

Do you think this is right? The creator who created the world and all the creatures in this universe breathed life into human beings as well as serpents. The snake is one of the heirs of this property, it has inherited the earth along with the rest of the creation. It is an undeniable fact that God's creation live together. Shouldn't we acknowledge this fundamental truth of oneness or brotherhood. But is it practicable? The serpent's sting is venomous and often leads to death. Hail serpent -you have no claim over my two acres of land, get away with you, at once.

But whither shall you go? The land owners in the vicinity will not spare you. Even the major part of this terrestrial globe is broken up by each and every one, mainly the human race that has established its supremacy, leaving the lower animals to their fate.

**(Bhoomiyude Avakasikal,
Vaikom Muhammed Basheer)**

Doesn't the extract given above indicate that all living beings have their right to live on earth?

All living beings including man have natural rights.


What are rights?

Rights are opportunities available to each for the growth and development of their personality. Like all other living creatures



human beings too have inherited the right to live and thrive on earth. A variety of activities have been undertaken the world over for the protection of not only the environment but also the endangered species among flora and fauna. Which are the crucial times during which man has to face major challenges and threat to his life

and property? We have already noticed in the previous chapters the agony and trauma undergone not only by the soldiers but also civilians including women and children at the time of war. Are there other disasters in addition to war that lands man in deep trouble and sorrow? Have a look at the news clippings.



- *Haven't the people in these news clippings inherited the right to live peacefully?*
- *Who is responsible to ensure their security and right to life?*
- *Identify and discuss the factors that impede their progress in life.*

Human Rights

The world is composed of people with different political, social, economic and religious backgrounds with a lot of divergences among them. Each individual has a right to lead a dignified life in a situation of his own choice. Their human rights can be protected only by providing congenial life situations and opportunities.

Those inherited rights which guarantee liberty and which can never be nullified by others can be termed human rights. For example the right to express one's views in a fearless manner and the right to enjoy pure breathing air and drinking water are human rights.

Human Rights: Origin and Evolution

The notion of rights is as old as human civilization. Humans could have expressed longing for freedom and claim of equal rights for natural resources from the very beginning of social life. In situations of denial of such freedom and claims, struggles might have taken place. The success in such struggles can be accounted as steps toward progress of human rights.

Consider the observations of eminent thinkers, regarding rights and freedom during the freedom struggle in the United States of America. 'The Government and state have no aim beyond the interests of the people who have created the state and the government and who live under the same'.

Britain attempted to control through a colonial rule, those who migrated to America (the new land) for freedom and peaceful living. This prompted the colonial people of America to strive for independence from

colonial rule. Representatives of the people assembled at Philadelphia in July 1776 and declared independence of the colonies. This declaration of independence established the freedom and rights of settlers in the colonies of America. The Constitution that was adopted consequently protected the human rights of the Europeans who had migrated to America and settled down there.

The French revolution and consequent declaration of human rights took place in the same century. Louis XVI, the autocratic ruler of France dissolved the French Parliament and denied the rights of the French. As a result of this under the collective leadership of the commoners the National Assembly which gave design to the Declaration of Independence of Man was formed in 1789. Equality, liberty and fraternity which served as the foundation of the French revolution prompted world nations to frame constitutions that ensured basic human freedom.



The French revolution and American war of independence played a role in ensuring equality. Examine what they are?

The struggle of people, against autocratic and authoritarian rulers, have helped them to protect their rights. The Russian revolution is another example in this context. The socialist government that assumed power in the post revolutionary period was prepared to implement the programmes of 'food for the hungry', 'land for the tiller'. The socialist system of government in which people had representation started

functioning in Russia instead of the authoritarian rule of the Tsars.

This ensured the rights of the labourers and peasants. The idea that political power is based on human will and not on divine will started gaining prominence in the world by this time. The philosophic notions of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Rousseau provided impetus to the concept of human rights.



- *Discuss to what extent the above cited struggles and revolutions influenced the protection of human rights.*

Cyres (syrus)



About 2500 years ago Cyres the emperor of Persia made a proclamation which astonished his people. The release of slaves and the right to live in perfect freedom was declared in Persia which had been steeped in slavery and slave trade. His proclamations pertaining to human rights were recorded and buried under the earth in a cylinder, shaped like a drum, and made out of clay. This was discovered by archaeologists in later times and the contents prove his inclination towards human rights.



