

**SIXTY YEARS OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE:  
ROLE OF LAW STUDENTS**

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**Scenario** :- Imagine yourself to be on a road at midnight driving a car. You come to a traffic signal. There is nobody around and the signal is red. Will you stop the car till the signal becomes green ? The answer of most of us would be an emphatic No !

Even at midnight, in Western countries of the world, if there is a driver driving the car who comes at a red traffic signal, he will wait till it becomes green, even if there is nobody around. The position in India is exactly reverse. The same is more amongst the youngsters who always try to jump the traffic lights and if stopped by the policeman, they know, how to deal with it. In fact, many of us take pride in jumping the traffic lights and thereafter dealing with the policeman. Small and insignificant as the incidence may appear, it shows our inbuilt tendency to brake the laws and encourage others to behave in a similar lawless manner.

**Introduction** :-

Needless to add, the lawlessness in India, drives most of the first time visitors to India, crazy. They point to a fundamental problem in our 60 years of independence i.e. absence of the rule of law. The situation appears to be more or less the same in many developing countries of the world, particularly due to the behaviour of citizens and also due to ineffectiveness of the State and rampant corruption. The Indian Courts with their mounting arrears of cases do not act as sufficient deterrent in this type of lawless behaviour.

It will be appropriate to take up certain questions from the point of view of law students :-

1. Have Sixty years of Indian independence laid to law abiding or lawless society in India?
2. Is democratic form of Government, in India, the right form to encourage law abiding behaviour ?

In short the students of law must always think of Dicey's Rule of Law. Dicey identified three principles which together establish the rule of law: (1) the absolute

supremacy or predominance or predominance of regular law as opposed to the influence of arbitrary power, (2) equality before the law or the equal subjection of all classes to the ordinary law of the land administered by the ordinary courts ; and (3) the law of the constitution is a consequence of the rights of individuals as defined and enforced by the courts. As students of law, in their years of studies, the focus should be on questions of above nature. Ultimately, if students of law do not learn and start believing in the rule of law, the whole education and their future lives will be a waste !

### **Role of Students :-**

My focus is not so much on the State, but on the Indian citizens, more on the youngsters, particularly the law students. The behaviour of citizens and their attitude towards laws is perhaps more worrying than the inefficient Indian State. Some people, therefore, question the very suitability of our having democracy in India and feel authoritarian system such as British or Indira Gandhi's emergency as better suited to us. From an economic point of view it may well be that the cost of breaking law in India is very low.

### **What can Law students do? :-**

It is, therefore, necessary that law students start playing their role in increasing the law abiding behaviour starting with themselves. We stop jumping the traffic lights! Equally important is spread of education that includes a sense of civic duty. If we do not do this, it may well be a basic hurdle in India's becoming a super power in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It may also result in people losing faith in the rule of law and order making the entire study of law, the legal system, the judiciary an exercise in futility. It may lead to anarchy and jungle raj. Any Country's development today is not measured only in terms of economic might, but it also measured on the basis of its law abiding citizens, its commitment to human rights etc. If we want foreigners to invest in India and increase our global trade and global legal practice, we must all make efforts to see to it that the rule of law is instilled in every Indian. The law students must start this effort with themselves.

