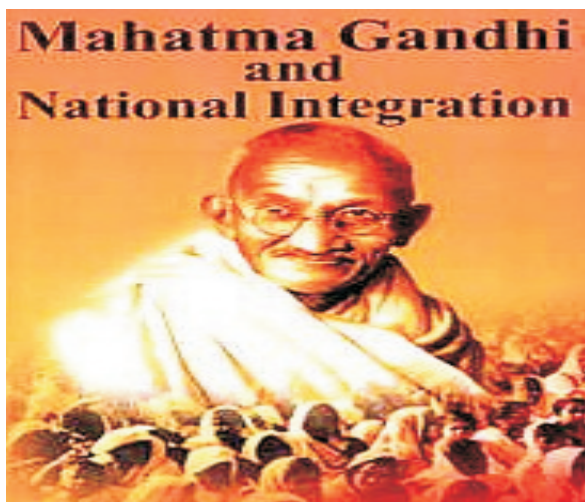

IDEA OF GANDHI ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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ABSTRACT

Gandhi wanted India to develop self-sufficiency. He emphasised upon political, territorial, economic and social integration of the nation. At the same time he accepted the motto that, 'that government is the best which governs the least'. This book aims at providing to our readers innovative and relevant material on the ideas and activities of Mahatma Gandhi with regard to the national integration. This will enable our readers to form their own opinion on this hotly argued aspect of the national integration.

KEYWORDS : *Idea of Gandhi , develop self-sufficiency , political, territorial.*

INTRODUCTION

The recent incidents in university of Hyderabad and Jawaharlal University raised the fresh controversies on Nation and National Integration. India has been a country of rich diversity in languages, religions, castes, communities, regions and races brought a new kind of national identity for the country in the world, non of country has. Nation is not made up of with one person and its integration is also not happens with one person. But in history there were some persons with their extra ordinary leadership try to do it. Of course, these attempts end up in failures sometimes success also achieved.

National integration means "creating a mental outlook which will promote and inspire every person to place loyalty to the country above group loyalties and the welfare of the country above narrow sectarian interests." – Dorothy Simpson

Gandhi was a person who tried to integrate India in all the aspects (Political, Social Economical and cultural) of the material and philosophically, till his death. Gandhian Philosophy was a spiritual Philosophy and this spiritual philosophy is very different from the activism. Activism is about the working with the hard realities. Gandhi try to integrate these two and continued his fight. Integration was not a very easy task because what are the problems India is facing now the then time also facing by same problems other than that it was colony of British. So integration was very important to the country, to bring all those different sections of the society under one umbrella to fight against British for the independent India.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "Let us forget all thoughts of, I am a Hindu, you a Muslim or I am a Gujarati, you a Madrasi, let us think, I and mine in a common Indian nationality, we shall be free only when a large number of our people are determined to swim or sink together."

1) Political Integration

Political Integration is about how different political parties in colonial India extended their support to Gandhi, the leader INC, to fight against British for the independence of the country. INC was divided into two factions when the time of Gandhi took up the leadership, then he eliminated these factions wisely and made them as a supporters of him. Both of these factions supported to Gandhi unconditionally for the freedom struggle. Another important Left Parties worked under INC, recognized the role of INC in the freedom struggle and Gandhi as its leader. The other important Parties neither supported British nor INC, they had fought for its self-interest. So Gandhi as a leader of INC and also to the nation tried to bring all these parties on one platform to fight against British.

a) Integration of Moderate and Extremist Factions in INC

When Gandhi entered into INC, it was divided into two factions one was under the leadership of Moderates and other one was under the Extremists. Before his arrival some of the leaders like Annie Besant tried to bridge the gap between them, but it was failed. When Gandhi took the leadership, he made his goal and means in such a way that both of the factions satisfied, extended its help to him. Gandhi throughout his life he followed the inclusive policy never explained, what was it exclusively, so everyone thought that he was supporting their faction. This policy he maintained till the end of getting Independence.

'While Annie Besant failed, Gandhi succeeded in uniting both the moderates and extremists on a common political platform. In the divided and contestable space of Indian politics, he could effectively claim for himself a centrist position, because he alienated neither and tactically combined the goal of the moderates with the means of the extremists. He adopted the moderates' goal of swaraj, but was "delightfully vague" (to borrow Nehru's expression) about its definition, as any specific definition, he knew, would alienate one or the other group.'

b) Left Parties

Communist Party of India was established in 1920s, when the time of its inception INC was a leading party in colonial India which had been fighting for the independence. The then time Gandhi's leadership in INC started to organize itself a mass based politics. So the important left parties in different parts of India, which were never organized in a proper way supported the INC. Communist Party of India was one among the left parties which decided to continued as pressure group within the congress.