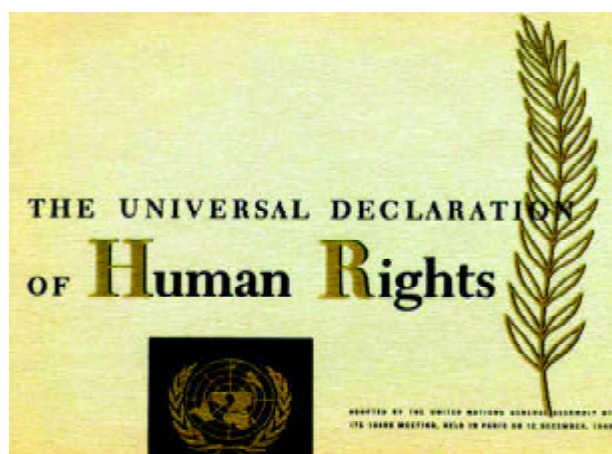
The national movement for independence in India was able to unite the people over and above the influence of divisive forces of caste, religion and regional sentiments. Movement for independence in India upheld the political and economic freedom of the people of India. The Constitution of independent India includes these rights. The Preamble of the Constitution of India binds together the ideals of democracy, secularism, socialism and republic. The Constitution itself is dedicated to the

people of India to ensure the rights of each and every citizen.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The two world wars which resulted in harsh cruelties and violation of human rights marked a decisive turning point in the context of human rights. The autocratic suppressive and authoritarian Fascist and Nazi regimes of Italy and Germany indulged in frightening genocide. During the times of war human lives lost its value and those affected by the war had to struggle through pain and agony. The United Nations was formed at this juncture with the twin aims of preventing the outbreak of another world war and establishing world peace and security.

The formation of United Nations was an added inspiration to the concept of human rights. A peaceful living atmosphere had been a major concern even at the time of the formation of the UN, since democracy had not become a reality even after the 2nd world war. Efforts along these lines, however continued in most countries and this prompted the UN to make the declaration of Universal Human Rights.



December 10 Universal Human Rights Day

The UN proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. This declaration contains the basic freedom and rights of human beings. Hence December 10, is observed as universal human rights day.

According to this declaration all human beings are entitled to the right to live in perfect freedom without discrimination of

any kind based on caste, race, religion, language, nationality, faith, culture and gender. The UN exhorts all the nations of the world to adopt measures to ensure the above.

Note the preamble of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

All men are born free and are equal in status and rights. They are endowed with intelligence and conscience and obliged to promote the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all men.



Do the ideas suggested by the revolutions and struggles we have learned earlier reflect in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights cited above? Discuss.

Certain rights that included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are given below.

- The right to live freely and (the right) to enjoy personal security.
- Freedom/Liberation from slavery.
- Equality before law and equal protection of law.
- Protection from arbitrary arrest, confinement (imprisonment) and forced exile.
- Right to be an innocent till offence or crime is legally established.
- Right to travel and settle any where in the country.
- Right to participate, directly or through representative in the government of the nation
- Right for the adults to marry and to set up a family.
- Individual and collective right to (earn) property.
- Right to expression of opinion and ideas and equal pay for equal work.
- Right to special protection for motherhood and childhood.
- Right to education.



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has proven that world wars and struggles for freedom helped enhance the personal status of the individual. Discuss.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights is regarded as the theoretical base of human rights. The covenants among states (of the world) regarding civil and political rights

(1966) as well as economic and cultural rights (1966) are also accepted as the basic documents of human rights.



Can a declaration of human rights alone ensure opportunity for dignified life to people? What other requirements are needed for creation of such a condition? Analyse.

Rights of Children



Look at the picture. Don't they too have rights? Such depictions raise certain questions.

- Do you hold that children are more subjected to violations of human rights?
- Do women and children have special rights? Why do they have special rights unlike others?
- Does poverty lead to denial of human rights?

