

## **Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Buddhist Teaching**

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### **Abstract**

Human rights are a set of privileges inherent in man by birth. As man himself violated these privileges connected with the right of living which is a gift of nature a treaty on human rights became the most essential need following the World War II.

It was as a solution to the social injustice created in consequence of the robbing of rights of the majority of people by the privileged class which consisted of merely a handful of people including rulers crazy over power and wealth, that the United Nations Organization adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The Declaration is important for two reasons. First, it suggests that serious breaches of human rights had occurred round the world. Second, it shows that man has identified that human rights are something inherent in him and that he has already made a collective attempt to protect them to a certain extent. This is the state that prevailed in Western countries when the Declaration was adopted.

It seems that this social reality which the Europeans realized in 1948 had already been perceived by Asian and south – eastern Asian countries some 2500 years ago. They accomplished it by recognizing and implementing the lifestyle according to the concept of human rights which the Buddha taught. It is for this reason that the Buddha is regarded with honour and respect as the first and the oldest spiritual teacher.

Buddhist teachings of human rights are full of eternal values. The concept of human rights is universal. The teachings which the Enlightened One had advanced in this regard were practically confirmed and proved meaningful through the action of society which comprises according to Buddhist thought the four groups bhikkhu, bhikkuni, upāsaka and upāsika.

## Introduction

Preservation of human rights is one of the major topics of discussion in the world at present. The question of human rights has come to the fore in the West especially, as a consequence of the tendencies of society towards economic, social, religious political and scientific issues. The emergence of the discussion on the need to defend human rights clearly suggests that there is breach of human rights. It is as a result of this awareness that various institutions, workers and missions/consulates such as human rights commissions, human rights committees, human rights observation boards, human rights enactments etc. sprang up round the globe in the past six decades. “**Human Rights Council**” affiliated to the UNO is the institution with international recognition and playing a pioneer role in the sphere of human rights.

Until recent past, there were governments run by monarchies in many countries. The head of the monarchy was the king. He came to hold that position by inheritance. While royalty possessed land by inheritance, people were under king’s control. Enactment and implementation of law and the rule of the country was carried out according to his own wishes. In such circumstances, wish or sympathy of the king was treated as justice. Critics of politics call this procedure as the “**feudal system**”.

The basis of feudal system was the offer of their labour by the majority of people for the benefit of the few. Under this set up extremely serious breaches of human rights occurred and as a result the majority of people had to just accept whatever they were given by the king whose compassion they had to depend on. Then the society was in real earnest of not rights but duties. Rights of the citizens were determined in accordance with the choice of the king. On the other hand, duty of the citizens was to serve the king according to his choice. The main trust of the present study is to explore the context of emergence of the Western Discourse on Human Rights and compare them with the teachings of Buddhism.

## **Background and the Objectives of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights**

Intellectual awakening and economic, political and scientific changes brought about in the West since the renaissance have led to many criticisms against the feudal system of society and in turn concepts of the worth of a democratic social system and began to spread throughout the world. The spread of the revolutionary concepts reached its culmination point in communism or socialism. The theory of the preservation of human rights through novel social traditions which valued ownership and independence of man also came to be established. The main concept took root in people vigorously specially following the bitter experience they had following the World War 11. This was the closest reason behind the spread of a great enthusiasm for human rights and the establishment of special institutions themselves solely to deal with them (Department of Educational Publications, 2005). The culmination point of this enthusiasm was the issue of the universal declaration of human rights. What is visible in it is a universal agreement with a legal base(Mahinda and Gunananda 2001). It is pertinent here to briefly deliberate on the objectives of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights

The principal enactment of human rights in force at present is the one known as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted by 48 countries of the United Nations Organization voting for it in 1948. No country voted against it. The number of countries refrained from voting for or against it was eight. Two countries were absent from the Assembly on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948 when the Declaration was adopted. With the adoption of the Declaration common agreements such as “Athens Enactment”, “Magna Charta Agreement” etc which had been in force and recognized by a few countries became null and void. The reason being that the new declaration referred to above has been approved by a majority of countries in the world unlike the old agreements. The Human Rights Enactment comprising 30 sections describes its object as follows:-

**“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,**

**Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom**

**from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,**

**Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,**

**Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,**

**Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,**

**Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,**

**Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,**

**Now, therefore,**

**The General Assembly,**

**Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations,” (Department of Educational Publication 2005)**

This comprehensive explanation expresses that the object of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is to ensure that no person either on the basis of factors such as his place of birth and cast and creed, colour, language, religion etc of his parents or whatever privileges he is entitled to as a human being shall be denied such privileges. And it asserts further if

such an unjust and inhuman act is committed wherever in the world urgent action must be taken against such act.