'The CPI called up on all its members to enroll themselves as members of the Congress, form a strong left-wing in all its organs, cooperate with all other radical nationalists, and make an effort to transform the Congress into a more radical mass-based organization.'

Congress Socialist Party was of the important left parties which fought for independence established in 1934 by the Jai Prakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Deva, Minoo Masani and Asoka Mehta etc were its members. This party also recognized Congress role in the national struggle especially Gandhi's (although they had some difference with his policies) role in it rather than try to trespassing Congress it felt that organize themselves under congress to give a socialist direction to congress.

'it would be a suicidal policy for us to cut ourselves off from the national movement that the

Congress undoubtedly represents; that they must give the Congress and the national movement a socialist direction; and that to achieve this objective they must organize the workers and peasant in their class organizations, wage struggles for their economic demands and make them the social base of the national struggle.'

So the important left parties in colonial India were under organized under congress to support for the cause of independence.

c) All India Muslim League

All India Muslim league Party was established in 1906 by the NawabSalimullah Khan, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar and Zafar Ali Khan etc. to support the partition of Bengal and on protecting Muslim liberties and rights, promoting understanding between the Muslim community and other Indians, educating the Muslim and Indian community at large on the actions of the government and discouraging violence. At the time Non-Cooperation Movement, Gandhi made pact with Muslim League and extended its support to Non-Cooperation Movement. But the sudden incident of Chauri-Choura, cancelling the Non-Cooperation and strained the relations with the League. After that also Gandhi tried to maintained good relations with the league. Jinnah became its permanent leader, started decreasing its vote Bank, in 1937 under his leadership elections was shown a poor performance. So 1940 onwards Jinnah went on communal politics on the name of creating a separate country for the Muslims of India.

But I am firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand as put forward by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for the unity and brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possible warring groups are enemies alike of Islam and India. They may cut me to pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong.'

Gandhi was not agreed initially for a separate country for Pakistan. But later increasing pressure from the communal riots happening throughout India, at last agreed for the separate country.

Gandhi now made a last throw to avert Pakistan. He proposed to Mountbatten that he dismiss the interim ministry and ask Jinnah to form a new one, with full freedom to choose his team and work for Pakistan. Ten years earlier he was unwilling to provide Jinnah with a say at the expense of Nehru and Patel. Now he was prepared to think of sacrificing them. Congress, said Gandhi, would Pledge not to use its majority in the Central Assembly to block a Jinnah led government, as long as Mountbatten thought that the latter was acting in India's interests... It was not, in any case, put to Jinnah.

There were many other regional parties in colonial India worked against INC by claiming INC it was castiest party.

2) Social Integration

Social integration is very much important aspect of any country people's peaceful and harmonious life. It is easy to bring Political parties together to fight against colonialism, but social Integration is much more difficult than the political integration; it is a challenge of individual versus group activity. Social integration is about removing the differences among the different sections of the people. In India the problem of social integration is very much difficult because of its rich diversity.

Social integration is focused on the need to move toward a safe, stable and just society by mending conditions of social disintegration and social exclusion - social fragmentation, exclusion and polarization; and by expanding and strengthening conditions of social integration - towards peaceful social relations of coexistence, collaboration and cohesion.

a) Caste and issue of Untouchables

When Gandhi was travelling in South Africa, from Durban to Pretoria, he faced racial discrimination. It was very uncommon to him because when he was in India either in London, he never faced such kind of discrimination. Then he understood the problems facing by the lower caste Hindus from their higher caste Hindus. His long stay in South Africa, he condemned the caste discrimination many times through his news paper, 'Indian Opinion'. Although he had supported the 'Varnasrama Dharma', he was clear to put an end to the untouchability.

In the ashram that he established in Ahmedabad in 1915 he banned any observation of untouchability. However, he refused to force any inmate to eat with a Dalit against their will, arguing that he had no reason to believe that eating in company promoted brotherhood in any way whatsoever. In September 1915 Gandhi admitted a member of the Dhed (a Dalit) community to the ashram, causing great hostility within and outside the institution. Kasturba Gandhi was particularly upset. During the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921-2 he called on Hindus to 'remove the sin of untouchability', otherwise there would be no swaraj, even in a hundred years.

