

Democracy and Discipline

Democracy without discipline is a body without soul. If there is no discipline in the country, democracy will degenerate into a monarchy i.e., a Government by a unruly crowd. In fact, in Greek 'Demos' means crowd. The word 'Curacy' is from the Greek word 'Krait' or 'Cratos' which means power. A lack of discipline in democracy justifies Plato's criticism that democracy is the divine right of the ignorant people to rule ignorantly.

It is true that democracy is based on the free will of the people who are supreme and sovereign. But this does not mean that democracy grants absolute liberty to the people to do anything. Under this mistaken belief, some people misuse their rights and liberties. Not only that, some people also think wrongly that in a democracy they have only rights but no duties. These people do not know that rights and duties go hand-in-hand.

No doubt, under a democratic form of government, people enjoy the freedom to elect their representatives in accordance with their wishes at the time of election. Even after the election, they can always make their views on various issues known to the Government through the press, radio or T.V. But they must air their grievances through constitutional and non-violent means. If people take the law in their own hands and become violent, they will neither deserve democracy nor can they make success of it.

Everything is fair in love and war but it is not so in a democracy. Democracy calls for a high degree of discipline, respect for the views of to her and unflinching faith in equality fairly and justice. Mahatma Gandhi had stressed the need for spiritualizing our politics by inculcating moral discipline among the people. According to him, democracy does not mean simple the grant of rights and their enjoyment. If the people want to enjoy their rights, they must be prepared to perform their duties as well.

We find that in the world only those countries whose people are disciplined have made progress and achieved greatness although the economies of Japan and West Germany were completely shattered during the Second World War, they were able to rebuild their countries due to the dedicated work their disciplined citizens. They have achieved great success in science, technology and industry.

But for the sense of discipline in their people, they would not have been able to achieve such success. Both Japan and Germany are democratic countries. They have, by their example, shown to the world that if democracy and discipline go hand in hand, countries can make great progress.

On the other hand, if a country lacks discipline, it is bound to be doomed and eventually to be replaced by a dictatorship the people will then lose their freedom of thought and action. They will have to carry out the orders of the dictator. They will have no say whatsoever in the administration of the country.

Only in those democratic countries which are inhabited by disciplined people, can the citizens enjoy the fruits of democracy. For example, in Switzerland, people are so disciplined and hard-working that they have made their country synonymous with democracy. They have become prosperous by dint of their disciplined and industrious temperaments.

In India, we have rightly adopted a democratic form of Government. It is now up to us, the people of India, to imbibe the spirit of discipline and to make democracy a grand success. For this, we should make a beginning by teaching discipline to our children at home itself and laying stress on it in the schools of the country, because the children of today are the future citizens of our country. If they are taught discipline today, then tomorrow they can be disciplined citizens and can make our country strong, united and powerful.

Nowadays, we are hearing about a lot of indiscipline and lawlessness in many parts of our country by certain vested interests that are guided and inspired by certain inimical foreign powers. These misguided and indiscipline people do not know what great harm they are causing to the unity of our country by their secessionist acts. They should remember that if India remains united and strong, they will also live a prosperous life. On the other hand, if India as a whole is weakened and divided, they will also perish with it. So, the success or failure of India is in reality the success or failure of her people.

Therefore, it is the foremost duty of all citizens of India to remain united and disciplined, to defeat the design of foreign powers to destroy the unity of India and the democratic set up of our country. By discipline and unity alone can democracy prosper in our country, and we remain free.