The countries which agreed with the Enactment and signed it are under obligation to comply with the clauses embodied in it. Further, those countries which did not sign the Declaration are not allowed to violate human rights on that account. If any country violates those enactments it is treated as an instance of going against the opinion of the world and such country will have to face adverse consequences. The consequences may range from enactment of economic barriers to contrivance of force by the United Nations.

Accordingly every country must not only pass its acts complying with the said enactment but also must take legal measures to curb violation of human rights. If violation of human rights occurs in any country such state must undergo punishment enforced by the International Courts. In this sense the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be treated as a triumph of the people who have been and who will be the victims of social injustice.

## **Contents**

Universal Declaration of human rights comprises 30 parts representing various spheres treated as classes and 49 Enactments which include the said parts (Ibid, 2005) One can grasp the nature of those clauses which are given in the following contents :-

**Clauses 1 – 2** All men are born free without any division with honour and are entitled to human rights. It is stressed that when enjoying fundamental freedom and human rights equality must be taken into consideration and no differential treatment should be shown in whatever manner.

**Clauses 3 – to 21** refer to citizenship rights and political rights. They are as follows:-

- i. Right for man to live and for free thinking and to receive protection.
- ii. Right to live free from slavery and bondage.
- iii. Right to be protected from injury and annoyance from cruelty and from inhuman and mean treatment.
- iv. Right to be received as a person in law and right to receive equal protection by law.
- v. When a violation of human rights is occurred the right to receive an appropriate compensation and to receive legal protection.

- vi. Right to be free from taking into custody arbitrarily, and to be free from being kept in custody and to be free from exile.
- vii. Right to have a reasonable judgment from an independent and impartial judiciary.
- viii. Right to be treated as an innocent until convicted.
- ix. Right to be free from punishment for an offence which had not been considered punishable at the time of its commitment.
- x. Right to be free from interference with by force private/personal life, family, house and property as well as private documents.
- xi. Right to travel freely in one's own country to live in a locality of his choice and to leave and come back to his country.
- xii. Right to take refuge in a foreign country.
- xiii. Right to claim one's nationality
- xiv. Right to marry and build a family.
- xv. Right to own property.
- xvi. Right to independent thought, belief and to believe in a religion of one's choice.
- xvii. Right to hold opinions and to express opinions.
- xviii. Right to assemble peacefully and to form associations.
- xix. Right to participate in state activities of one's own country.
- xx. Equal right to enter state service of one's own country.

### **From clause 22 to clause 27**

Refer to human rights of economic social and cultural spheres. They confirm

- i. Right to have social security.
- ii. Right to choose a livelihood or a profession of one's choice
- iii. Right to receive equal salaries for equal work
- iv. Right to receive a reasonable and beneficial salary which must protect human dignity.
- v. Right to form trade unions and to join them
- vi. Right to take leisure and leave in suitable manner
- vii. Right to receive fundamental facilities such as sufficient health, food, housing etc.
- viii. Right to receive protection from disasters such as loss of employment (unemployment), illness, widowhood, old age which are beyond one's control?
- ix. Right to protect motherhood and childhood

- x. Right for the parents to decide the type of education their child should be given and the right to receive appropriate educational facilities.
- xi. Right to join cultural life of ethnicity to which one belongs.
- xii. Right to yield benefits and use from one's intellectual property.

**Clause 28** expresses that – every individual has the right to the social and international reception needed to own full rights and kinds of freedom included in this declaration.

**Clause 29** describes that every person has a set of duties to be carried out on behalf of society to fulfill rights and freedom referred to in this declaration. It is also mentioned here that the rights and independence enjoyed by an individual has a limit and that limit is determined by a system of laws enacted in order to safeguard those rights and freedom and to protect law and order and common welfare of a democratic society. Clause 29 comprises 3 enactments.