Such questions and discussions generated new thoughts the world over. And as a result of these and in continuation of declaration and covenants on human rights, under the auspices of the UN, customs and practices relating to the rights of children evolved. It is known as the Convention on the Right of the Child (1989). This was proclaimed by the UN on November 20th, 1989 and through this proclamation UN directed governments of member states (of UN) to ensure the rights of children. This proclamation of 1989 exhorts parents and society to ensure the development of the

personality of the child focusing affection, freedom, peace and equanimity and compassion.

Some of the rights of children

- Protection for the personality of the child
- Right not to be separated from parents
- Right to health
- Protection from discrimination
- Right to education
- Protection from harmful substances like psychotropic drugs



There are laws in India for protecting the rights of the child. Our Constitution guarantees such rights to the child. The laws mentioned below are related to such rights of the child.

- Right to Education Act
- Prevention of Child Labour Act
-

- New born (baby) died due to lack of medicine and proper medical care.
- A child of 12 years denied the opportunity to attend school and made to work in match factory.
- Brutal punishment by teacher to child for not completing home work.
- Police torture of boy serving as domestic help accused of theft.
- Increase in the number of abandoned children reaching 'AMMATHOTTIL'.

- Have rights been violated in the above situations?
- Which are the rights that have been violated in each of the above situations?
- Who is responsible for the violation in each of the above situations?
- Are there measures available to ensure rights at appropriate levels of violations? What are they?
- What can society do to prevent such violations (of right)? Prepare a list of your suggestions.

Rights of Women

Which are the different ways in which rights are denied to women in our society?

Aren't the following like neglect of women, discrimination in matters relating to food, dress and other life conditions at home, at

place of work, harassment at public places and travel, violaton of human rights of women?

The UN has highlighted the dignified status of women in order to end discrimination of women. Action programmes have also been framed for this purpose. The UN convention of 1979 enjoins the following as responsibilities of governments.

- Gender equality.
- Government shall not practice any discrimination against women.
- Individuals, associations or organizations and institutions shall not attempt discrimination against women.
- Initiate procedures to end discriminatory rules and customs against women.
- Abandon all discriminatory laws against women.

In compliance of the proclamation by the UN India has enacted laws and implemented them. Some of them are given below:

- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence, Act - 2005.
- Protection at place of work (2010 law passed by parliament).



Are discrimination against women caused by social conventions? Discuss.



You might have witnessed such scenes Often.

- Don't they require protection and support?
- Don't these come under the perview of human rights?

Protection and support (allowances) during old age are envisaged as human rights. Such protection is ensured through rules and programmes in our country too.

- What measures are adopted in our country toward this? Find them out and discuss their effectiveness.

Regional human rights covenants are made by states with similar social, political and geographical conditions. The European Convention on Human Rights is of such nature. This convention is qualified by its features like prohibition of capital punishment and protection of full human rights for aliens in the European soil. Regional human rights conventions exist in Africa and America.

Rights in India

Rights guaranteed by our Constitution have been discussed in previous classes. You may recollect the same.

Which are the rights guaranteed to citizens and individuals by our Constitution?

Indians have experienced for long the impositions of colonial rule and the prolonged struggles against colonial domination. This experience (might) have made us support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the UN. The chapters (and articles) on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy are related to human rights.



What are the fundamental rights in our Constitution? Are the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles related to Universal Declaration of Human Rights by UN? Discuss and find out.

Are all human rights fundamental rights?

Right to citizenship and right to franchise are not included as fundamental rights in the Constitution of India. But these are guaranteed as rights by the Constitution. All human rights are not included in the list of fundamental rights. Human rights have wider scope than fundamental rights. For instance the claim to pure drinking water, pure air, unpolluted environment are treated as human rights, but these are not specified as fundamental rights in the Constitution.

Human rights-present status

Some of the news reports discussed in the present are given here. Observe.

Aung San Suu Kyi



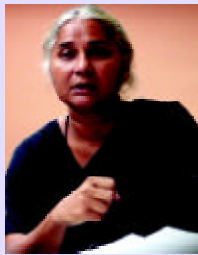
Aung San Suu Kyi is the popular leader who directs the struggles for freedom and democratic rights in Myanmar. She was kept under house arrest for long years by the military regime.

Racial riots in Kirgistan



Kirgistan is a new state formed after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. In 2010 the people of the Kirgistan ousted the ruler heading a government of gross misrule. But the Kirgs who are in the majority of population organized riots and genocide against the minority Uzbeks.

