

Chapter-12

Freedom

Revision Notes

1. Freedom is a liberty to do whatever a person likes to do or a positive power of doing and enjoying the worth of work.
2. Freedom has the two aspects, i.e. positive and negative. Positive freedom refers to those rights which do not reach any harm to others if enjoyed as well essential for an individual's development. Negative freedom implies the absence of any restraints on freedom.
3. Freedom is considered valuable because it allows us to make choices and to exercise our judgement. It permits the exercise of the individual's powers of reason and judgement.
4. Freedom can be classified as natural freedom, civil freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, religious freedom, individual freedom, etc.
5. Restrictions on the freedom of individuals may come from domination and external controls. Such restrictions may be imposed by force or they may be imposed by a government through laws which embody the power of the rulers over the people and which may have the backing of force.
6. The 'Harm Causes' must be 'serious'. For minor harm, Mill recommends only social disapproval and not the force of law. For example the playing of loud music in an apartment building should bring only social disapproval from the other residents of the building. They should not involve the police.
7. the existence of the 'minimum area of non-interference that human nature and human dignity need an area where the person can act unobstructed by others.
8. Various safeguards have been provided for freedom, i.e. democratic setup, equal rights for all, economic security constitutional provisions, etc.
9. Freedom of expression require non-interference or should not be restricted because it is a fundamental value to be possessed by the people.
10. Though, a number of times, the demands have been raised to ban books, films, articles, journals, etc.
11. Banning is an easy solution for the short term to meet the immediate demand but it is

very harmful for long term prospects of freedom in a society because once one begins to ban then one develops a habit of banning.

12. Constraints of different kind thus exist and we are subject to them in different situations.while reflecting on such situations we need to realise that when constraints are backed by organised social-religious or cultural-authority or by the might of the state, they restrict our freedom in ways that are difficult to fight against.