**Clause 30** is as follows:- “By no clause of this declaration shall make a definition which will enable any state, group or an individual a right to formulate a course of action which will destroy any right or independence mentioned in the declaration.”<sup>5</sup>

Taken as a whole the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a document of humanism and there is no contention that it is not. It has a legal force which can influence not only the countries which agreed with it and signed it but also those who did not sign it and even those countries which are not members of the United Nations. In this regard the name of this document,” i.e. **the Universal Declaration**” is literal because it is an agreement reached to ensure rights for all the people living round the globe.

### **Buddhist Teachings on Human Rights**

Next we turn our attention to Buddhist teachings on human rights. We know that the Enlightened One referred to human rights in 6 thousand B. C. or some 25 centuries before the introduction of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The time when Lord Buddha taught, it was extremely low level of development in the field of material sphere of advancement.

The kind of economic, social, political and scientific progress what we experience in the world today was absent at that time not only in India but also throughout the whole world. But on the other hand, the spiritual progress that had been achieved then was much more developed than that of today for which in fact, ample evidence is furnished by both history of

India and that of the Tripitaka Literature. Buddhist teaching on human rights alone shows the greatness of the said spiritual attainment.

Even at the time when the Buddha was born there had been serious breaches of human rights. Colour bar which had been deep rooted in Indian Society and various ideas socialized by Brahmins under Isvara Nirmānavāda (Creation of God Siva) were the cause of the breach of rights. While a handful of people belonging to Ksatriya and Brahmana castes led a luxury life enjoying all privileges the majority of people which comprised Vaisya and Sudra castes had to lead a miserable life under an unjust social order. Women were treated as subordinate citizens. They were not enjoying any of the privileges men enjoyed. Woman was treated just as a tool which man needed to exist. She was treated as a slave (woman) under the strict control of her husband(Sri Lanka Padanama, 1991)

The Enlightened One in adopting His teachings on human rights rejected all social misconceptions existed in India at that time. What were meant by “social misconceptions” are all kinds of teachings of Brahmins which caused breach of human rights. It is pretty obvious from the Vāsettha Sutra how the Buddha had mercilessly rejected all kinds of religious, philosophic, political and social misconceptions which violated human rights( **Khuddaka Nikāya, 2005**)

The above sutra was delivered by the Enlightened One in reply to a Brahman called Vāsettha himself when he inquired from Him as to how the word “Brahmana” could be interpreted.

Vāsettha was an erudite man who had mastered all Trivedas. The Buddha explained that though each and every species is designated by different names there is no such difference in man and hence division of human species into Kshatriya, Brahmana etc. is baseless and erroneous. He further clarified and emphasized that man becomes either noble or mean merely by his physical, verbal and mental conduct.

The same view is further clarified in detail in a number of other sutras such as Vasala, Assalāyana etc( **Majjhima Nikāya, 2004**). Another singular feature one finds in Assalāyana Sutra is the inclusion in it of the harsh criticism and displeasure leveled against the serious unjustness which the woman of the Buddha’s time India had to undergo. In this sutra not only the offence but also the lineage of Brahmins responsible for such wrong doing is ridiculed without sympathy (**Sutta. Nipata, 2004**)



Rejection of all the prevailing teachings, opinions, recognitions and social agreements which violated human rights in India at the time of the Buddha forms a part of Buddhist concept of Human Rights. Critics call this part of the Doctrine “Pratishdhanātma Ansaya” (part dealing of with repulsion) According to the above classification, discourses of the Buddha which are favorable to establishment of human rights belong to the part dealing with “development”. Many of those discourses can be identified as results of the attempt at repulsion referred to above. The Enlightened One rejected colour bar or social division based on caste system and explained the value of humanity and introduced equality. Although there are various differences between beings and inanimate things such as vegetation according to him there is no such difference between man and man, and the Buddhist point of view is that every man possesses an equal value. The Buddhist society which has been established to confirm this view considers everybody who has faith in Buddhism as “Srāvakas” (followers). Although Buddhist –society is divided into four groups such as Bhikshu, Bhikshunī, Upāsaka, Upāsika, based on their sex, male and female, and clergy and laity there exists no division between one group and the other as “upper” and “lower”. A person who enters the Buddhist-community may belong to a certain caste, class, or race according to the general acceptance of the society but according to Buddhist community he is a “follower”. When he perceives “the caturārya satyaya” (Four Noble Truths) by following “the Path of the doctrine” he becomes an “Arya Srāvaka”, (Noble follower). Nowhere in the world do we find a more practical illustration than this to corroborate ownerships and equality of man. To clarify the equality the Buddha quotes the following illustration:-

