



FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR A NATION

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the author discusses the "Fundamental Duties" that are enshrined in the Indian Constitution. They are a set of moral obligations and responsibilities that citizens are expected to follow. These duties state the idea that, while citizens have rights, they must also fulfil some moral obligations towards the citizens and the nation. These duties guide individuals to become responsible members of society to contribute to the country's welfare. In addition, the Fundamental Duties are moral obligations that citizens must follow to maintain a balanced relationship with their country and other citizens of the country. These duties are essential for maintaining social order, justice, and economic growth, ensuring that personal freedoms do not harm others or the nation. They encourage citizens to use their freedoms in a responsible, respectful manner, while also considering the welfare of others and the nation as a whole.

The duties include respecting the Constitution, promoting unity and integrity, while also protecting the country's cultural heritage, and safeguarding public property. The goal is to make a society where individuals work together for the public good while respecting one another's rights and freedoms of rights. By fulfilling these duties, citizens play an important role in ensuring peace, justice, integrity and overall progress of the nation. These responsibilities help citizens actively contribute to social harmony, environmental protection, and national development overall. While these duties are essential for national growth, they are often overlooked by some citizens and taken for granted. This article explores and explains why such duties are crucial, especially in a diverse country like India, and discusses their significance in detail.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important provisions in the Indian Constitution is the Fundamental Duties, which is mentioned in Article 51A. These duties represent a set of moral obligations and responsibilities of the Indian citizens to promote patriotism and maintain the unity of the nation. They were introduced by the 42nd Amendment in 1976 in Part IV-A of the Constitution. Though these duties are non-justiciable, meaning they cannot be enforced by law or the judiciary, yet they serve as guiding principles and moral obligations for citizens. They aim to inspire citizens to contribute positively to the nation's progress. These duties are crucial for promoting national integration, social cohesion, and environmental preservation. Initially, there were 10 Fundamental Duties, but the 86th Amendment Act in 2002 added an 11th duty, bringing the total to 11.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

Originally, the Indian Constitution did not include Fundamental Duties. The idea of incorporating such duties came from both international and domestic influences, particularly the challenges faced by India in the post-independence era. The main objective behind introducing Fundamental Duties was to promote responsible citizenship and strengthen national unity in the independent nation. India's concept of Fundamental Duties was influenced by the Soviet Constitution (of the former USSR), which had provisions which required citizens to actively contribute to the welfare and progress of the state. These duties were inspired by the constitution of Japan.

The necessity for Fundamental Duties was realised during the period of internal emergency from 1975 to 1977. Before the 42nd Amendment in 1976, the Indian Constitution focused primarily on Fundamental Rights (Part III), which guaranteed fundamental rights and civil liberties to citizens of the nation. However, it did not explicitly mention the corresponding responsibilities which created an imbalance between the rights of citizens and their duties. In 1976, the Government of India formed the Sardar Swaran Singh Committee to examine the need for Fundamental Duties. The Committee observed that while citizens had rights, they also needed to recognize and perform certain duties. As a result, the Committee recommended the inclusion of a chapter dedicated to Fundamental Duties in the Constitution. The Government

of India accepted the recommendations and decided to incorporate these duties into the Constitution. This led to the enactment of the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1976, which introduced a new section, Part IVA, that specifically outlined these duties. Therefore, Article 51A was added to the Indian Constitution, listing ten Fundamental Duties for Indian citizens. Although the Swaran Singh Committee had proposed eight duties initially, later in 2002, the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act introduced an additional duty: to provide education to children between the ages of six and fourteen. Therefore, today, Article 51A of the Indian Constitution contains 11 Fundamental Duties. The concept of Fundamental Duties in India is a blend of domestic needs and international influences. These duties reflect a unique balance between the rights granted to citizens and their responsibilities toward the nation, society, and the environment.

IMPORTANCE OF FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

India's multi-religious, and multi-lingual society can sometimes lead to a rise in tensions. Duties such as promoting harmony and preserving the dignity of others serve as a reminder to fight against discrimination and violence. The duty of citizens to maintain social order, equality and safeguard public property and avoid violence directly contributes to social peace and order, preventing unrest and destruction. These duties are a tool for a responsible citizen who understands the ethical principles that govern a democratic society. Citizens who understand their Fundamental Duties and follow them are more likely to take part in civic activities, such as participating in elections, voting, engaging in public welfare activities, and contributing to the development of the nation. They also indulge and promote engagement in public discussions about national policies and the public good, strengthening democratic values. The duty to protect and improve the natural environment is highly significant, especially given the environmental challenges India faces like deforestation, pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Fundamental Duties encourage citizens to uphold the moral values of society. The duty to provide education to children (ages 6 to 14) aims to uplift India's literacy levels and ensure that future generations are equipped to participate in the global knowledge economy. Fundamental Duties encourage citizens to respect national symbols like the Constitution, National Flag, and National Anthem, which deepens patriotism and pride in one's country. They urge citizens to uphold the sovereignty, integrity, and unity of India. Fundamental Duties are therefore an important article as they protect our nation and help to maintain unity in our country.

ELEVEN DUTIES UNDER THE FUNDAMENTAL DUTY

51A(a): To abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag, and the National Anthem. It reflects a sense of respect for India's democratic values and sovereignty overall. It reflects a collection of patriotism and unity, national pride and the idea that these symbols represent the spirit of the nation. It helps in uniting people from diverse backgrounds under the common ideals of justice, liberty, and equality that are mentioned in the constitution of India. It also encourages national integrity and unity in diversity. By promoting peace solidarity and unity, citizens are encouraged to rise above differences and contribute to national cohesion and unity.

