

FACETS OF TOLERANCE THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO HUMAN RIGHTS

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Awareness of Human Rights and its dispensation is closely linked with political awareness of the masses and tolerant behaviour of the people in general. The political process, from time to time, positively contributes to changing the system of governance and the social setup. It is an instrument of change contributing effectively towards changing the status quo. It leads to good governance, economic viability and establishment of a fruitful society. But, in order to be effective, this political process should be creative, progressive, principled, clean and founded on dedication for the cause on the part of political leaders and government servants, with its precincts explicitly laid down.

The various areas in which toleration should be exercised with the purpose of creating cooperative and progressive societies are race, language, color, religion, caste, creed and general behaviour. Cultivation of toleration in its various forms is essential for establishing a democratic, cultured and equitable society.

Prejudices such as ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, sectarian, and sectional contribute heavily towards violation of human rights. Another aspect that negates the importance of human rights, and its compliance, is giving preference to personal interests as against the collective interest.

Human rights violations are made at two levels - the public level and the government level. Unless we effectively curb these at the public level it becomes difficult to curb it at the government and state levels. Therefore, a mass literacy and education movement and a sound programme will have to be initiated for this purpose.

Adherence to the observation of Human Rights dispensation enables a group of people, or a nation, to develop into a democratic, pluralistic and peaceful society and establish a welfare state. On the one hand, it prevents gross violation of human rights both by state machinery and social structures and, on the other hand, it grants equal opportunities to every citizen to realize his/her full potential as an equal and dignified member of the human society. It safeguards every citizen from all kinds of exploitation by the vested interests. These vested interests, in our case, are the *jagirdars*, the monopoly capitalists and industrialists, and the religious elite.

The bestowal of human rights requires that the following rights be guaranteed to every individual: -

1. The right to a safe life, free from undue financial stress.
2. Full protection of the law for dispensing liberty and dignity of the person.
3. Equal opportunities to utilize the natural resources of one's country and a substantial level of living standard, without any discrimination on the basis of colour, caste, creed, gender, ethnic or cultural identity, language and social status.
4. Devolution of political, administrative and economic power to democratically and freely elected bodies of the people at the lower levels.
5. Special representation to women, religious minorities, workers, peasants and other disadvantaged groups in elected bodies, at all levels, to ensure earliest attainment of equality among people.
6. Equality of every person before the law, and equal protection of law.
7. Permission to peacefully assemble and associate without interference, and to travel to any part of the country.
8. Freedom of thought and conscience, and the right to express one's opinion freely.
9. Protection against all forms of hate-speech and false propaganda by an individual, group or state organ.
10. Sharing, acquiring and imparting information and ideas through any media without interference from the state.

11. Rendering every assistance to develop the productive and creative potentials and activities of an individual.
12. Providing social security in case of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or natural disaster.
13. Special legislative and administrative measures for the economic and social uplift of disadvantaged groups, communities, and regions.
14. Freedom to adhere to any religion or belief and to practise it in public or in private.
15. Equal status, rights and opportunities regardless of one's religion and belief, and protection against the linking of political, legal, economic and social entitlements with one's religious identity.
16. Non-interference of the State in religious affairs, and in formulation of religious dogmas.
17. Abolishing all laws and customary practices manifesting gender discrimination, through appropriate legislative measures. Helping women attain equal status and opportunities in every domain of State and society. Giving them constitutional guarantees of their access to the political and electoral structure.
18. Entitling every child to total protection from all forms of violence, forced labour, neglect, abuse and coercion. Giving the child the right to free choice of profession and opinion formation.
19. Preservation and promotion by the State of regional cultures, languages, arts and literature. Promotion of commonalities among various cultural entities to facilitate evolution of a pluralistic culture.
20. Ensuring compulsory and free education to all citizens up to the secondary level, providing them access to higher professional and technical education and promoting education in liberal arts and sciences to develop a humane polity.
21. Providing just working conditions, and giving equal remuneration for equal work.
22. Placing restrictions, in the best interest of the people, on monopolies and socially unacceptable ownership of land and

natural resources, which are the collective properties of the people living in the country.

23. Guaranteeing rest, leisure and recreation to all segments of society, and providing a clean environment.

24. Fixing an affirmative role for the State to promote international peace and well being of humanity.

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