



# **Constitution, Trust and Society**

*Connotation and its Indian Inevitability*

**An Essay**

**Sachin Kumar Jain  
Gurusharan Sachdev**

**Title**

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**Authors**

Sachin Kumar Jain and Gurusharan Sachdev

**Translation**

Sravani Sarkar

**Publisher**

Vikas Samvad

**Year**

2024

**Contact**

A5, Aaykar Colony, G3 Gulmohar, Bhopal. 462039. Madhya Pradesh.  
India

**Email**

office@vssmp.org

**Website**

[www.vssmp.org](http://www.vssmp.org) & [www.samvidhansamvad.org](http://www.samvidhansamvad.org)

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# Constitution, Society and Trust

## Connotation and its Indian Inevitability

### An Essay

*Sachin Kumar Jain*  
*Gurusharan Sachdev*

*An atmosphere of pervasive mutual trust is prerequisite for the country, government, and the society at large to function smoothly. Citizens and the governance system are mutually dependent and this relation can be fruitful only when it is based on abiding mutual trust. Many a times, these relationships are not visible to the naked eye. However, these rests on trust, a sense that is not easy to perceive. Its erosion and ending can lead to serious failures for the nation.*

*It is the Constitution of India that renders a mandate to abide by the values of social harmony. It requires that the citizens, society, and the dispensation of governance occur from the pedestal of mutual trust with due regard to wider and common good for the nation.*

## DNA of the Existence and Path to 'Sadahna' (Spiritual Practice)

- What could it mean to be a living being?
- Undoubtedly, it is to have a consciousness.
- What could it mean to have consciousness?
- Undoubtedly, it is to have inquisitiveness; to tend to think profoundly.
- What could it mean to have the tendency to be inquisitive, to think profoundly and deeply?
- Undoubtedly, it is to inquire why what is happening is happening. What are the purposes or deep intentions of what is being said or done?
- What is the importance of having the inclination to reflect profoundly?

The importance is that it allows us to know the reference and context of any occurrence or point being made. Reaching a conclusion or understanding is not possible unless reference is known. One has to keep enquiring 'Why' and but 'Why'? When we reach a conclusion without knowing the reference, it leads to resentment and conflicts. Then we are not able to accept each other and it creates violence and confrontation.

If we indeed want to feel nature, we have to think profoundly about it. To think profoundly with an objective of realisation is known as 'Sadhana.' 'Sadhana' means a methodical discipline to attain desired knowledge, acquaintance, or goal. There could be different ways of 'Sadhana.' To think profoundly, seek knowledge, self-dialogue (soliloquy), to debate and to examine are different aspects of 'sadhana.'

It is a strange thing that the ideal representations – be they Paigambar Mohammad, Mahavir, Gautam Buddha, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Raidas or idols like Ram and Krishna - all evolved from their own conscience, inquisitiveness, and their inner monologues, but the society that follows them is not ready to follow the approaches of these ideals, whilst we do aim for the target but chooses to ignore the journey and the process.

## Mind-set on Preserving the Existence Alienates from Self-Realization

Since forever, in our society, people have considered merely preserving their existence as their lives. In a society of power structures, exploitation, inequality and wars; how is it

possible to attain a safe and peaceful life? For them, existence means merely acquiring some wealth, some social repute, to maintain professional position and to save oneself from attention of the power structures or the governance system. Such an aim to save existence does not let people to nurture curiosity. In fact, there is no difference between safeguarding the existence and living the entire life with a sense of fear. And this is the reason that most people accept the society's discrepancies on as is where is basis – without even questioning them. They start viewing and accepting violence, possessiveness, lies and hypocrisy as religion; concentration of wealth as the economics, destruction of environment as development and; inequality, gender disparity, and caste discrimination as the divine principles.

But, in the same society, there are quite some people who do not accept these definitions. They do not accept discriminations based on birth and race; they do not accept hypocrisy; they do not accept any imaginary creator. They do not become prisoners of their existence. They question. They enquire. And only then, Gautam Buddha is born; Mahavir is born. Only then we get Shankaracharya, Kabir and Basavanna.

If stereotyping, customs and traditions, beliefs were not challenged in human society, we would not have been ever able to talk about 'civilisation'. Then 'Sati' practice would not have been eradicated and traditions like the Devdasi system would not have made us feel ashamed. The fear of saving one's existence does not allow human beings to realize their own potential. Due to this fear, people do not want to know the ideas that are different to them. They want to take control of those who behave differently or have a different way of life from their own community or faith; want to humiliate them or even annihilate them. They want to do all this simply to maintain their own superficial existence.

How surprising that in Hindu beliefs, Ram and Sita abandoned their royal way of life for a 14-year exile in forests. Exile meant a life of anonymity and incognito - a life where they would not have the royal identity or royal protection. But the followers of Ram and Sita never want to leave the boundaries of their limited existence and enter the premise of one's own bigger, basic existence. According to the epic Ramayana, Ram belongs to a community of values and they believe – Life may be sacrificed, but Promises may not; the system of values creates the foundation for system of trust.

Similarly, Pandavas, as per the epic Mahabharata, also go into exile and live a life of anonymity ('Agyatwas') and here they experience 'dharma' and the principle of righteousness in life. However, those who recite Mahabharata do not realize that without knowing the unknown, it is not possible to know the self. These people only want to protect their limited existence. Apparently, the society has only learned the message of war and violence from Ramayana and Mahabharat whereas the real message was on policy and justice. Getting just the message on violence and war has been an easier route.

The ambassadors of religion have told society that Mahavir has achieved salvation, so ask it to worship him, but do not move towards salvation yourself! Gautam Buddha has achieved 'Nirvana' (ultimate peace and happiness), so worship him, but do not get into the depths of life yourself, do not think profoundly. Jesus Christ was crucified for compassion and love; so just worship him but do not get crucified yourself. Ram, Sita, and Pandavas spent years in forests to understand dharma and principles, but you should not do that yourself. Society has examples of incarnation of self-attainment and liberation. These are worshiped as well. But to become a good human being, one needs to go through the process of revolution.

## **Challenge of Trusting and Reposing the Trust**

The basic thing is that the biggest strength of human beings lies in their capacity to think, to use discretion, being able to create. However, it is this strength of human beings which is snatched away first. In the entire world, religious leaders or the ambassadors of religion do not want human beings to think profoundly.

Just reflect about what it means to be a seed. When the seed sheds (does not lose) its existence, only then it germinates and a plant comes out of it, which later grows into a tree. A seed is endowed with huge energy. It is with that energy, the heat with which a seed can shed its outer shell. A tree gives flowers, leaves, and fruits. And finally, many seeds come out of that one seed. When one seed sheds its existence, only then it procreates into several seeds and each of these new seeds gets ready to let go off its existence. Precisely, this is the principle of life and nature. Regrettably, however, a person does not wish to shed his delusion, ego, and fear. The process to shed this shell is called 'Sadhna'.

But some human beings could not assume this status. Only a few seeds like Ram, Krishna, Pandavas, Mahavir, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Raidas could be formed. Then human beings made rules and religious texts propagating worship of the seeds that became trees. Others were not supposed to become that seed. If someone else seeks to become that seed, then they are branded criminals, anti-nationals.

