

## Lecture 4

### Economic Structure Suited To National Genius

Yesterday we had discussed the functions of the State in a Nation. According to the *Bharatiya* traditions, a Nation is an organic living entity which has come into existence on its own and has not been made up of, or created by, any group of persons. A Nation brings forth a variety of institutions to fulfil its needs, as well as to give concrete shape to its inner fundamental nature. The State is one of these institutions, which, though an important institution, is not supreme. In our literature, wherever the duties of a king are referred to, his importance is definitely recognised. This is so, perhaps, to make him realise his immense responsibility. He exercises tremendous influence on the lives and character of the people. Hence, he has to give due attention to his own behaviour. Bhishma has said the same thing in the Mahabharata, when he was asked whether circumstances make a king, or a king makes the circumstances. He categorically stated that the king shapes the circumstances (राजा कालस्य कारणम्). Now some persons interpreted this to mean that he considered the king above all. But this is not true. He did not suggest that the king was above *Dharma*. It is true that the king wielded a great deal of influence, and that he was a protector of *Dharma* in society, but the king could not decide what constitutes *Dharma*. He only saw to it that people led their lives according to *Dharma*. In a way, he was equivalent to the present-day executive.

### King is not Above *Dharma*

In a modern state, the executive has the responsibility to execute the laws properly, but it does not enact laws. When the executive does not function with honesty and efficiency, the laws are entirely disregarded, as we may well see around us. And we can well say today, "Executive is responsible for the present evils to a great extent". After all, why has prohibition failed? Who is responsible for its failure? When those very persons, who have been entrusted with the task of implementing prohibition, start taking monthly pay-offs from the bootleggers, how will the prohibition policy succeed? The executive is therefore, responsible for the proper enforcement of the law. This is the meaning of Bhishma's statement. It would be a mistake to interpret it as an acceptance of proven supremacy of