

## **A Prologue: Mission of Life**

**Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel<sup>1</sup>**

Generally, the law students start their studies from Preamble to the Constitution. Students also read Article 51-A of the Constitution laying down Fundamental Duties. One of such duties is to be inspired by the “noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom” While the students read and even memorise these provisions, they do so as part of their syllabus. Some believe that these provisions have no relevance beyond using the knowledge of the same for the profession. In other words, their functional utility is not realised. Is it so? Let’s examine.

Obvious dream of young student, after completing law studies, is good placement with corporate house/law firms, unless they have prospect for their own lucrative law practice or otherwise. This is quite usual and apparently nothing wrong with this. Sometime there is compulsion to return loan or other financial reasons. This is so for other professionals also. Money is an essential component of comfortable life. Everyone is entitled to aspire for happiness which is perceived to imply good earning, acquiring status and position, having a prosperous family. Apparently, one has legitimate freedom to make choice in life so long as there is no violation of law. It may thus appear that whatever is important for achieving the goal of comfortable life may be focused without being concerned with anything else.

Counter argument is that Preamble and fundamental duties are to be followed individually for your own benefit as well as benefit of society. They are as sacrosanct, if not more, as binding law. Enjoyment of individual life without concern for life of others is against established norms of Indian culture and way of life which is superior to culture of individualism concerning welfare of individual without concern for welfare of all. Happiness for all is part of universal prayer in

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our culture (Sarve bhawantu sukhina) since times immemorial. Gandhiji's famous song "Vaishnav jan to tene kahiye je peer parayi jane re" which is expression of same thought gained so much popularity that it was translated in many languages of the world. Preamble is also expression of same thought in the background of freedom movement. The mission of freedom fighters was to end injustice by imperialist forces which thrived on their commercial interest at the cost of others resulting in denial of basic needs of common man. They fearlessly kissed gallows considering the life to be worthless if such state of affairs continued. Gandhi stopped wearing full dress after he saw that large section of Indians could not afford dress. Shastri stopped taking meals at least one time in a week seeing people remaining hungry and on his appeal most of Indians skipped Tuesday evening meals. Bhagat Singh in his famous speech in his Court statement justified his throwing bomb to end injustice when person growing food was not getting food, person weaving cloth was not getting cloth and person raising constructions was not getting shelter. There are numerous stories of freedom fighters making sacrifices for assuring dignified life of equality and liberty to Indians under their own rule. How in practical terms happiness for all is achieved and noble ideals which inspired struggle for freedom are followed is not defined anywhere though undoubtedly it is expected to be done.

Happiness is a relative term. Some see happiness in wealth, power, position, relationships, food, good dress, big house. Certainly, wealth provides facilities and comforts and they provide some happiness but not all happiness. However, there are some, perhaps in minority, though highly respected who do not see happiness in wealth, power, position or status but in sacrifice and service inspired by the mission of freedom fighters and values in the Preamble or such values in our society.

We are passing through difficult times because of Pandemic which has taken several lives. Courts are considering failure to handle the situation of shortage of medicines, oxygens, doctors. It is reported that essential medicines are being

hoarded and sold in black market and those who are unable to access are dying. Many people are unable to access medical facilities. Yes, there may be shortage of infrastructure in the country but is the management perfect. Is there also failure of human effort. In normal times, common man is skeptical in going to a doctor apprehending sharp practices by some. Even for approaching a Court, some people are apprehensive. This may be true of all professions. It is not being suggested that professionals lack competence and sincerity but there appears to be crises of confidence in our own people in free democratic country. Allegations are made even against highest authorities openly, including in court proceedings. There are allegations of corruption, adulteration, encroachments, failure to perform duties or committing misconduct. One of reasons for these failures is being too selfish, materialistic and being not only unconcerned about miseries of others but also exploiting others for personal gains and mere law is not enough to rectify all wrongs without inner commitment to values.

There is thus certainly a question to be debated and pondered over whether mere material achievements without commitment to values of our society enough. Our texts talk of a balance in material and non-material values. Yes, one must have dreams to acquire wealth but balancing it with duty to serve. How such balance is brought about is not merely by obeying law but doing service to the society and fellow citizens. Where balance is reached is for each one to decide. Life is a trust for serving the mankind. Any power, wealth, status is trust in individual's hand to be accounted for and not to be squandered away at will. Though public trust doctrine strictly applies to and can be legally enforced against public authorities, its applicability to all is expected by the society and the Constitution while leaving enforcement to individuals themselves. But success of the society depends on every single Individual being committed to it. Only this can lead to happiness of all. This is the true mission of life.