

Duties vs Rights

Commander Veerendra Jaitly (Retd.)*

Human beings are social animals. The system of our social organization gives equal priority to both the community and the individual. It tends to emphasize the dual nature of rights as both freedom and duties. Any society as a whole can progress only when everyone fulfils his/her obligations to the fellow citizens. In a progressive society, we acquire the ability to exercise our rights only when we learn to respect the rights of the others. If while exercising my right, it clashes with the right of a fellow citizen, I should immediately think of my duty to the society, community and the country.

At times, the human rights activists go out of the way to plead and protest for the terrorists and naxalites when they get killed by the police or armed forces. They forget the gruesome killings of children, ladies and anyone else who comes in their way. How can such people who have no respect for the law of land, expect mercy from the legal system or the law enforcement agencies as a part of their rights?

Fundamental rights are rights and freedom guaranteed by constitutions of some countries and therefore have a legal sanction and are

enforceable through a court of law. Similarly there are fundamental duties basically a responsibility bestowed on us as citizens of the country and we are expected to perform them as good citizens. Thus the primary difference between fundamental right and fundamental duty is that fundamental right is based on privilege granted to us by the constitution of the country where we live whereas fundamental duty is based on accountability as a good citizen or as a good human being.

We all come across a number of individuals in our life who are very conscious about their rights. During any discussion, they would like to support their behaviour quoting their Right to Freedom of Expression or their Right to Freedom of Speech or even their Right to live their life, the way they want.

It is worth noting that rights are solely a form of personal entitlement granted by the constitution of the country where you are staying. One must remember that individuals have a reciprocal obligation also to respect the rights of others if they expect to have their own rights respected in turn. If your neighbour feels that he has the right to play loud music till middle of the night to celebrate the birthday

**Veerendra K Jaitly is a motivational speaker, a consultant, a coach, a writer and a mentor for the corporate world. He is known for his communication and leadership skills. His trainings are well-known for being informative, interactive, and action oriented. e-mail: ccubeconsultants@gmail.com*

of his son, he must also realize that you too have the right to sleep peacefully without any unnecessary noise.

If I have the right to speak anything in my organization or the residential society where I stay, I must understand that it is my duty that I don't hurt anyone. Even while discharging my official duties, if I have to issue some instruction that may not be liked by the majority, I can always use an appropriate language in such a way that it doesn't disturb the harmony of the organization and everyone understands that it is ultimately for the good of the organization.

Similarly, the right to religious expression

is also quoted at a number of places. This right ensures that members of religious minorities are protected from interference in the exercise of their religious freedom. At the same time, it means that it is their duty not to denigrate the religion of the majority. People must show the tolerance when it comes to religious practices too when they differ from their own. It is very important that when we ask for our right to worship the way we want, we must also take into consideration our duty that it doesn't disturb the community in general and doesn't hurt others.



Courtesy: Monthly Management Mailer

SPIRIT OF SERVICE

My profession progressed satisfactorily, but that was far from satisfying me. The question of further simplifying life and of doing some concrete act of service to my fellowmen had been constantly agitating me, when a leper came to my door. I had not that heart to dismiss him with a meal. So I offered him shelter, dressed his wounds, and began to look after him. But I could not go like that indefinitely. I could not afford, I lacked the will to keep him always with me. So I sent him to the Government Hospital for indentured labourers.

But I was still ill at ease. I longed for some humanitarian work of a permanent nature. Dr. Booth was the head of the St. Aidan's Mission. He was a kindhearted man and treated his patients free. Thanks to Parsi Rustomji's charities, it was possible to open a small charitable hospital under Dr. Booth's charge. I felt strongly inclined to serve as a nurse in this hospital. The work of dispensing medicines took from one to two hours daily, and I made up my mind to find that time from my office-work, so as to be able to fill the place of a compounder in the dispensary attached to the hospital. Most of my professional work was chamber work, conveyancing and arbitration. I of course used to have a few cases in the magistrate's court, but most of them were of a non-controversial character, and Mr. Khan, who had followed me to South Africa and was then living with me, undertook to take them if I was absent. So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning, including the time taken in going to and fro the hospital. This work brought me some peace.

The Story of My Experiments with Truth – M.K. Gandhi