in the Declaration. The Saudi Arabian delegation’s abstention was prompted primarily by two of the Declaration’s articles: Article 18, which states that everyone has the right “to change his religion or belief”; and Article 16, on equal marriage rights. The six communist countries abstentions centred around the view that the Declaration did not go far enough in condemning fascism and Nazism. Eleanor Roosevelt attributed the abstention of Soviet bloc countries to Article 13, which provided the right of citizens to leave their countries.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution of the Republic of India which came into force on 26th January 1950 with 395 Articles and 8 Schedules, is one of the most elaborate fundamental laws ever adopted. The Preamble to the Constitution declares India to be a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic. The term ‘democratic’ denotes that the Government gets its authority from the will of the people. It gives a feeling that they all are equal “irrespective of the race, religion, language, sex and culture.” The Preamble to the Constitution ledges justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation to all its citizens.

**INDIA AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION**

Enforcement of rights conferred by this part Article 8 Article 32 Table 3.1: Similarities between Universal Declarations of Human Rights and Indian Constitution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Rights</th>
<th>The Constitution of Indian</th>
<th>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality before law</td>
<td>Articles 14</td>
<td>Article 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment</td>
<td>Article 16(1)</td>
<td>Article 21(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc</td>
<td>Article 19(1) A</td>
<td>Article 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection in respect of conviction for offences</td>
<td>Article 20 (1)</td>
<td>Article 11(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of life and personal liberty</td>
<td>Article 21</td>
<td>Article 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibition of trafficking in human beings and forced labour</td>
<td>Article 23</td>
<td>Article 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of conscience and free profession practice and propagation of religion</td>
<td>Article 25 (1)</td>
<td>Article 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Interests of minorities</td>
<td>Article 29 (1)</td>
<td>Article 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right of minorities to establish and administer Educational Institutions</td>
<td>Article 30(1)</td>
<td>Article 20(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to property</td>
<td>Not a fundamental rights after amendment 44, but now in Article 300A</td>
<td>Article 17 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedies for enforcement of rights conferred by this part</td>
<td>Article 32</td>
<td>Article 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarities between Universal Declarations of Human Rights and Indian Constitution

Fundamental Rights and Human Rights the judicially enforceable fundamental rights which encompass all seminal civil and political rights and some of the rights of minorities are enshrined in part III of the Constitution (Articles 12 to 35). These include the right to equality, the right to freedom, the right against exploitation, the right to freedom of religion, cultural educational rights and the right to Constitutional remedies. 1.0 Fundamental rights differ from ordinary rights in the sense that the former are inviolable. No law, ordinance, custom, usage, or administrative order can abridge or take them away. Any law, which is violative of

---

13 UNAC. “Questions and answers about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, United Nations Association in Canada (UNAC).
15 Glendon 2002, pp. 169–70
any of the fundamental right, is void. In ADM Jabalpur v. Shukla, Justice Beg observed “the object of making certain general aspects of rights fundamental is to guarantee them against illegal invasion of these rights by executive, legislative, or judicial organ of the State.” Earlier, Chief Justice Subba Rao in Golak Nath v. State of Punjab had rightly observed, “Fundamental rights are the modern name for what have been traditionally known as natural rights.” The Supreme Court of India recognizes these fundamental rights as ‘Natural Rights’ or ‘Human Rights’. While referring to the fundamental rights contained in Part III of the Constitution, Sikri the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in keshavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala, “observed, “I am unable to hold these provisions to show that rights are not natural or inalienable rights. As a matter of fact, India was a party to the Universal Declaration of Rights and that Declaration describes some fundamental rights as inalienable.” The Chief Justice Patanjali Shastri in State of West Bengal v. Subodh Gopal Bose observed referred to fundamental rights as those great and basic rights, which are recognized and guaranteed as the natural rights inherent in the status of a citizen of a free country.10 Article 14 of the Indian Constitution proclaims the general right of all persons to equality before the law, while Article 15 prohibits the State from discriminating against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and prohibits any restriction on any citizen’s access to any public place, including wells and tanks. Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters of public employment is guaranteed under Article 16. Article 17 abolishes untouchability and makes its practice an offense punishable under law. Both Articles 15 and 16 enable the State to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, for such castes and tribes as recognized in the Constitution (known as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) require very special treatment for their advancement. Article 18 abolishes all non-military or non-academic titles.10 The right to freedom guaranteed to all citizens under Article 19 encompasses the right to freedom of speech and expression, the right to assemble peaceably without arms, the right to form associations or unions, the right to move freely throughout the territory of India, the right of residence, and the right to practice any occupation, trade or business. The protection of a person in respect of conviction of offense under Article 20 includes protection against ex post facto criminal laws. Article 21, the core of all fundamental rights provisions in the Indian Constitution, ordains: “No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.” Article 21A was added to the Constitution by the Eighty Sixth Constitutional Amendment Act 2002. Article 21A proclaims” the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.” The rights of a person, arrested and detained by the State authorities, are provided in Article 22. These include the, right to be informed of the grounds of arrest, the right to legal advice and the right to be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest (except where one is arrested under a preventive detention law). The right against exploitation includes prohibition of trafficking in human beings and forced labour (Article 23), and prohibition of employment of children below 14 years of age "to work in any factory or mine or in any other hazardous employment." Subject to public order and morality, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate religion (Article 25). Every religious denomination or section also has the right to establish and maintain religious institutions and manage their religious affairs (Article 26). No one may be compelled to pay any religious taxes (Article 27). The wholly State-funded educational institutions are barred from imparting religious instructions (Article 28).10 The rights of any section of citizens or a minority to promote its distinct language, script or culture, to have access to State-funded educational institutions (Article 29), and to establish and maintain educational institutions of its choice (Article 30) are also guaranteed. The right to Constitutional remedies is essentially the right to move the Supreme Court of India for enforcement of the above rights (Article 32). The Supreme Court is vested with wide Constitutional powers in this regard. They include the power to issue directions, orders or writs for the enforcement of the fundamental rights (Article 32(2)). State (i.e. provincial) High Courts too have identical powers (Article 226). As laws inconsistent with or in derogation of the rights conferred by part III of the Constitution are void (Article 13), the Courts have the power to adjudge the Constitutional validity of all laws. Furthermore, by virtue of Article 141, the law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all courts in India. Fundamental rights guaranteed under the Indian Constitution may be divided, for the sake of convenience, into two categories viz., specified fundamental rights and other fundamental rights (rights not specifically enumerated).