**“There are five major rivers in India. Water of these rivers differs. Their nature differs. All these rivers flow to the sea. Then the water of diversity becomes one and the same salt water. Buddhist society is also similar to this.” (Anguttara Nikaya 2005)**

The most remarkable feature found in Buddhist teachings on human rights is “Attupanayika Dharma Pariyaya” the method of inducing the followers to be themselves their own teacher. According to this method everybody who complies with his Doctrine should behave towards others according to his own will and consciousness.

**Sabbē tasanti daṇḍassa – sabbēsaṇ jīvitaṇ Piyaṇ**

**Attānaṇ Upamaṇ Katvā – na haneyya na ghātayē ‘(Maggima Nikaya, 2005)**

(Every being fears punishment and loves his life. Therefore one must think of himself and refrain from inflicting harm on others.)

A violation of human rights of a person is inflicting harm on that person. It is an instance of deprivation of his right to live. When you realize that you do not like yourself to be hurt then you must be able to realize that the same is the case with the other man. Then a violation of the right of other man also does not occur. The person who doesn't realize this fact robs the other man of his natural rights for the comforts of his own life. What Buddhism emphasizes is that it should not be done.

The Buddha – the Enlightened One- was the first world religious teacher who advocated the freedom of thought freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression and freedom of acceptance of thought. As man is his own master this freedom is a right he has inherited by birth. A sermon of the Buddha which most clearly analyzes this Buddhist concept is Kālāma Sūtra of the Anguttara Nikāya. It says as follows:-

**“Kālāma, doubt is appropriate. You should not accept anything because you have heard it, or because it has been handed down for generations, because somebody says that this has happened in the past, simply because this view goes with ours, because this is logical, because the person who says it is my teacher. You must examine yourself before accepting that “this is merit, this is demerit, this is good, this is bad.” These things are reproached by the wise. These things bring suffering. These things bring harm. Thus either you must reject them or accept them only after careful inquiry. (Sutta Nikaya, 2004)**

How much did the Enlightened One, the spiritual teacher of an exceedingly great number of followers, respect the human rights of His devotees is amply confirmed by the Vimansaka Sutra of the Majjima Nikaya. In this Sutra He declares and extends this right to such an extent that He says His followers have a right even to test the very Buddhahood of the Enlightened One.

**“Vimaṅsakēna bhikkhavē bhikkhunā parassa Cētopariyāyaṇ ajānantēna tathāgatē Samannēsanā kātabbā sammā sambuddhovā nō vā iti Viññāyati”(Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997)**

The same idea is further analyzed by another Sutra called Ambalattika Rahulovada Sutra. What is expressed therein is that one should think once again before one acts by means of mind, body and word. The Sutra emphasizes that every person has a right, freedom and a responsibility to come to a conclusion before which he has to think independently of his action.

**“Ēva mēva khō Rāhula, paccavekkhitvā paccavekkhitvā Kāyēna Kammaṅ Kātabbaṅ paccavekkhitvā paccavekkhitvā vācāya kammaṅ kātabbaṅ paccavekkhitvā paccavekkhitvā manasāya kammaṅ kātabbaṅ.”<sup>16</sup>**

Concept of Human Rights as taught in Buddhism covers an exceedingly vast field. Not only man but also the rights extend even to cover all conscious beings. This fact is analyzed in the important Sutra called Metta Sutra. This sutra says that rights of not only the beings already born but also that of to be born must be protected. The religious phraseology Metta (Maitiya) means that the right to acquire such rights must be respected. Rights of beings are violated at the instance of inflicting harm on them. On the other hand the rights are protected at the instance of offering of maître (loving-kindness).

**“Bhūtā vā sambhavēsī vā sabbē sattā bhavantu sukhittā (Maggima Nikaya 2004)**

Bhūtā means beings already born. Sambhavēsī means beings which are on the move in the Antarābhava (the period between the death and the next birth of a being which anticipates a permanent birth) it is the duty of a genuine Buddhist to have a good thought, a good blessing to the effect that let all such beings be happy.