Those who follow Mahavir could not recognize that without self-initiative, Moksha (salvation) is merely an illusion. Those who interpreted Mahabharata could not make people feel that Kurukshetra was not laid down just once – it always exists around us. It, thus, becomes necessary that we continue to look for dharma and the truth.

Actually, our 5000-year-old history is the history of forgetting the biggest and most basic of human strengths – inquisitiveness, thinking, use of conscience, logic, and self-creation. Human beings observe that women are discriminated, exploited, that the 'Sati' and 'Devdasi' practices are wrong, that the discriminatory and exclusionary conduct with 'Dalits' (the oppressed) is inhuman; yet they continue to follow the set traditions. Even on observation and experience, they do not think why such a system was made. Is it fair? Who

makes such systems? Who decides these social norms? We see, we experience, but we do not seriously think about it. If we could indeed think profoundly, we could take initiative to change such customs and traditions. To take insightful initiatives, it is necessary to have inquisitiveness. It is actually not possible to be human beings without inquisitiveness.

If it were just a matter of existence, Kabir would have been just a weaver. To know one's true identity (existence), to have inquisitiveness and to play a role in society-building, the most important thing is to have trust; to have trust in oneself; to have trust in what one sees, one experiences, one's inquisitiveness and one's role. If only one's family, livelihood, shop, farm were considered as the primary reason for one's existence, then probably there would have been no Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule, Pandita Rama Bai, Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, Periyar or Vinoba Bhave.

Only they are important for the nation and society, who shed their existence like a seed endowed with the trust that a tree will be born out of it and that many new seeds will be created. But we do not think intensely and choose to shed inquisitiveness. Hence, we are always ready for violence and confrontation. However, when we seek to know different aspects, lifestyles, festivities, religions, we do not face any mutual confrontations. Possibilities of any hostilities become nil.

Is it possible to create without curiosity or inquisitiveness? Nothing can be created. It is a matter of deep thinking that when inquisitiveness is lost, then one's work, relationships and role seem meaningless. When any individual 'presumes' that they know everything and they do not need to learn or know anything new, then inquisitiveness is lost. Then a situation arises where family, community, society, and system start considering such individuals as irrelevant.

The way we are nurtured in society, the tendency towards inquisitiveness is not given social protection. To question the system, life, relationships, market, policies, and politics is considered a bad trait. To raise questions is considered to be a sign that the questioner does not know anything or understands nothing. People have a lot of questions, but they are apprehensive as to what view the family, school, community, circle of friends or office will take about them, if they raise the questions. It will be thought, "Oh, they don't even know this much"! There is a lack of trust even within the family, office, or circle of friends. Inquisitiveness is imperative for scientific temper to develop among individuals and the society and to develop inquisitiveness, a deep trust between a person and the society is crucial. There should be trust that if I ask a question, display curiosity, I will not be considered stupid or unknowledgeable; questions would not be raised on my capacity.

Similarly, society has an expectation that a person should always be successful. Those who are unsuccessful are not notable and should get less respect. We eulogise our culture a lot, but to get the opportunity to learn and to experiment, a person has to become a rebel or a

revolutionary because in the normal socio-political system, a person, children, youth, women do not have the right to experiment or to innovate. Actually, to build a better society, it is important to nurture and protect the scientific temper within each person.

If experiments are to be done, innovations are to be done, if there is a plan to know the unknown, an intention to take initiative to resolve a problem; it does not necessarily mean that the plan will fructify, that solution will be found. In many situations, one can face failure. Failure is the biggest potential hidden in any initiative. This means that inquisitiveness among people, experimentation, and initiative on the basis of inquisitiveness and to learn to accept success and failure with an open mindset could lead to betterment of life and of the society. Inquisitiveness, initiative taking, and the inherent capacity to accept failure while aiming for success makes an individual 'relevant.'

A person is very alert towards one's relevance. They want to remain relevant, but they are not alert to the reasons that make them irrelevant. For example, not analysing one's capacities, remaining unaware of the wider environment and ecosystem and lack of capacity for profound thinking lead one to become acutely irrelevant. For one's relevance, a person has expectations from the outer world that they should be accepted, but they are not alert towards their own capacities, own behaviour and potential. Actually, the trust of people on their own self is the weakest and therefore they search for their relevance and the reason for their depressed state of mind in the outer world.

## **Dialogue and the Expanse of Life's Dimensions**

When a person is part of a group, then their existence is linked to the wider society. 'Communication' plays a crucial role in establishing this link and maintaining it. Without communication, neither a person can connect to self, family nor with society. Communication is crucial for civilisation. When there is communication, only then do we get to know about diversity in the world, only then do we hear and we think. When there is communication, only then do we get the opportunity to examine our ideas and knowledge. Communication leads to expansion of the life aspects. If there is no communication, a person cannot know that there are multiple facets of life.

This is why there is the concept of 'Anekant' and 'Syadvada' in Jain philosophy. In this doctrine that all judgments are conditional, it is considered that a thing does exist or it does not exist; that a thing could be there or not be there. Wider the communication, more is the opportunity to end confrontation. When there is no communication, people do not know each other. And when people do not know each other, biases are created. Perceptions develop into prejudices and people consider these prejudices as 'truth.'

Mutual trust is crucial for communication. Here, trust is at two levels – one on self and second on others, community, friends. Without trust, there cannot be communication. Just think, is it possible to listen to someone's idea without trust? Even if something is listened

to, is it possible to think on that idea without trust? To present one's thoughts and to listen to others; both require trust. Communication can start even if there is a pinch of trust and when communication starts, this pinch of trust transforms into an ocean of trust.

In fact, since the human started acquiring developed form of hands, legs, and brain, it did not first invent fire, wheel, and farming. First of all, 'trust' was built, buoyancy that his claws can take hold of something, he can walk on his feet, sense of confidence that he can invent. He can not only create and nurture aspirations, but he can also fulfill them.

Going beyond all this, he can do politics, create a system of power, and enslave not only materialistic things, but also his own family, community, and the people of the world. In every system created by humans so far, be it political, social, or economic system, the central tendency to conquer, subjugate, rule, and enslave others appears to have been there.

Wars were invented for control and power and weapons for the wars. Be it good or bad, 'confidence' in one's own abilities has brought humans to where they are today.

## **Trust and Search for the Unknown**

Trust itself takes the institutional form and shape of 'religion'. 'Religion' does not only include social segments like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Jain, Buddhist, Jainism, but also includes innumerable faiths, symbols, and practice systems. Institutional religions are often negatively presented in intellectual debate.

Undoubtedly, some inconsistencies and evils have been present in every institutional religion. People have created the notion of religion in such a way that religion itself has been made the basis of socio-economic discrepancies. In reality, religion is a system defined as a value-based way of life. However, the evil practices, ostentation, desire to control and insistence on purity of the community have made the religion go astray from its original form.

Paintings, buildings, statues, symbolic places came to be considered as fundamentals of religion and the basic principle that God (which is a human-made standard) is present in every particle was discarded both in thinking and practice. One needs to recognise that God is not a symbol, but a way of living a conscious life.

In fact, just like science, religion also takes humans on an endless journey of 'curiosity'. The truth is that no matter how much a person knows, how many inventions he makes, still something remains 'unknown' and that unknown has been connoted with 'God'. Human being is traveling into space. Yet, he has not been able to touch its other end.

That end itself is unknown. Man is going into the depths of the ocean, but there is no idea of its depth yet. Where floods, droughts, tsunamis, cyclones come from and where they disappear is also 'unknown'.