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY

Judicially non-enforceable rights in Part IV of the Constitution are chiefly those of economic and social character. However, Article 37 makes it clear that their judicial non-enforceability does not weaken the duty of the State to apply them in making laws, since they are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the county. Additionally, the innovative jurisprudence of the Supreme Court has now read into Article 21 (the right to life and personal liberty) many of these principles and made them enforceable. The duties of the State encompass securing a social order with justice, social, economic and political, striving to minimize and eliminate all inequalities (Article 38), securing for “the citizens, men and women equally” the right to an adequate means of livelihood (Article 39 (a)), distribution of ownership and control of community resources to sub serve the common good (Article 39(b)), prevention of concentration of wealth and means of production the common detriment (Article 39(c)), securing equal pay for equal work for both men and women (Article 39(d),

GAP INTERDISCIPLINARITIES – VOLUME II-ISSUE III

OCTOBER-2019

54

https://www.gaplcc.org
preventing abuse of labour, including child labour (Article 39(e)), ensuring of child development (Article 39(f)), ensuring of equal justice and free legal aid (Article 39 A), organization of village democracies (Article 40), provision of the right to work, education and public assistance in case of unemployment, old age sickness and disability (Article 41), provision of humane conditions of work (Article 42), living wage and a decent standard of life (Article 43), securing participation of workers in the management of industries (Article 43A), provision of a uniform civil code for the whole country (Article 44), provision for early child care and education to children below the age of six years. The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years (Article 45), promotion of educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and their protection from injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46), raising the standard of living, improving the level of nutrition and public health and prohibition of intoxicating drinks and of drugs (Article 47), scientific reorganization of animal husbandry and agriculture (Article 48) conservation of environment, forests and wildlife (Article 48A), protection of monuments and things of artistic or historical importance (Article 19), separation of judiciary from the executive (Article 50) and promotion of international peace and security (Article 51).

MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 defines the term 'human rights' to mean 'rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution, or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by the Courts in India. In this definition 'human rights' have been given a wider ambit than those embodied in the Indian Constitution so as to include the rights listed in International Covenants.

The role of judiciary has been remarkable to interpret the various enactments and the provisions giving brighter spectrum and the new dimensions to the various provisions of the Act. Recent important verdicts of Hon'ble Supreme Court, High Courts, and various Commissions and Tribunals have raised the scope of various provisions of the Act.

ROLE OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The National Human Rights Commission is an expression of India’s concern for the protection and promotion of human rights. It is a unique expert body, which is created under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, for examining and investigating the complaints relating to violations of human rights, as also the negligence on the part of any public servant in preventing such violation. In India, the National Human Rights Commission can play a vital role in influencing the policy making and sometimes even policy initiations, facilitating protection and promotion of human rights, such institutions provide an excellent mechanism for building public opinion and strong alliances and partnerships with non-governmental organisations and other human rights activists for influencing the national agenda on human rights. Apart from the resolution of disputes brought to such institutions, voice articulated, studies conducted and research produced by these institutions carry great credibility and respectability and thus, can be important source material in the quest of securing and protecting human rights. There is a need to evolve more meaningful interaction and networking among these institutions.

CONCLUSION

At the end we can say that our constitution of India is itself great for rights of civilians and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 is accepted by our Indian constitution. It's in part 3 Fundamental rights in our constitution.

REFERENCE

1. The Constitution of India
2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
3. Human Rights and Constitution of India
4. History of Indian Constitution
5. History of Human Rights
6. United Nation Organization
7. United Nation Human Rights Council
8. The Protection of Human Rights Act
9. National Human Rights Commission

16 Sec 2(1) of PHRA, 1993.
17 International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1996