



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# Free speech is an integral part of a healthy society : Supreme Court

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## Context

- The Supreme Court on Friday said the **fundamental right to free speech** through poetry, theatre, stand-up comedy, and satire **must be cherished**, even as it quashed a criminal case accusing Congress MP Imran Pratapgadhi of inciting discord through his poem on “suffering injustice with love”.
- Justice Bhuyan explained to Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta that the **“reasonable restrictions” on free speech must remain reasonable**.
- **“Restrictions cannot be harmful or oppressive**. Restrictions cannot overshadow the fundamental right to free speech,” Justice Bhuyan said pointedly.
- The top court said free speech was an integral part of a healthy and civilised society. A person’s views cannot be silenced merely because the majority does not like the sound of them.

## Article 19

Article 19 guarantees to every Citizen of India the following **six basic, fundamental freedoms**

- 19(a) Freedom of **speech and expression**.
- 19(b) Freedom to **assemble peaceably and without arms**
- 19(c) Freedom to **form associations or unions or co-operative societies**
- 19(d) Freedom to **move freely throughout the territory of India**
- 19(e) Freedom to **reside and settle in any part of the territory of India** and
- 19(g) Freedom to **practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation trade or business**

## Reasonable restrictions under Article 19 (2)

Article 19 (2) of Indian Constitution empowers the State to instil reasonable restrictions on the following grounds:

- Security of the State
- Friendly Relation with Foreign States
- Public Order

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- Decency and morality
- Contempt of court
- Defamation
- Incitement to offence
- Integrity and sovereignty of India