Similarly, when humans started living in groups, they needed rules and rubrics that must be accepted by all the people in the group. After this, there was a need for rules and standards for control, then after creation of story of the unknown, social rules and power structure would have been propounded through religious narrative. Rules are acceptable only when there is trust in the system that makes the rules. If there is no trust, the system of rules cannot last long.

It is clearly visible that religion and religious symbols have inspired humans to live with the 'unknown', to worship the unknown, and have also inspired them to live in a social group. Therefore, the importance of religion cannot be summarily dismissed.

### **Where Do We See the Values of Humanity?**

There is another important thing that needs to be considered. In the period of approximately 5 thousand years of evolution of modern civilization, man has greatly expanded his powers, but his faith in humanity has continued to deteriorate. In its early ages, humans were violent for their own survival, but 'developed humans' have been more violent for meeting their authoritarian aspirations. His violence has progressively become more planned. This violence is clearly taking new forms in power relations within families, communities, and nations. It does not seem to be ending. This probably means that human history is one of evolution of power and control, not that of human values. Prior to this, the imaginization of development of human values seems to have occurred through religions. However, gradually religions have also been subjugated under the authoritarian tendencies.

### **Concept of Constitutional Values for Development of Human Values**

Constitutional trust means creating and adopting a 'system' in which different groups and communities have trust in it, a system that makes equality, scientific thinking, co-existence, and reciprocity the basis of social life. Undoubtedly there will be plurality of religions, beliefs, thoughts, and cultures in the society; and in such a situation, the constitutional system gives every religion, thought, belief and culture the assurance of protection and preservation of its distinct existence amidst this diversity. Constitutional trust ensures that such a system is not questioned from the point of view of interests of any particular community, sect, belief, or organization.

The process of making the Constitution determines how strong constitutional trust can be. The Indian Constitution was created in a participatory and logical manner. Its intention was to make India an egalitarian, democratic and secular republic and it considered world peace as its 'end'.

To achieve this 'goal,' the Constitution itself becomes an important 'means.' Ideas and ideologies can be put on the table in the process of making the Constitution, but once the constitutional system is in place, these ideologies may have democratic political importance, but the constitutional system cannot be sacrificed on the basis of ideological positioning.

## Social Values

The values determined by the society for general personal, family and group behaviour are known as social values. These are determined by religion and philosophy. The philosophical questions arise primarily with an objective of making the social system better and ridding it from the social discrepancies on the basis of self-realizations. Religious principles are created after profound consideration of spiritual and social experiences. Such principles espouse the dream of an ideal society. Such as:

***Agyanmiti cha rajji sarpabhrantirivadvitiye sarvannusyute sarvamaye brahmani |  
Narshthavarstripurushvarnashrambandhmokshopadhinanatmabhedkalpitam  
Gyanamgyanam ||***

*"The way a rope gives an illusion of a snake; similarly discriminating between the brahma and dev existing within all, animals and birds, human beings, sessile beings, women and men, varna and ashram, bonds and liberation and all other non-self-entities is the actual sign of 'ignorance'"*

***Ayan nijah paro veti ganana laghuchetasam udaracharitnana tu vasudhaiva  
kutumbakam ||***

*This means – "thoughts like this is mine and this is not, are fostered by shallow-minded people; for the large-hearted, the entire world is a family".*

***Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Nir-Aamayaah |  
Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyant, Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet ||***

*This means - "May all become happy; May all be free of illnesses |  
May all find auspiciousness everywhere; May none ever feel sorrow ||*

Despite such profound philosophical principles, caste-based systems, untouchability, gender discrimination and economic disparity have become basic elements of the system in Indian society. This happened because the dharma-philosophy based principles were not considered 'universal.' The social divide also practically divided philosophical principles. The irony is that when there is a mention of some personalities of Indian society like Shankaracharya, Kabir, Nanak, Raidas, Savitri Bai, Jyotiba Phule, Gandhi, or Ambedkar- they did not talk of anything else but advocated the establishment of a society based on human

values. They were either considered anti-socials or exceptional, being great people. This is the inner conflict.

The basic social values are first limited to the practical context of 'moral values.' Though the basic meanings of moral values are very profound and vibrant, the social divide has made them limited in scope. A person acquires moral values from one's family, community, and community-cultural system. On the face of it, moral values seem to be universal values, but the truth is that moral values are deeply affected by cultural and traditional beliefs of every community. This is the reason that the same moral value is practically implemented in different ways with other people or communities; because moral values have not been 'mandatorily considered universal.'

There is reference to fraternity in social values. But do we not see that the scope of fraternity is limited to community or religious groups? For the Jain community, the scope of fraternity is limited within the Jain community. For the Brahmin community too, the practical scope of social values is limited to their own caste identity. Similarly, the limited scope of social values of Muslim community is also clearly visible. Look around ourselves. Generally, it is seen that these communities and castes also undertake the people's welfare work within their community-caste boundaries. Various caste groups demand a share of representation in the elections being held under the political-democratic system on the basis of community/caste. Similarly, residential settlements are established on the basis of caste or communal divide.

It can be argued that moral values have prime place in Indian society. But the moot question is about the meaning of moral values. Any community considers certain practices good and necessary and certain practices improper and unnecessary based on its cultural beliefs. The identification of such practices is necessary as the adoption of such practices leads to stability in society and social units like families are preserved. One of the moral values is to respect elders. In a natural sense, this is also the value of 'dignity.' But does this include respecting the elders or senior persons from the other castes and religions too?

The second moral value is that of insincerity or non-stealing. But does this ideal include not grabbing the natural resources of tribal society or engaging in the practice of earning fair profits in trade? The third moral value is that of discipline. But is it necessary to be sincere and accountable to one's role in this value and free from any discrimination or untouchability or passion and ill-will while performing that role? Moral values have their own importance, but their practice has been confined within the community/caste-communal-cultural confines.

Moral values include those standard conducts that guide us in our ideas, practices, and decision-making. These standard conducts play an important role when a decision is to be taken in face of a moral or social dilemma. They play an important role in making decisions regarding the 'proper' or 'improper' in reference to a subject or an incident. In reality, moral

values are integrated within cultural opinions, social criteria or principles espoused by religious texts.

Honesty is a moral value. A person behaves honestly within the family setting. But when the same person is in the role of a teacher, does he use the element of honesty? When he is a teacher, does he have an honest disposition and behaviour towards girls and dalit students? When he is in the role of a trader, does he conduct his business with honesty? A person is very affluent and makes huge donations for the construction of a religious place. Do the religious or spiritual leaders ask him whether he has earned the money for donation through fair means?

Forgiveness is considered an important moral value; But this moral value is treated by looking at the individual, his status and social identity. If someone is an equal or influential person, the value of forgiveness will be applied to him; But a person who is inferior in caste and class will not be treated with forgiveness. The further question would be, for whom should the value of 'forgiveness' be important in a system based on caste, class, creed, gender, place of birth or any discrimination? Since moral values are defined primarily for the purpose of maintaining the purity of community and family structures, their scope is not universal and they are also discarded on the basis of individual, family, caste, creed etc., with some exceptions.

## **Meaning of Constitutional Trust**

Some essential questions that have to be considered. Should everyone in the country be equal? There should not be any discrimination or practice of untouchability with anyone. No particular group, community or households have monopoly over country's resources. Should people of the country not have the right to question their own government? Should women not have the freedom to study, work and move anywhere without fear?