Narmada Bachao Andolan



The Sardar Sarovar Project in Narmada river poses threat to the tribals engaged in conventional work for living. People of the area agitated under Medha Padkar seeking protection for their place of living, work, cultivable land, forest and water sources.

Erom Shanu Sharmila



The increased level of secessionism in militancy in Mizoram empower the armed forces to arrest without a warrant, shoot at sight and to demolish buildings under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Against the indiscriminate use of this Act by the army Erom shanu sharmila is on hunger strike for the last 10 years.

- The above given are some news reports discussed in recent times.



Are there violations of human rights traceable in these news reports? What are the rights that have been violated? Who violated these rights? Examine.

There are certain rights reserved for those who are evicted when land is acquired for development purposes. Which are the rights that are violated when eviction is effected for common good of society? Discuss in the light of news report on Narmada Bachao Andolan.

Development activities always violate the human rights of a section of people. Do you have any such instance in your area where for promoting the gains of majority rights of minority groups are denied? What are they? Are all such reported incidents violations of human rights? Examine.

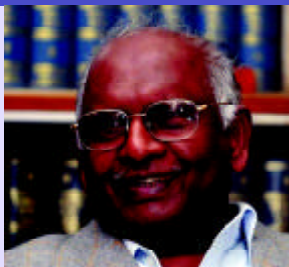
Denial of rights of men occur at different places like service arrangements, military, police, local bodies, educational institutions etc. You are aware that in case fundamental rights are denied citizens have the choice to approach the judiciary. What if human rights are violated? How can they be protected? Discuss.

Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Protection Act came into existence in 1993 for protecting human rights. Accordingly national level and state level human rights commissions were

constituted to ensure protection of human rights.

National Human Rights Commission



Justice
K.G. Balakrishnan

National Human Rights Commission comprises a Chairman and four members. Also, the Chairpersons of National Minority Commission, National Scheduled Caste Commission, National Scheduled Tribe Commission, National Commission for Women are ex-officio members of the National Human Rights Commission. Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission will be a retired Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India.

Which are the problems that allow us the right to approach the human rights commission?

Look at some of the powers of the commission.

- Protection of right of citizen
- Review the laws that are opposed to human rights
- Reforms of administrative arrangements
- Prevent atrocities in prisons
- To prevent violations of human rights of SC and ST population
- Protection of the rights of women and children

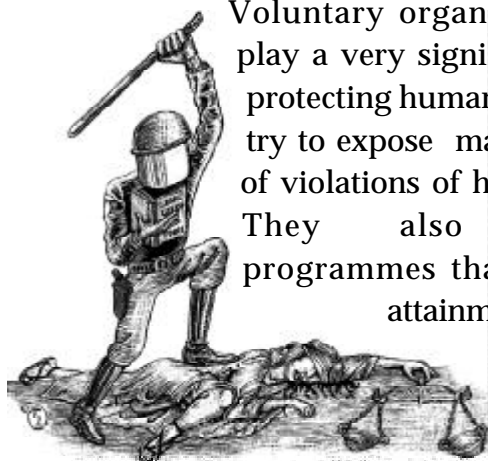
State Human Rights commission

Human Rights commission functions at the state level, as it works at the national level, for the protection of human rights. State Human Rights commission consists of a Chairperson and Two members. Chairperson of the commission will be retired Chief Justice of the High Court.



Analyse news reports about a problem in which Human Rights commissions intervened recently.

Human Rights and Organizations



Voluntary organizations can play a very significant role in protecting human rights. They try to expose many instances of violations of human rights. They also promote programmes that make full attainment of human rights possible.

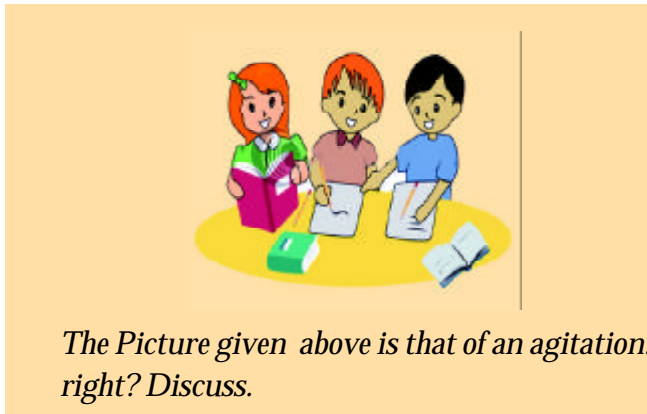
These voluntary organizations help the governments to prevent violation of human rights. In situations like eviction in the name of development, pollutions etc. these organizations hold agitations.

Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Global Watch, America Watch, Asia Watch, Africa Watch are well known human rights organizations in the international level.

- People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)

- People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR)
- Citizen for Democracy (CFD)
- People's Council for Social Justice (PCSJ)

are human rights organizations functioning at the national level. Such organizations or branches of such organizations are functioning at the regional level. Which are they? Enquire.



The Picture given above is that of an agitation. Why is the right to agitate counted as a human right? Discuss.



Rights of Consumer

Do you take note of the quantity and weight of things that you purchase from shops? The seller or the producer record these details on the cover in which goods are packed and supplied. And they charge the price as given there. There are instances in which goods and services do not provide the quality that is advertised. Does the consumer has a right to complain in such a situation and to get goods and services of a definite quality?

How can this right be established or realized?

The right of the consumer is the right of the buyer to get the proper measure, weight and quality of the goods and services for which he pays the cost. For purposes of protecting these rights consumer disputes redress forum at district level and consumer disputes redress commission function at state and national levels.



Which all affairs relating to consumer rights are intervened and solved by consumer redress forum? Discuss after collecting details.

Rights and Duties

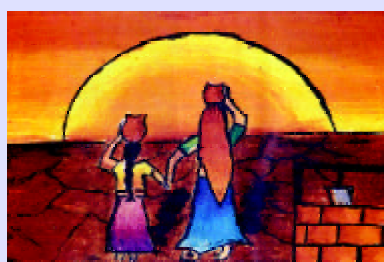
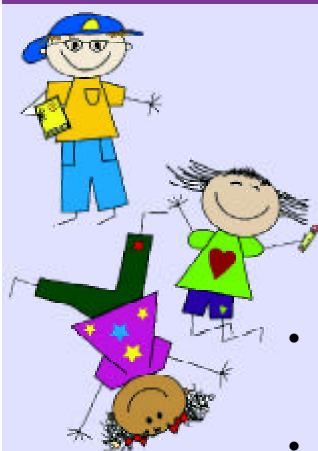
Human rights begin from where fundamental rights end. Human rights are related to individuals and society. All rights have corresponding duties too. It is the duty of others to make possible the rights of a person. That means it involves accommodating others. The right of a person to propagate ideas cannot be hindered by others. Human rights are inviolable but they

are not unrestricted. Society and individuals have to impose certain restrictions on the exercise of rights. Such restrictions can be considered as duties, and this is based on the value norms of society. Human rights become true and meaningful when the human rights of others are accepted.

The table that follows indicates rights and duties in a democratic system. Complete the table.

Rights	Duties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of speech • Right to vote /franchise • Right to conduct propaganda • • Right to form organizations and work as a member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant the freedom of speech of others • • • Consider the opinion of others •

Activities



Look at the picture given here.

Mother and daughter are walking back after collecting water for daily use from a distant place.

- Can this be seen as a human rights issue?
- What is the violation of human rights in this? Establish your opinion.
- The rights, violation of rights of women and children and related situations are cited in the lessons, as noticed by you. Why is it that in our society the rights of women and children are more violated? Is it because of the limited defining of rights?
- Why society is not able to ensure these rights for them? Organize a seminar in your class and discuss.
- You are invited to make a speech about the significance of human rights in the context of universal human rights day. What advice will be included in your speech? Prepare a note on speech.
- Why has violation of human rights become extensive in the period of highly developed world scenario? Can the reason for this be attributed to the insufficiency of laws in the respective nations? Or is it due to the absence of creating awareness? Are the customs in society responsible for this? What are the other reasons that can be located? Find out Prepare a note.
- When Human rights are discussed it becomes clear that human rights are made a cover for misuse of the idea of human rights. Can the promotion of selfish interests under the cover of human rights violation be prevented? Organize a debate.
- Who is the Chairperson of the State Human Rights Commission? Prepare an analytical note on an issue intervened by the State Human Rights Commission.