

## Competitive Exams Essay: Should Strikes be Banned

Strike is the refusal by workers to work, in order to pressurize the management to accept their demands. Strike can also be 'sympathy' strike to express solidarity with their brethren elsewhere. Other forms that strike can take are work to rule, go slow, lightening strike, token strike etc. In another innovative form in Japan, workers may work more in order to express their resentment. In whatever form it is, strike is a weapon to be used only in the extreme circumstances when all other democratic means to negotiate have come to a end.

Today, industrial relations in our country are very bad. There is very little understanding, leave alone solidarity between the management and the workers. Lack of effective communication between the two creates a lot of misunderstanding and heat. So, strike today has become almost the sole means for the workers to force the management accede to their legitimate demands.

Who gains by strike? Whatever may be the end result, it is always found that strike harms the nation, the community, the workers as well as the management. During the period of strike, production comes to a standstill Inventories pile up. Stores are clogged. Transport sector slumps. The workers remain idle during the period. They face monetary and psychological problems. Their job is threatened. Millions of man-hours go waste.

Man-power, money, material resources, machines everything remain idle and this constitutes a loss. Production level falls down, inventory losses mount, transportation industry suffers, shortages are created, prices of commodities sky-rocket. The entire planning and social welfare schemes go haywire. And can one forget the miseries of common man who suffers silently because he neither has money power of the industrialists, nor the muscle power of the workers. And if the employees of essential services go on strike the problems are compounded.

Aren't the reasons cited above sufficient to convince one that strikes should be banned? Before jumping to any conclusion, however, we should realize that ours is a democratic country. If this right to strike is taken away from the workers, they will be left at the mercy of the management with no recourse to justice. And in our country, with a feudal tradition, it will not be a very happy situation. But strikes endanger the very functioning of our democracy. So what is the remedy?

Perhaps the most important remedy is one based upon the maxim Prevention is better than cure. It is important that the industrial relations are improved. We need profit making units but they should be owned and managed not by money minded people out by professionals. Management ought to look after the welfare of the workers. It requires change in the attitude of both the management and the workers. Management should understand that happy workers are more efficient and work harder. Also, workers should cultivate a sense of belonging for the

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Company. Above all, it is our work culture, our attitude towards work that should change. All this will go a long way in reducing the need and frequency of strikes.

‘Strike is a form of Satyagraha’ claimed Gandhiji. If today it has acquired a bad name, it is because politicians and unscrupulous leaders have virtually hijacked trade union and they use worker's grievances to further their own career and sometimes, even to blackmail industrialists. It is not strike that should be banned but the misuse of this right for unrelated issues as well as for any petty grievance. It should be resorted to when negotiations yield nothing but not to keep the whole country at ransom.