The preamble to our Constitution affirmatively responds to all these questions. However, both our society and system of governance do not appear to have accepted the answers. Ensuring equity, equality, dignity, justice, liberty, and fraternity for and amongst the people necessitated that India is endowed with constitutionally-appropriate political and governance systems where practices and behaviors of untouchability, casteism, sexual harassment, monopolization of resources and social discrepancies were expressly repelled. In the historical system, caste, gender, feudalism and then colonialism had completely erased the layer of 'trust' from the minds of the Bahujans where they felt that they too could be treated with dignity or they could be freed from slavery.

Constitutional values are universal and reject the concept of discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, creed, residence, gender, identity.

After independence, an attempt was made to re-lay the layer of 'trust' by making a written promise through the Constitution. It was promised that India would be a democracy,

fraternity and dignity would be considered the basis of unity, the individual would not be bought or sold, there would be no master and slave, the individual would not be subjects, but a citizen and the law would be equal for all. The Constitution is a written promise to rebuild the 'trust'. The question is whether we, as individuals, as a people-centric government unit, as a collective unit, behave as per the Constitution's mandate. Did we all take the responsibility of rebuilding the 'trust' that would have created a sense of the country that politics of unrighteousness is not recognised in the name of religion, where violence is not seen as a symbol of power and falsehood is not made the central policy?

## **Why is there a Need to Breach Constitutional Trust?**

There are several reasons for this ostensible and reprehensible act. Looking at it from the lens of the perpetrators who have taken resort to the act of breaching the constitutional trust requires one to look up their mindsets. For them, trust has to be breached so that the practice of slavery (albeit in whatever form) continues and that perpetuity of caste-based social, economic, and political injustice is maintained. The idea has been not to disturb the balance of power away from the powers that be. Also, they considered that the breach is needed so that ushering in the era of socio-economic and political principles of women's equality is not allowed to occur lest their vested interests vanish. Because, unless the trust is breached, the feudal and influential classes will be forced to go to the doors of the poor, dalits, tribal, women, sanitary workers, and minority communities, which in turn upsets their pride.

In order to control socio-economic power, a faction of the society created a series of standards based on caste, class, gender that could govern the body of the individual. Untouchability, sexuality, labour, menstruation, reproduction, etc., all exercise control over the body.

When constitutional values are referred to, it is not only about laws. It pertains to the very question as to what the meaning is for being a human being. The socio-economic and political systems have not been created by outsiders and people are captive of such systems. It has always been the subject of the mindset and power as to what kind of system will be created. Human beings have selected rule-based and power-centered systems. The power of rule has been kept at the centre and to establish this central power, a policy based on race, gender, caste, and sub-castes ('Varna and Jaati') was implemented.

'Body' has always been at the centre of the systems developed by people across the world. A person was always identified by his body rather than the mind. For example, the body of women is considered to be at the centre of their existence. She gives birth to children so her body is weak. She does not or cannot engage in physical labour and, therefore, her share in the family, community or system is at minimum. Menstruation is a natural phenomenon, but it has been established as a taboo or as a stigma. To establish this concept, physical labour done by women has been refused to be identified. This mindset limits the existence

of a woman in relation to her body. Similarly, color of skin was made a basis to determine that non-white people were impure and those who are white were venerable and dominant. The entire policy of apartheid was based on this concept. Then human society was divided into races and some races were considered 'pure,' while others were considered as 'slave and impure.' The concept of caste was also established in the social system. To run the caste system, the profession, role, and birth were considered as the underlying standards.

## **Why Does 'Physical Body' Become the Basis of System?**

A human body can be controlled and made captive. In the social system based on 'body', the importance of talents and values of a person are not allowed to be established. When the socio-economic and political system is 'human body-based', humanity is not considered a universal condition but an exception. Some groups are given liberty to the extent of speaking about humanity and creating humanity-based systems, but humanity is not allowed to become the foundation of the system. This is the reason that under the Indian Constitution, effort was made to create a value-based universal system, rising over the 'body' (physical identity) of a person.

When the existence of a person is limited to the 'body', controlling human beings becomes easy. People can be controlled by subjecting them to starvation; violence and making them handle human excreta. When people become weak psychologically, they can be easily made part of a mob and this mob becomes the safety system of the 'human body-based' system. Human values help people to take control of their minds. On the other hand, when individuals and society are built on the plateau of minds, then it becomes impossible to control them, to make them slaves or keep them lifeless for a long time. Till the time people consider their bodies as their identity, they cannot identify racism, class system or gender discrimination. But when they consider their minds and intellect as the centre of their existence, they start developing consciousness towards values and the basic nature of the socio-economic and political system starts changing.

The 'capitalist' system was developed on the basis of race (white and non-white), caste and gender. A massive group of human society was made to feel that they were not human beings but dalit, tribal, women or non-whites. Human values allow people to develop as 'minds' rather than 'bodies.' When people become conscious of their minds and consider it their identity, then it is difficult to control such people. This is the reason that the Indian Constitution does not define the dignity of a person under influence of family or society but keeps the 'person' at the centre and establishes the concept of dignity, respect and liberty of the people, fraternity amongst the people and social, political, and economic justice for the people. This concept moves beyond consideration of the existence of a person as a 'body' and accepts people as human beings who are social and free-living beings.

Those who considered their existence above their bodies have saved the society from deviating from the path of humanity. Then they can be Meera, Andal, Periyar, Bhagat Singh, Gandhi or Vinoba. All these tested the meaning of being human and proved that the goal of human life is not violence, injustice, exploitation. Man is a much broader entity than his 'body'.

## **Significance of Trust and Expanding the Construct of Social Agreement**

What are the most important initiatives and the most crucial resources for building India? Can a country be built with a lot of money, metals, coal, dams, cement and the like? If all these resources are available, but there is no mutual trust amongst those using them, what kind of India will be built? The resources are managed either by the society or the state system. But the base of the society and state system are not the power which they exercise, but actually the very foundation of the society and state systems is 'trust.' The principle of 'social agreement' is taught, which means that the society gives acceptance to a system so that everything is well-managed.

The society gives rights to the state system to manage everything properly. To keep things managed, resources are needed and therefore the society authorizes the state system to implement taxes. The society gives rights to the state system to make laws and implement them so that there is no anarchy in the society and crimes and violence do not occur. Therefore, on the basis of laws, people can be imprisoned or given death sentences. If society does not allow so, the state system cannot collect taxes or give punishment to anyone.

The society endows the state with the rights and power and in return, the state system has to fulfil its obligations and responsibilities. What are the responsibilities of a state system? It is to ensure that there is no injustice meted out to anyone, there is no anarchy, people are safe, no one lives in poverty, no one starves, there is no fear amongst people, everyone is free to follow his religion and faith and have freedom of expression of opinion and no obstructions are created for them in realising these freedoms. Everyone should get a livelihood opportunity and no one's dignity should be hurt. It is also the responsibility of the state system to ensure that the resources are not irrationally distributed or used in an unplanned, illegal or irresponsible way. State system should be alert to the fact that the available natural resources are not only meant for the current generation, but also for the posterity. Thus, air, water, oceans, forests, hills, animals, insects, iron, coal should be safeguarded for posterity too. In the 'social agreement' between the state system and societal system, 'trust' is the formative key.