The Metta Suta comprises a long description of the beings to whom metta (loving-kindness) should be extended. This description includes all kinds of beings that live in the universe. Accordingly Buddhism recognizes that there are rights inherited not only by human beings but also by all the beings in the world.

**“Mātā yathā niyaṅ puttaṅ – āyusā ēkaputtamanurakkhē ēvampi sabbabhūtesu – mānasaṅ bhāvayē aparimānaṅ.**The above stanza expresses that the love and affection that should be extended to all the beings is just the same as love and affection a mother extends to her one and the only son. It is nothing but a universal love.

The universal love put forward by the Metta sūtra is further strengthened by the Satara Brahma Viharaṇa (four kinds of noble life) called Mettā (loving-kindness), Karunā(compassion),Muditā(delight)and Upekshā (indifference)\*<sup>19</sup> and the Satara SangrahaVastu (four kinds of treats) called dānaya(alms-giving),priya vacanaya (pleasantspeech),arthacaryāva(benevolentconduct),samānātmatāva(equality)\*<sup>20</sup>

The typical feature connected with the human rights of Buddhist thought is that it emphasizes that rights are a mutual social activity interconnected with duties. What is expected in Buddhist thought is this. By carrying out one's own duties one yields to the right of the other man. And by performing other's duties one earns his right. Through carrying out the rights of both parties they will be preserved. The sermon of the Buddha "**Attānaṃ rakkhanto paraṃ rakkhati paraṃ rakkhantō attānaṃ rakkhati.**"<sup>\*21</sup> confirms the above truth or relativity. (By protecting oneself one protects the other. By protecting the other one protects oneself.)

The Buddhist concept referred to above manifests a very deep social reality. In every society at any time the issue of rights emerges whenever the duty loses its dignity. According to the Buddhist view it is not the right but the duty which is of more importance. There is no meaning in speaking about or claiming the right while abandoning one's duty. This is because the right is protected only when the duty is performed. Accordingly every one must possess volition. That is why volition as an essential factor in case of preservation of human rights in Buddhism is given top priority.

In this regard Singalā Sūtra deserves mention as one of the most important Buddhist teachings. This Sūtra is popularly known as "Singālovāda Sūtra." <sup>\*22</sup> According to this Sūtra the whole society is divided into 12 strata. Nobody who doesn't come under this division lives in this universe. Accordingly a system of human rights and duties which is an integral part of the society is introduced therein. The 12 strata are as follows:-

Parents	Employers	Husbands
Teachers	Laity	Friendly Ministers
Wives	Sons and daughters	Employees
Noblemen	Students	Clergy

As it is evident from the Singālovāda Sūtra every group mentioned in it is entitled to rights. The particular right will be preserved if mutual duties are fulfilled. When duties are neglected rights are violated. This emphasizes that rights and duties are interdependent or relative to each other. This Buddhist idea is an eternal truth. Even the "Pancasila Pratipadā" (Policy of Five Precepts) taught in Buddhism evidently updates the above concept. Pancasila Pratipadā refers to 5 refrainments which a Buddhist has to follow. One must abstain from

those actions because they violate the rights of the others in the society. The five precepts referred to above and are treated as the fundamental bases of the conduct of a Buddhist are as follows:-

- (1) Abstaining from destroying living beings**
- (2) Abstaining from taking things not given**
- (3) Abstaining from sexual misconduct**
- (4) Abstaining from false speech**
- (5) Abstaining from intoxicants (Chandima Wiejebabdara, Ibid.)**

When a person abstains from these five wrong doings human rights of others, i.e. the following will naturally be secured.

- (i) Right of living
- (ii) Right of using private property
- (iii) Right of leading a good family life
- (iv) Right to know true news
- (v) Right to work mindfully

The Buddhist idea of human rights which is preserved by “Pancasila Pratipadāva” is further strengthened by the system of conduct known as “Dasa Sakviti Vat”(Ten practices of Universal Monarch).“Dasa Sakviti Vat” is an excellent teaching wherein all the members of the society are classified and thus their rights are well preserved.

