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NCERT Class 11 Political Science Part 2 Chapter 2: Freedom Overview YouTube Lecture Handouts

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NCERT Class 11 Political Science Part 2 Chapter 2: Freedom Overview [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogw54arLbNU]

- Heroic struggles against domination
- Struggle for freedom represents the desire of people to be in control of their own lives and destinies and to have the opportunity to express themselves freely through their choices and activities.
- Rules require constraints to be imposed on freedom and it may free us from insecurity – focus on principles to distinguish socially necessary constraints and other restrictions

Ideal of Freedom

- Autobiography of Nelson Mandela – “Long Walk to Freedom” – explains personal struggle with apartheid in South Africa, resistance of his people to the segregationist policies of the white regime, about humiliations, hardships and police brutalities suffered by blacks – struggle against unjust & struggle to remove obstacles to freedom of all people of South Africa – went for 28 years in jail.
- He gave up his favorite games (boxing) , clothing, music to achieve freedom and went to jail
- Aung San Suu Kyi: She remained under house arrest in Myanmar, separated from her children, unable to visit her husband when he was dying of cancer, because she feared that if she left Myanmar to visit him in England, she would not be able to return. Book – Freedom from Fear.
- She says, “for me real freedom is freedom from fear and unless you can live free from fear you cannot live a dignified human life”

What is Freedom?

- Absence of constraints
- There is no external control or coercion and person can make independent decision in autonomous way

- Expanding ability of people to freely express themselves and develop their potential – develop creativity and capabilities
- Find which social constraints are necessary at core relationship between individual and society – see which features are desirable and which are not
- Features we need to differentiate unnecessary from necessary constraints
- Reduce or minimize social constraints that limit our ability to make choices freely
- Free society enables one to pursue one's interests with a minimum of constraints

Swaraj

- *Swaraj* incorporates within it two words — *Swa* (Self) and *Raj* (Rule)
- Freedom as a constitutional and political demand, and as a value at the social-collective level
- Tilak – “Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it”
- Mahatma Gandhi in his work *Hind Swaraj* (1909) where he states, “It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves” . Swaraj is not just freedom but liberation in redeeming one's self-respect, self-responsibility, and capacities for self-realization from institutions of dehumanization.

Sources of Constraints

- Domination
- External control
- Social inequality – caste system
- By government – laws (apartheid in South Africa)

So democratic government protects freedom of people

- Netaji Subhash Chand Bose - By freedom I mean all round freedom, i.e., freedom for the individual as well as for society; freedom for the rich as well as for the poor; freedom for men as well as for women; freedom for all individuals and for all classes.
- This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social iniquities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance.

Why We Need Constraints?

- Disagreements can appear as open conflicts – ready for fight, road rage while driving, fight over parking, land etc.
- Need to control violence and disputes
- Society required we be willing to respect differences of views, opinions, and beliefs
- Legal and political restraints are required
- Support from law to avoid harassment or bullying

Liberalism

- It is identified with tolerance as a value
- Defended the right of a person to hold and express his/her opinions and beliefs even when they disagree with them.
- It focuses on individual
- It tends to give priority to individual liberty over values like equality
- Favored free market and minimum role of the state (historically)
- Role for welfare state and reduce social and economic inequalities (modern view)

Harm Principle

- Address the issue of the limits, competence, and consequences of the imposition.
- John Stuart Mill – Book “On Liberty” – Harm principle the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection.
- That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.

He Explained

- ‘self-regarding’ actions, i.e., those actions that have consequences only for the individual actor and nobody else (state has no business to interfere)
- ‘other regarding’ actions, i.e., those actions that also have consequences for others (external interference)
- The ‘harm caused’ 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 and no involvement of police
- People should be ready to tolerate different ways of life, different points of view, and the different interests, so long as they do not cause harm to others.
- We must not develop a habit of imposing restrictions since such a habit is detrimental to freedom.

Negative and Positive Freedom

- Negative Freedom: Freedom as the absence of external constraints or non-interference - define and defend an area in which the individual would be inviolable, in which he or she could ‘do, be or become’ whatever he or she wished to ‘do, be or become.’
- Existence of the ‘minimum area of noninterference’ is the recognition that human nature and human dignity need an area where the person can act unobstructed by others. Explains idea of “freedom from.”

- Positive Freedom: Freedom as the expansion of opportunities to express one's self. Thinkers like Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, Gandhi, and Aurobindo. Looking at conditions between individual and society, explains man like a flower which blossoms when soil is fertile, sun is gentle and water is adequate.
- Person must not be constrained by poverty and unemployment. Explains idea of "freedom to." Tries to make that society such that it enables the development of the individual

Freedom of Expression

- It is considered to belong to the minimum area of 'non-interference'
- 4 reasons why there should be freedom of expression by J. S. Mill in book "On Liberty"
 - No idea is false. What appears to us as false has an element of truth.
 - Truth does not emerge by itself. It is only through a conflict of opposing views that truth emerges.
 - This conflict of ideas is valuable not just in the past but is of continuing value for all times
 - We cannot be sure that what we consider true is true. A society that completely suppresses all ideas that are not acceptable today; runs the danger of losing the benefits of what might turn out to be very valuable knowledge.
- Sometimes there is demand to ban books
- 'Justifiable constraints' have to be supported by proper procedures and important moral arguments.
- Fundamental value and society must bear some inconvenience to protect it from people who want to restrict it.
- Voltaire's statement — 'I disapprove of what you say but I will defend to death your right to say it'.
- Deepa Mehta – wanted to make film on plight of widows in Varanasi (but was not allowed) – it would bring bad name to historic town

Other Films & Plays That Were Banned After Protests

- Ramayana Retold by Aubrey Menon
- The Satanic Verses by Salman Rushdie
- The Last Temptation of Christ
- Play Me Nathuram Boltey
- Ban is easy for short term as it meets immediate demand – but harmful in long term as it becomes a practice – go for censorship (part of the film was banned)
- In England, anyone who is employed to work for the Royal household is constrained by contract (constraint?) from writing about the inner affairs of the household. So, if such a

person were to leave the employment, they would be unable to give an interview or write an article or author a book about the politics of the Royal household.

- When constraints are backed by organized social religious or cultural authority or by the might of the state, they restrict our freedom in ways that are difficult to fight against
- Freedom - when we make choices, we have also to accept responsibility for our actions and their consequences. It is for this reason that most advocates of liberty and freedom maintain that children must be placed in the care of parents. Our capacity to make the right choices, to assess in a reasoned manner available options, and shoulder the responsibility of our actions, must be built through education and cultivation of judgement.

 Mayank