When the principle of 'social agreement' is looked as separated from human values, it becomes clear that whenever values are eroded, the state system is perceived to be protecting the criminal acts by the society and that even the society is also seen to be

protecting the criminal acts done by the state system. When the value of accountability vanishes, there is an unrestrained exploitation of resources. The thought as to what resources will be left for the coming generations also fades. When the value of fraternity erodes, the state system becomes a mute observer of social practices of untouchability! When the value of justice disappears, caste and feudal systems raise their ugly heads.

A nation becomes independent, but the people are forced to adopt the religion of others and become ready to bear the symbols of other religions. When there is no political justice, then even if a woman becomes a 'Sarpanch' (Head of Gram Panchayat), the name of her husband appears prominently along with her in her name plate, or advertisements related to her. These men actually seize the power of the Sarpanch and start ruling and though people, society, chief minister and the bureaucrats witness this, no one feels uncomfortable about it. These things are dismissed as 'normal'.

There are claims that 'kindness' is established as a value, but while giving a one-time share of food or old clothes to a beggar, does it occur to us as to how the person concerned could be supported so that they do not need to beg and could live a dignified life? The commitment to maintain the status quo on an existent system, untouchability and inequality continues along with the 'kindnesses' we dish out in the name of charity. Are not these acts more of a self-fulfilling nature? The value of 'justice' does not accompany the value of 'kindness.'

### **Breach in Trust – Deliberate or Spontaneous?**

The Indian Constitution was framed with an intention of giving the people of India the right to create their own system. There was an intention to serve social, economic and political justice to everyone. To eradicate the bitterness of communalism and casteism, the concepts of fraternity and dignity were considered crucial. Personal liberty was adopted within the independent nation. The creation of free India was a massive goal. To achieve this goal, trust of people was more necessary than money, resources or arms and ammunition. Trust in the sense of creating confidence within people that while they have the right to vote, their elected representative will not betray them after getting their votes. People got the judiciary, but there was a need to create confidence that they will not face misbehaviour, will not be hurt or not be subject to corruption in the judicial system. It was also to be ensured that the government elected by the people will not only ensure sovereignty of the nation, but also personal sovereignty of the people where they will be allowed to take their own decisions and be rid of illegal interference. People should have developed a trust on the public health system of the country, on the education system. Some steps were also necessary so that people could repose faith in traders and industrialists of the country.

We failed. Even as we aged as an independent nation, actions were taken all around towards breaching of trust. The expanse of the serious wounds, the bad experiences during colonial India could not be reduced. Many friends suggest adoption of 'positive outlook.'

According to them, much has changed, a lot has improved. Really, now the roads are far better. There are tall buildings all around. The food production has quadrupled. But the parallel question is, “Is trust growing”? Given the political and economic policies adopted, trust is only weakening. Taxes are imperative for the development of the country. But the way messages are conveyed in the tax collection system, the intention becomes clear. At least according to the tax collection system, every person in the country is under the shadow of suspicion that they are tax evaders. That is the reason everyone is sent out similarly worded notices en masse.

In the education system, there are various types of schools like the Model School, Navodaya School, Central School and others. When the intention is to provide education, then why should there be different categories of teachers like contract teachers, guest teachers or ‘Shikshakarmis’ (Education Workers)? The impact of the social class system is clearly reflected on the state system. It is not that the crisis of trust is just for the common people.

The crisis is equally there in respect of the public image of traders and industrialists. When one goes out to buy ‘maava’ (a milk product) in the market, the thought of it being adulterated or synthetic comes immediately to one’s mind. When it is about industrialists, there is a prevalent thought that they might have engaged in tax evasion and other wrongdoings related to their capital, produce or credit.

The shop that is being opened in the locality belongs to Hindu or Muslim, what caste or religion person is purchasing the apartment being sold in the colony, what caste or religion does the person doing haircut belong to, what is the caste or religion of the person from whom vegetables are being purchased – these are the questions that are afloat in the minds of the people. This means that the crisis of lack of trust is all around.

People are being forced to relinquish trust on curiosity too. About 100-200 or 1000 years ago, everything was in the process of creation. The existence of human beings depended on curiosity. The 10,000 varieties of paddy came into existence because of the curiosity of human beings. Majestic architecture was created due to curiosity. But now, being curious or inquisitive is considered negative politics. Asking questions has come to be questioned as crime.

Farmers cannot even decide what seeds to use for growing crops. They are not even allowed to trust themselves. When there is no curiosity, how can anything new be created? There is still a scope of curiosity whether Ramayana and Mahabharata are great epics or historical facts? Who actually wrote the Quran? Curiosity is a natural human tendency. Curiosity does not intend to hurt any sentiments.

India is deeply riddled with caste divides. When the biggest event of democracy – that is elections – are held, the candidates are not selected on the basis of the bigger social categories like Hindu, Muslim or Christians. Rather, the Kushwaha community says

candidates should be from Kushwaha community, Jain community says the candidate should be a Jain, Vaishya community organisations start demanding candidature for a Vaishya candidate. Candidates from Meena, Karni, Dhakad, Gurjar or Ahirwar communities are demanded. This means that the caste divides are so deep that people do not want to trust elected representatives from other sub-castes. Now every sub-caste has a feeling that their welfare could be ensured only when a person belonging to their particular sub-caste or clan become members of parliament, members of legislative assemblies, ministers or chief ministers.

Media is subject to easy criticism. They are being given different kinds of analogies. There have been experiments with alternative media too. We witness that our trust in the media has been broken in a well-planned way. The media that sides with the power as well that that sides with the opposition, both are facing a crisis of trust. The review whether the media is doing right or wrong is reasonable and mandatory, but total breakdown of trust in media is dangerous for a democracy.

Questions on the functioning of the judiciary are also there and logical, but the erosion of trust in the judiciary as a constitutional unit of the country, is dangerous. Delayed justice is a case in point.

The immediate happenings in the parliament should be mandatorily subject to criticism and review, but an increasing feeling is gaining ground that there is no meaning of having a parliament! This does not augur well for India.

Whatever may be our views, the most dangerous is to lose faith in constitutional values i.e. fraternity, social, economic, political justice, dignity and liberty of the individual and democracy.

## **Electoral Franchise, Democracy and Trust**

When the right to vote is defined, there are several meanings to it. Whether there will be a role of the common people in the governance system is determined by the right to vote. In independent India, there was no attempt towards public instruction on the importance of the right to vote. The call for voting is made only once in five years. When the nationalist movements for freedom started getting stronger in India, the government of the British Empire started promising that it would ensure representation of Indians in the regional and central legislative councils. Under the Indian Councils Act, 1909, the members of the legislative councils were not elected by common Indians but by the influential section of society like landholders, zamindars, industrial organisations, universities and corporations and boards. In the Government of India Act, 1919, provisions were made for election of representatives of Indians, but only selected special classes like property holders, income tax payers, land holders and tax payers to civic bodies had the right to vote. Thus, in the consequent elections, only 2.9 percent of the population got the right to vote. Then, in the

Government of India Act, 1935, elections were held at a more extensive level. Yet only 14 percent of Indians got the right to vote. So, when people did not have representation in the government, how and why would they have trust in the government?