In addition even the Policy of the “Spritual Path” known as the “Arya Ashtāngika Mārga can be valued as a teaching which establishes human rights in mundane life. The said teaching which comprises 8 parts is associated with true conduct. If the society is engaged in true policy then involuntarily human rights will be preserved. <sup>25\*</sup> Buddhist doctrine is a way of teaching connected with man from his birth up to death. The doctrine contains both teachings meant for success of mundane life as well as spiritual liberation. In particular if the system of good conduct recommended in Buddhism is implemented in every sense of the word every problem connected with human rights will be solved. As a whole when we weigh the Buddhist teachings we are compelled to come to that conclusion.

Subject area of Buddhism is extremely wide. It is divided into two sections called Sammuti (consensus) and paramārtha (absolute). According to Buddhist teachings all what we call man, animals (beings), objects etc. are merely kinds of consensus we have invented

for the sake of easiness of use. In absolute terms all those entities are merely names. When we cling to the consensus called man we tend to believe in I, my etc. which give birth to egoism. It is this egoism which in turn gives birth to the basis of concept of rights. It is again the egotism which paves the way for the gaining one's rights as well as to seize other's rights. If the absolute truth of Buddhism could be understood problem of rights will not arise. Why? When we realize the fact that in reality there is no man or being but a collection of some elements then we will not have a craving for the belief in "I" or "my". Instead we will have a feeling of equality not only of everybody but everything. This feeling is the result of our understanding that everything in this material world is subject to the triple, i.e. impermanence, suffering and soullessness. This understanding of ours helps to preserve the rights of all the beings in the universe. In short the Buddhist doctrine in its entirety can be valued as a very much practical declaration of human rights. The present writer is of the opinion that the following quotation which corroborate the above will be of use in this regard.

Sir Marches of Setland was a scholar who did a thorough study of how the democratic legal basis of the British parliament should be devised. He who explored into each and every ancient religious and philosophical works in order to accomplish this task has ultimately come to the following conclusion:

## Conclusion

The modern concept of human rights is not a novel idea of anthropo-sociologists but a Buddhistic doctrine uttered by the Enlightened One 25 centuries ago and implemented very much successfully and practically and as a result the human society had gained admirable results. However, while Buddhism spread and gained popularity only in Asian and South-eastern Asian countries the European countries failed to undergo its influence.

Owing to various reasons it was since the birth of the feudal system that the violation of human rights commenced. The violation culminated in the World War II. In the continuous struggle for power in which powerful countries captured the weak, and the feeble nations became slaves of the super power, human rights were seriously violated. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was the culmination of the problem which had been the subject of discussion among the humanitarians, social workers and intellectuals who immensely respected democracy. The foremost aim of this Declaration was to protect human rights and the independence which all human beings living on earth are inherited by birth.

Though 60 years have been already elapsed since the adoption of this declaration which is treated as the international enactment of human rights the field of human rights as a concept is still being in the process of development. And as a result the defects of the said declaration are also the subject of their discussion among intellectuals. This implies that it is not a complete document in spite of the fact that it is a pioneer consensus of human rights.”\*<sup>27</sup>

In spite of adoption of the Universal Declaration violation of human rights on and often occur in the world. As a result of its legal aspect those countries which break human rights seems to be either trying to make justify their breaches or trying to hide them in the light of loopholes found in it. This indicates that the Universal Declaration is incomplete. On the other hand the exigency that cropped up following the Declaration of adopting additional enactments such as rights of women, that of children and that of labour too points out that the former was not entirely free from defects. However, the present state of affairs, it is true, is better than what had prevailed prior to the adoption of the Universal Declaration.

Although the Universal Declaration from time to time had to be amended as well as undergone criticism Buddhist doctrine has never been meted out with such fate. In fact there will be no room even in future for such a chaos. The Universal Declaration keeps on adopting

each stratum of society a separate enactment but the Buddhist teachings on the other hand takes the entire society as a whole. Accordingly its humanistic aspect is also excellent.

As the analysis of Buddhist concept of human rights is of philosophic as well as ethical basis it has become a system of ethics founded on voluntariness and self-discipline rather than a teaching burdened on man by force. Moreover, as Buddhist doctrine recognizes not only the rights of man but also that of all the living beings it extends even the scope of the Universal Declaration and thus manifests a much more remarkable concept.

After a deep investigation into the opinion of human rights taught in Buddhist thought what one can contemplate is that it is an extremely reasonable, philosophic and compassionate doctrine and compared it with the Declaration the latter is merely an incomplete shadow.



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