

Life is the most precious creation in this world. No matter how advanced science has become, the beauty of nature and creation of life and cause of death remains an unfolded mystery. Life cannot be created. Thus, it makes even taking away life punishable legally. But there are circumstances where even law is in a dilemma over the issues of life and death. And one such case is that of mercy killing or euthanasia.



By definition, euthanasia means the act of killing a person painlessly to relieve his or her suffering, even when requested by a patient with an incurable disease, euthanasia (literal meaning is "easy death"), is against the law in most countries.

Mercy killing is a concept or a practice where a person who is living an abnormal life or is in a 'vegetable state' due to terminal illness (unable to do things which a healthy person can do due to an illness, disease or another factor), is killed legally under law. This is an extremely sensitive legal and social issue as life being extremely precious cannot be decided when to be ended. However, the case of legalizing mercy killing can be understood by two clear perspectives i.e. for and against.

For:

Law may take steps in certain circumstances to allow euthanasia keeping in mind the 'right to live' which is the right of every citizen. But if due to a prolonged illness for years, a person lives in a vegetable state or in coma, then life becomes meaningless and painful for the person.

Every country is bound by laws and every citizen has to abide by the law of the land. The most popular way of governance is a democracy where a person has the right to speak, live, right to equality etc. Right to life is where every citizen of country has the right to lead a healthy, dignified and respectful life. Thus, in such a case law can take steps to make mercy killing legal for the terminally ill and 'brain-dead' patients.

Another aspect is performing medical experiments on such patients for benefit of medical sciences. Such a case might favor euthanasia as performing medical experiments without the consent of the patient is also unethical.

Against:

Life cannot be created. So life should not be taken. A simple stance which is clearly against mercy killing. No matter what the condition of a patient, killing of life under any circumstances is criminal and illegal by law. Thus, mercy killing can never be justified.

Another aspect which goes against legalizing mercy killing is if such a law comes in place, then it would lead to an increase in criminal offences as people will use it as a loophole in overcoming the criminal laws of the country.

Mercy killing or euthanasia is an ideological point which will always create a furor socially and legally. On one hand, many NGO's are strictly against taking the precious life of a person and on the other the relatives of person suffering call for mercy. Whatever judgment or a law a country makes, this issue will always be a legal and social dilemma.

About the Author : Sunita Saharia is a legal expert and the co-founder of the NGO (International Society for Human Awakening and Development).