Right to vote for every citizen was considered the very basis of democracy because it would lead to trust among people that their representatives are part of the government and would take decisions for their welfare. The Indian Constitution made provision for the right to vote for all Indians including women right from day one. It should be remembered that even in the United States of America, women got the right to vote 120 years after the Constitution of the country was framed. India adopted a political tradition that included feudal, landholding and casteist elements in a new form and thus trust in creation of new India could not develop. Actually, trust develops only after a long process and multiple examinations. Despite change of circumstances, physical development and innovations, conservative system continued to be part of the society in a new form.

## Rebuilding Constitutional Nation and Trust

When the Indian Constitution was framed, the gross domestic product of India was just ₹ 2.7 lakh crores or ₹ 794 per person. The per capita income was just ₹ 230 per year or 63 paise per day. At some places there was drought, while in others there was flood situation and India had to be dependent on other countries. There was a system of *zamindari*, *raiyyatwari* and *mahalwari*, where the farmers and labourers did not have any rights on the resources or produce. The Constitution promises eradication of these systems. On the other hand, India was facing a situation of communal clash and enmity. Thousands were killed in communal riots and huge property was destroyed. Then India faced a violent partition that left 10 lakh people dead, and 1.5 crore people were displaced from their homes. What lessons should have been learnt from these manmade politico-social disasters - eradication of the basic causes of communalism and enmity or nurturing them? In independent India, the necessary initiative was not taken to neutralize the sense of communalism and social disharmony. This initiative could have been taken then and it can be taken now so that the people of India, the governments and the political system can trust themselves to put the ills of the past behind and set new standards of humanity. A fight cannot be ended through retaliation or revenge. If there is a dream for building a better society, there should be trust in the concept of 'forgiveness.' We could not instil the mutual trust that we do not have enmity or violence for one another in our minds. The society that considered 'forgiveness and non-violence' as a religion, set aside the trust in forgiveness and non-violence.

How different are the people of India of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries? The Constitution promises 'sovereignty.' Is the meaning of this amply clear? The decision on whether India will participate in the Second World War or not was not taken by India, but by Lord Linlithgow (former governor-general of India). But the Indian Constitution gives the right to India to make its own policies, to make its own decisions and that there cannot be the interference of any external force, government or country in this matter. A government elected by

people of India was not available to take a decision whether India should participate in the world war. Independence means that India should have a government that could make internal and foreign policies according to the spirit and values of the people of India. However, at present, the people of India know of the foreign policy only as an adventurous and mysterious story.

On November 25, 1949, Dr B.R. Ambedkar was making concluding remarks in the Constituent Assembly debates (on Constitution). Quoting John Stuart Mill, he urged all those who were interested in maintenance of democracy, "not to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with power, which enable him to subvert their institutions". There is nothing wrong in being grateful to great men who have rendered life-long services to the country. But there are limits to gratefulness."

Dr Ambedkar further said "As has been well said by the Irish Patriot Daniel O'Connell, no man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty. This caution is far more necessary in the case of India than in the case of any other country. For in India, Bhakti or what may be called the path of devotion or hero-worship, plays a part in its politics unequalled in magnitude by the part it plays in the politics of any other country in the world. Bhakti in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship."

Why did Dr Ambedkar say so? Was he correct? When the trust of the people of the country cannot hold on to a democratic process like voting, then they start looking for trust in an individual and start thinking that only that individual can deliver them and the country. For an individual to become the centre of power, the 'gland of trust' from the common people has to be thrown only through the political process.

On November 26, 1949, Dr Rajendra Prasad (first President of India) also said that 'whatever the Constitution may or may not provide, the welfare of the country will depend upon the way in which the country is administered. That will depend upon the men who administer it.

Dr Prasad clearly said "We must admit that the defects are inherent in the situation in the country and the people at large. If the people who are elected are capable and men of character and integrity; they would be able to make the best even of a defective Constitution. If they are lacking in these, the Constitution cannot help the country... We have communal differences, caste differences, language differences, provincial differences and so forth. It requires men of strong character, men of vision, men who will not sacrifice the interests of the country at large for the sake of smaller groups and areas and who will rise over the prejudices which are born of these differences."

On November 23, 1949, while participating in the debate, Balwant Singh Mehta said "We have made this Constitution as good as we could. It is now our duty to go to our

constituencies and explain this Constitution to the people of our country-side, which is our real sphere of work. Sometimes misgivings got currency in the masses due to lack of education and propaganda. For the general masses, independence and Constitution can have the least significance only if they can provide him with food, raiment, shelter and education.”

On November 25, 1949, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma said “where is the spirit of this Constitution? The point is who is to work this Constitution? Will it be a clan, honest, pure, well-integrated political party or will it be a rabble that will administer this Constitution? There was an aspiration and an objective in the base of the Constitution. It wanted to create trust among the people that the country had become independent and the people had become independent too. It wanted to create trust that when people elect a government for themselves, it will construct such roads where women will also walk without fear. The disparity of income will end in the country and the people will get full rights to utilise their resources. There was trust in the people that now our own people are managing the government, and they will be able to raise questions and seek answers. It was the colonialism of the British Empire where Indians did not have representation and they did not have any right to speak out their opinion or criticise the government. The people of India could not get organised to struggle for their personal rights or the rights of the village and country. In such a situation, the Constitution promises the people of India that in a free country people will also be free and will be able to criticize the government.

## **The Science of the Body and the Science of Values**

The human body is also governed by a system. Each part of the system has its own role to play. The role of every organ is imperative, indispensable. And each organ plays its role together with each other's role. As soon as the relationship based on reciprocity begins to weaken, one's body begins to weaken. In general, the heart, brain, liver, kidneys are considered important, but just imagine what will happen if the eyelids become weak and their opening and closure starts to get obstructed? What happens if the fingernails are not there or come off? Skin is also an organ and if the skin becomes weak, what will happen then? Order means adopting mutuality and making mutuality natural. Whether it is the order within or the order outside, without faith and mutuality it cannot be beneficial.

It is often the case that the talk of values is taken as an ideal or a spiritual thing. It is also assumed that the subject of values is a matter of the realm of great people, gods and goddesses or saint-imams. The meaning of 'human values' for human beings can also be identified from the arrangement of the human body. There is blood in the human body. Everybody knows it is very important. Because when there is an injury, blood comes out, when someone falls sick, he is also given blood from another person. If you have gone to school, you also know that there are red and white cells in the blood. It is also important to maintain their balance. But there is another cell in the blood, which is called platelet. This cell helps the blood to clot. If platelets are reduced, the risk of bleeding increases. This fear

increases so much that blood starts leaking in different parts of the body. If there is an injury, the blood accumulates at the place of injury and its flow stops. If platelets are low then the flow of blood cannot be stopped. We do not see platelets, but they have their own function, they have their own characteristics and their importance is so much that even the safety of life depends on them. When a person is sick, platelets are reduced and the blood's ability to clot decreases. Platelets play an important role in keeping the body healthy, we can see the injury and blood clotting on the injury, but we do not see the role of platelets. Does this mean we do not need platelets?

Oxygen is not visible anywhere, but it is felt. It does not appear, but for life it is indispensable. We all know about 'calcium'. It strengthens the bones. It does not let them weaken. When there is a lack of calcium, the bones become weak. We use a lot of our bones, but we do not remember that calcium is doing its job.

