

Introduction

- Liberty is derived from a Latin word “Liber”, which means free or independent. The concept of liberty occupies a very important place in civics.
- It has made powerful appeal to every man in every age. It is the source of many wars and revolutions.
- In the name of liberty war, battles, revolutions and struggles have taken place in the history of mankind.
- Liberty means the unrestricted freedom of the individual to do anything he likes to do. But this sort of unrestricted liberty is not possible in society.

Nature & Scope

The idea of liberty may be analyzed in terms of : **Freedom as the quality of Human Being** : Animals, birds, insects are governed 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest'.

- Only a human being is capable of freedom. Man as a hominid has distinguished himself from other living beings as he claims to have an aim in his life.
- Man has created many social organizations. Man has tamed and controlled animals. Freedom is the distinctive quality of man. Human beings capacity to gain scientific knowledge is the source of their freedom.

Freedom as the Condition of Human Being : Liberty is usually defined as 'absence of constraint'. The concept of liberty has very wide implication in the sphere of political philosophy. We demand liberty for the human being (as a condition of life) because we treat him to be a rational creature.

- Since here our demand is confined to the removal of external restraint, hence it is termed as negative liberty. Now a man may not be free even if there is no essential restraint. Freedom in the wider sense requires that man should not feel any internal or external constraints.

- This means, freedom from physical pain, disease, ignorance, fear or wants. A state tends to secure positive liberty for its citizens. We wish to have freedom for the rational agent. If a person is not free in the real sense and still he is not keen to have freedom, efforts should be made to arouse his conscience and made him anxious to win his freedom.

Classification of Liberty

- Natural Liberty,
- Social / Civil Liberty
- Moral Liberty.
- Social / Civil liberty is further classified into:-
 - Personal liberty
 - Political Liberty
 - Economic Liberty
 - Domestic Liberty
 - National Liberty
 - International Liberty

- ***Natural Liberty*** : It implies complete freedom for a man to do what he wills. In other words, it means absence of all restraints and freedom from interferences. It may be easily understood that this kind of liberty is no liberty at all in as much as it is euphemism for the freedom of the forest. What we call liberty pertains to the realm of man's social existence.

- This kind of liberty, in the opinions of the social philosophers like Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau was engaged by men living in the "state of nature" – since where there was not state and society. This kind of liberty is not possible at present. Liberty cannot exist in the absence of state. Unlimited liberty might have been engaged only by few strong but not all.

- ***Social/Civil liberty***: it relates to man's freedom in his life as a member of the social organization. As such, it refers to a man's right to do what he wills in compliance with the restraints imposed on him in the general interest.