51A(b): This clause states the importance of remembering the ideals, values and sacrifices made by those who fought for our nation's independence and also encourages citizens to follow these ideals in their everyday lives. It urges citizens to carry forward the legacy of the freedom struggle and apply its core principles in their everyday lives. By doing these, they contribute to the building of a just, democratic India. This duty serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by the freedom fighters of our country for independence and as a guiding principle for the future of the nation.

51A(c): To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India. This article emphasizes the duty of every citizen to promote and respect the spirit of international peace and security. It deals with both internal sovereignty as well as external sovereignty which is the right of India to have control over its affairs and to interact on the global stage without any external interference.

51A(d): This clause serves as a foundational principle that calls for fostering national unity and social harmony by encouraging all its citizens to respect and promote brotherhood, peace, and understanding among all people, regardless of their religious, caste, cultural, linguistic, or regional backgrounds.

51A(e): This clause aims to promote harmony and the spirit of brotherhood amongst all the people of India regardless of their religious, linguistic, and regional diversities. It emphasizes the duty of citizens to value and preserve the rich heritage of the country's culture. It plays an essential role in safeguarding India's rich cultural heritage, which is a source of its identity, unity, and diversity.

51A(f): This clause aims to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture. It serves as a reminder for Indian citizens to appreciate and protect the rich cultural heritage of our country. India's composite culture is a treasure trove of diverse practices, traditions, languages, and arts that have evolved over thousands of years.

51A(g): This clause aims to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures. It emphasizes the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment. By protecting and improving the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife, citizens can contribute to sustainable development, climate change mitigation, and the preservation of biodiversity.

51A(h): This clause aims to develop the scientific temper, humanism, and the spirit of inquiry. It highlights the importance of developing a scientific temper, embracing humanism, and fostering the spirit of inquiry and reform as part of the Fundamental Duties of Indian citizens. These values are essential for building a progressive, rational, and just society where citizens contribute to the well-being of the nation and work towards a better future.

51A(i): It emphasizes to safeguard public property and to abjure violence. This duty underscores the importance of protecting public goods and rejecting violent behaviour. By promoting these values, the Constitution encourages citizens to act responsibly, resolve conflicts peacefully, and respect the resources that belong to the nation as a whole.

51A(j): To strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of achievement. Urges citizens of India to strive for excellence in every aspect of their lives, whether individually or collectively, with the goal of raising the nation's achievement levels in various sectors. It highlights the importance of continuous self-improvement, collaborative efforts, and national progress. By encouraging citizens to aim for excellence, the Constitution envisions a nation of achievers where every individual and group contributes to the overall success, prosperity, and development of the country.

51A(k): provides opportunities for education to children between the age of six and fourteen years. This was added by 86th Amendment Act of 2002.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

Fundamental duties are Non-Justiciable: It means that it is not enforceable by law, which means that no legal action can be taken if they are not followed. While the duties themselves are not enforceable by courts, the Constitution ensures their importance through the moral framework they provide. They serve as a guide for citizens to follow a set of ideals that are conducive to the welfare of society. It guides the state in formulating policies that reflect the fundamental values of the Constitution. The Fundamental Duties apply to each and every citizen of India with particular emphasis on those who are citizens by birth or citizens by naturalization. They aim to encourage and engage citizens in positive action for the nation's progress while maintaining social order and peace. They serve as guiding principles. It creates a balance between the exercise of rights and the obligation to respect the rights of others, ensuring a healthy democratic society where personal freedom is respected and exercised with responsibility. It upholds these rights by ensuring that citizens value and safeguard the public good, individual freedoms, and social justice.

The Fundamental Duties in India are a unique aspect of the Constitution, and they highlight the balance between individual rights and responsibilities. They are not enforceable by law but act as guiding principles that shape the ethical conduct of citizens, aiming to create a progressive society. While these duties are not legally binding, but these duties reflect the national vision for responsible citizenship and contribute to the overarching goal of nation-building and democratic consolidation. It is for the welfare and well-being of our nation as a whole.

NEED OF FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

Fundamental duties help us realize that being a citizen isn't just about claiming rights, but also about contributing to society for a better future. Duties like respecting the law and helping others encourage us to be active and responsible members of our country.

Building a better and stronger Nation: By encouraging citizens to strive for excellence and contribute to national progress, fundamental duties push citizens to work for the country's growth in areas like education, science, and technology. This leads to a stronger and more developed nation.

Balancing Rights and Duties: Fundamental rights give us freedom, but fundamental duties ensure we use those rights responsibly. They help to create a balance, so our freedom doesn't

harm others. Rights and duties together ensure that we live in a peaceful and harmonious society.

Social Welfare and Justice: Fundamental duties focus on promoting social welfare, like ensuring the well-being of children or supporting reforms in society.

Protecting the Environment: we have a duty to protect the environment for a better future. Fundamental duties like preserving nature teach us to take care of the planet by reducing pollution and conserving resources for future generations.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Duties are an essential part of the Indian Constitution which aims to create responsive and active citizens who contribute positively to society. They play a key role in developing a strong, just, and progressive nation where citizens are not only aware of their rights, freedom and entitlements but also their obligations to other citizens and the country. It encourages citizens to act ethically, promote justice, and work toward the betterment of the nation overall. By Following these duties, they help us to ensure the peace, stability, and growth of the nation while building a more inclusive, fair, and responsible society for every member of the society regardless of their caste, gender, or religion. It shapes a responsible and active citizen that upholds the values of the Constitution, respects the laws, and contributes to the welfare of the nation. In a world where rights and freedoms can sometimes lead to conflicts, the presence of these duties is key to ensuring a balanced, harmonious, and thriving society. By following these duties, citizens play a crucial role in the continuing success and progress of India as a vibrant democracy.

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