We must have often heard about 'Vitamin-D'. We use our bodies a lot. We make it run around, climb mountains, cross rivers, plough fields, play games. One who runs well, plays, climbs mountains or does a lot of physical work is appreciated. The important thing is that any person is able to do this work because his muscles and bones are very strong. They are strong because 'Vitamin-D' does its work in the human body. Vitamin D comes from sunlight. Do we see Vitamin D in sunlight? We cannot see it. Despite not being able to see it, not touch it, it does its job. When we are deficient, we are told that Vitamin D deficiency is the reason for the weakening of our bones and muscles.

Calcium comes from milk, but does calcium appear in milk? It is not visible, but it is there and plays its role in our body. Vitamin D works to remove calcium from milk and deliver it to the bones, but it is not visible in the sun. When there is a lack of them, then a person feels pain, his bones become weak and start breaking. When problems arise, they realize their importance.

The person feels irritable, tired, has difficulty in walking, is frustrated. This is due to vitamin B12 deficiency. This vitamin is mainly derived from animal products. We feel tired, frustrated, irritable, but we do not know that this is happening due to vitamin B12 deficiency. Vitamin B12 is not visible, but it has its significance. It is not visible in eggs or milk, but it is there.

A mineral called magnesium plays an important role in the proper functioning of the body, especially in maintaining the system of the nervous system. Similarly, heartbeats become abnormal when potassium levels are unbalanced. It may even lead to a heart attack.

There are several glands in human body and these glands produce different hormones. Brain produces hormone called Serotonin, which controls the emotions and stress levels in human beings. The deficiency of Serotonin leads to problems such as depression, headache and insomnia. When a person is stressed, the cortisol level in his body increases so that

stress could be managed. When cortisol is not produced in a stress situation, then issues like alcoholism, fatigue and panic arise.

The hormone oxytocin leads us to feel the emotion of love. When there is love, this hormone is produced. When a person achieves something, dopamine hormone is produced, and they feel happy. When a person is joyful, why are they able to sleep well? This is because endorphins is produced in such a situation. This hormone makes human beings feel the emotion of happiness and joy.

Many minerals, vitamins, protein and hormones play a role in functioning of human organs, human thought process, being positive or negative. These are not visible, but they run the human life. We consider them important because their effect on the human body and mind can be investigated. These have been tested on them.

When vitamins, minerals, proteins and hormones are deficient or fluctuating, a person is sick, depressed, and has a reduced vitality. When these problems occur, then the person is able to feel the pain within him, the effect of the disease. When he feels pain, he initiates treatment. Similarly, when there is a decline of values in an individual or society, there is an imbalance in values, then animosity increases, violence increases. The only difference is that individuals or communities are not able to feel the pain of this social disease. It is not taught to feel the impact of the erosion of values in social life.

Human values also exist somewhere within a human being, in some form or the other. This is the reason that examples of Kabir, Martin Luther King, Jesus Christ, Adi Shankaracharya, Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi are present in human history. Just as vitamins, minerals and hormones do not show up, but operate from human bones to happiness, human values may not be visible, but values are the basic elements that manage human behavior. The analogy is simple, clear and loud. When mutual relations are treated with reciprocity, happiness, building a better society, a sense of dignity, realisation of prestige and empathetic behaviour, then 'human values' play the most important role. Vitamins, minerals, proteins, hormones may make us aware of our dignity, prestige, happiness, sorrow, depression, but the values of a person make him conscious of others' dignity, respect, happiness, sorrow, and depression.

## **The Dhamma (Law of Nature – The Truth) of Trust – Gautam Buddha's Enlightening Teaching**

Naturalness is the basic necessity to imbibe values. Every object, every person, every element of nature has a basic character. This character is related to its nature. 'Neem' tastes bitter. Bitter gourd also tastes bitter. But their character is not negative. Despite being bitter, their character is beneficial for the health of human beings. This means that one should not make decisions about someone or something, based on their apparent nature.

Rather their deeper character should be recognised. Foundation of trust is built when the character is recognised.

Tiger is a powerful creature, which lives its life by hunting. He hunts only to satisfy his and his family's need for food, not violence for the purpose of storing or spreading terror. It also has its own geographical scope. Man knows the nature of the tiger from his experiences and behaves accordingly. He does not treat a tiger the same way as he treats a cow or a deer. He learns the naturalness of the tiger.

Human values are linked to the naturalness of human beings. But the aspiration for power and control consumes their naturalness. Actually, to imbibe values, it is important to know the spontaneity (naturalness) of life behaviour of humans (what is basic character of human beings? What is their basic nature and tendency?) Double character never allows trust to thrive. And unless there is mutual trust, fraternity, unity and integrity cannot be imagined.

Gautam Buddha does some such basic analyses that inform that 'Dhamma,' and 'Dharma' are different. According to him, the objective of 'Dharma' (religion) is to explain the origin of world, whereas the objective of 'Dhamma' is recreating the world. 'Dharma' looks for answers to questions like – is the world eternal or not? Is the world infinite or not? Are body and soul the same? Does one exist after death or not? Whereas 'Dhamma' gives explanations for questions like what is misery? What are reasons for misery? What are the solutions for misery? The questions for which Dharma seeks answer for does not contribute to good conduct, purging of lust, liberation from aspiration of power and control or to the way to salvation.

Buddha answers the question – What is Dhamma? And he says to Maintain Purity of Life is Dhamma, to Reach Perfection in Life is Dhamma, to Live in Nibbana is Dhamma, to Give up Craving is Dhamma, to believe that all compound things are impermanent is Dhamma, to believe that Karma is the instrument of Moral Order is Dhamma.

What is the meaning of maintaining Purity of Life? He says, "There are these three forms of purity - Purity of body, purity of speech, purity of mind".

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his classic analysis "Buddha and His Dhamma" showcases the Buddha's understanding of living challenges - There are these five weaknesses, which are a source of weakness to training. What five? Taking life; taking what is not given; lustful, evil practices; lying; and indulging in spirituous liquors, which cause idleness. He also adds that there are these three failures -failure in morals, failure in mind, failure in view. While describing failure in morals, he narrates the narrative of values - A certain one takes life, steals, is a wrong-doer in sensual desires, a liar, a slanderer, of bitter speech, an idle babbler; this is called "failure in morals". And of what sort is failure in mind - a certain one is covetous and malevolent of heart. This is called "failure in mind."

According to Buddha, to Reach Perfection in Life is also Dhamma and there are three perfections -perfection in body, speech and mind; and these are fundamentals for Values in Practice.

Buddha believes that religion does not have a place for ethics or universal ethical values because religion encourages only searching for intangible elements like God, spirit outside oneself, whereas the basic of ethics or ethical values is to develop one's naturalness, one's behaviour and awareness towards one's values. Religion divides society into groups and then these groups start a war to establish their own superiority and society continues to fight this war for infinite time.

Gautam Buddha defined establishment of human values and creation of egalitarian society through 'Dhamma'. The more layers of values human beings have, the more peaceful and equal will be the society.

What is the meaning of 'Dhamma'? Dhamma means that which is imbibed, accepted, lived by and made part of one's nature. According to Buddha, it is that way of life that encourages the person to seek enlightenment and which upholds the natural condition of the person and the world. It is also defined as laws of nature. Emperor Ashoka also defined 'Dhamma' after embracing Buddhism. Ashoka set up edicts to give message to the world. In one of such edict, 'Dhamma' was defined as a set of qualities and values like mercy, charity, truthfulness, purity, gentleness, virtue, welfare work throughout life, prohibition of animal sacrifice, respect of elders, gentleness with other creatures, proper behaviour towards servants and employees. In another edict, less expenditure and less accumulation (of wealth) has also been considered as 'Dhamma'. Also, the Emperor sought to define what was not Dhamma- cruelty, sin, harshness, pride and anger, recognising only one's good deeds and not recognising the bad deeds – were looked upon as big impediments in embracing the tenets of 'Dhamma'.

When Buddha was asked as to when does 'Dhamma' become 'Saddhamma' (meaningful way of living life)? Human values are the foundation of life and to practice human values, it is important to understand one's own nature, habits, objectives of life and sociality. The importance of values has reduced due to needs of life, race of prosperity, tendency towards power and identity becoming secondary. Buddha considers values tangible and not intangible. When there is a question as to when Dhamma becomes Saddhamma, he underlines values as the foundation of Saddhamma. According to the perspective of Buddha, equality, fraternity, compassion, friendliness, reciprocity and co-existence are the basic elements of Saddhamma. The significant point is that he sees and recognises values in their entirety. None of the values can exist individually. Everyone should get education; it is the right of everyone. But morality is important along with education. Along with being moral, a person should have compassion and along with compassion, friendliness (benevolence) is crucial. If in a society, everyone has education, has respect and dignified

life, then values are affirmed. 'The Buddha and his Dhamma' illustrates the realisations of Gautam Buddha.

### ***Knowledge for All***

Gautam Buddha has a clear belief that Dhamma become Saddhamma only when it makes learning open to all.

When Buddha had made this statement, the Brahminic principle that seeking of knowledge cannot be opened for all, was strongly in vogue. It was said that seeking of knowledge should remain strictly restricted to few in the society. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were allowed to seek knowledge; but the women of these three sections were yet not allowed to seek knowledge. Both men and women in the Shudra category were not allowed to seek knowledge. Buddha opposed this principle.

### ***'Pradnya' with 'Vidya' (Insight with Knowledge)***

Gautam Buddha believed that only 'knowledge' (Vidya) was not complete in itself. An educated and a knowledgeable person was eligible for veneration only if s(he) is graceful - morally strong. Gautam Buddha talked of four qualities for a person of wisdom:

1. One who has knowledge and wisdom but who is given to the welfare of many folk, to the happiness of many folk
2. Whatever train of thought one wishes to apply themselves, to that train of thought they apply themselves; to whatever train of thought they desire not to apply themselves, to that train of thought they apply not.
3. Whatever intention one wishes to intend, one does so or not if one so wishes. Thus, one is master of the mind in the ways of thought
4. One who attains at will, without difficulty and without trouble, the four musings which belong to the higher thought. Who can destroy the asavas (fetters, mental defilements) in this very life?

### ***'Sheel' with Pradnya (Morality with Insight)***

Buddha says that Dhamma become Saddhamma only when there is 'Sheel' (Morality) with 'Pradnya' (Insight). This is a two-way sword that could be used or misused. Insight leads to welfare only when it is accompanied by morality ('Sheel'). 'Sheel' means not to kill; not to steal; nor to tell a lie; nor to indulge in sex immorality; and not to indulge in drinking. The use of knowledge or insight depends on the 'Sheel' (morality, character, nature, values, intentions) of the person.

Gautam Buddha says, "Sheel is the beginning and the refuge, Sheel is the mother of all good. It is the foremost of all good conditions."

### ***'Karuna' with 'Sheel'(Compassion with Morality)***

Dhamma manifests in Saddhamma only when there is compassion with insight and morality. The purpose of Tathagata in coming into the world was to befriend those poor and helpless and unprotected, to nourish those in bodily affliction, and to help the impoverished, the orphan, and the aged, and to persuade others to do so. Compassion relates a person to society and makes life meaningful.

### ***'Maitri' with 'Karuna' (Universal Fellowship with Compassion)***

Only compassion was not enough; Buddha went beyond it and taught 'Maitri' (Universal Fellowship). Buddha held that compassion (Karuna) is only love for human beings. Maitri is love for all living beings. Buddha wanted human beings not to stop with compassion, but to go beyond mankind and cultivate the spirit of Maitri for all.

Buddha gives an example by saying "Suppose someone comes to dig the earth. Will the earth resent it? No, it will not. But earth is also a part of nature, so there should be a feeling of kindness for earth.

Suppose someone wants to set the River Ganges on fire with a torch. Would it be possible? It would not be possible because the Ganges has no combustibility in its water.

Is there air? There is. Can air be seen or controlled? No, it cannot be. Suppose someone tries to paint pictures in the air. Do you think they could do it? They will not be able to do it because there are no dark patches in the air."

Buddha concludes "just as the earth does not feel hurt and does not resent, just as the air does not lend [itself] to any action against it, just as the Ganges water goes on flowing without being disturbed by the fire, so also you Bhikkus(those who have renounced worldly life and joined the mendicant and contemplative community – disciples of Buddha) must bear all insults and injustices inflicted on you and continue to bear Maitri towards your offenders.

He said that the ambit of Maitri should be as boundless as the world, and as so be vast that it is beyond measure.

Buddha said "According to my Dhamma, it is not enough to practise Karuna. It is necessary to practise Maitri."

This is the underlying teaching of Buddha for the people on the Earth to engage in and practice fellowship that rises over and above the human bodies and translated values in real action.

### ***Bringing an End to Divisiveness***

Dhamma to be Saddhamma must break down barriers between Man and Man. Buddha did not agree with the society's definition of Vedas, the varna (caste) system and the principle of social barriers.

### ***The Ideal Society***

A society where learning is open to all, where there is morality, compassion, benevolence and where there is no caste; no inequality; no superiority; no inferiority; all are equal. Such a society is an ideal society.

### ***The Worthy Traits***

Dhamma to be Saddhamma must teach that 'Worth' and not 'Birth' is the measure of human beings.

### ***Equality***

Dhamma to be Saddhamma must Promote Equality between Man and Man. Buddha says "Men are born unequal. Some are robust, others are weaklings. Some have more intelligence, others have less or none. Some have more capacity, others have less. Some are well-to-do, others are poor. In the struggle for existence, if inequality be recognised as the rule of the game, the weakest will always go to the wall. Inequality should not be allowed to become the rule of life. Society has to be committed towards equality.

## **Conclusion**

The state and social system envisaged by the Constitution of India is based on constitutional values of democracy, justice, fraternity, dignity and liberty. It was repeatedly stated in the Constituent Assembly debates that no one could claim that drafting a good Constitution could ensure a good system. It depends on the values of the society and the people as to what kind of country and governance they want.

If the people have belief in social harmony, then all communities will create and sustain trust amongst one another and if they want animosity, then falling apart of the trust is a fait accompli. The way writing of Ramayana cannot create 'Ramrajya' (ideal rule), or creation of Mahabharata cannot ensure 'Dharmarajya' (rule of dharma – based on virtues); similarly, the drafting of Constitution cannot ensure democracy and fraternity. For this, all people including teachers, politicians, authors, farmers, labourers and religious leaders have to stand by the constitutional values with utmost dedication. The most basic initiative is to create trust; trust of people for the people, people in the government and government in people, trust in judiciary, media, teachers and society's trust in the Constitution. The time is NOW.