After the end of the Poona Pact both Gandhi and Ambedkar come to a conclusion to work together to put an end to the untouchability. They both had started the 'All India Anti-untouchability league' later this league was renamed as 'HarijanSevakSangh' with this Gandhi extended his battle for the untouchables into civil sphere. But Gandhi and Ambedkar had a dispute, so Ambedkar was dissociated with the 'HarijanSevalSangh'. By 1946 he was urging caste Hindu girls to marry Dalits.

So till the end of his life he himself averted the Untouchability, laid the path how others could practice to put end Untouchability and tried to change the heart of caste Hindus. A peaceful resolution neither hurt by caste Hindus and Harijans.

b) Women

The present Feminists criticize the Gandhi attitude towards his wife and other his philosophies on women. But when were criticizing the Gandhi, they are forgetting, what Gandhi had given to them. He was the one who preached and practiced the women equality.

'At the Gujarat Political Conference at Godhra in 1917 he said that in not including women in their movement they were walking on one leg.'

'When on one occasion, Gandhi saw that only men were attending a meeting, he rebuked the audience: 'It was my hope that women also would be present at this meeting. In this work there is as much need of women as men. If women join our struggle and share our sufferings, we can do fine work.'

His commitment towards the encouraging women to make the part of the freedom struggle was really appreciable. First step towards that direction was introducing 'Cherakha', with this women from her home make the cloths and becomes member to destroy the colonial economic power. Second step he brought out the women from home to picketing in front of liquor shops. There were a lot of women participated silently in this program, because of these activities men who come to purchase liquor used to abusive them but the volunteer never fought back with them. In the third step he brought them on streets to fight against the British, in the morning times women in a group participated in prabatpheris (Devotional Songs). Later in PrabatPheris devotional songs place occupied by the national struggle songs.

'GangabenVadya, an older woman who was on the managing board of Gandhi's ashram, recounted how she had been beaten until blood poured from her head: 'the other sisters bore the bowls with exemplary bravery. In some case the assaults were outrageous, many being kicked on their chests with the heels of the policemen's boots. Not one budged an inch, everyone stood unflinching at her post.

Whereupon came this sudden access of courage and strength, I wonder. God was with us I am sure. He gave us the strength.' 'Gandhi praised her fulsomely in his reply: 'How shall I compliment you? You have shown that you are what I had always thought you were. How I would have smiled with pleasure to see your sari made beautiful with stains of blood. I got excited when I knew about this atrocity, but I was not pained in the least. On the contrary, I felt happy.'

So in this way Gandhi created a sense of equality that was never lower than the men and made them as a part of non – violent freedom struggle also. As he always quotes, 'women are symbol of Non-violence.

c) Muslims

Gandhi and INC had always wanted Muslims should also a part of India and their cooperation was necessary for the Indian independence. So when ever there was a question raised regarding minority, they tried to maximum justification. When Khilafat movement became the part of Non-Cooperation movement, the whole Muslim in India cooperated for the independence. But suspicion of the movement created a discontent in the Muslim society. Gandhi also fought for Hindu – Muslim unity.

As for Mohamed Ali, it must be said to his credit that during the two years of Gandhi's incarceration, he tried to work with the congress leaders. Even after Gandhi's release from jail, it seemed for a time that the Ali brothers would be able to work with him. It was in Mohamed Ali's home in October 1924 that Gandhi went through his twenty-one day fast for Hindu-Muslim unity.

'After communal clashes of the 1923-7 period, many Muslim continued to follow Gandhi with fervor. Most notable in this respect was Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his KhudaiKhidmatgars or 'servant of God'. They were from the Pathan or Pukhtun community of the North West Frontier Province, which had been the first in the subcontinent to convert to Islam in the eighteenth century when the Prophet Muhammad was still living.'

In 1939 Gandhi remarked: 'The Congress will safeguard the rights of every minority so long as they do not advance claims inconsistent with India's independence.' But, he added, 'independent India will not tolerate any interests in conflict with the true interests of the masses.

When the time of INA trails also Hindu and Muslim unity seen, they together participated in the protests. Whether the Muslim League or Congress organized the protested both Muslim and Hindus participated.

On 11 February 1946, Muslim League students led the procession, Congress and Communist student organizations joined in and this time some arrests were made on Dharamatola Street.

But Jinna's call for 'Direct Action Day' went on violent there were organized killings happened in undivided India, with this incident Gandhi was forced to agree in favour of Pakistan. When the time of partition of Bengal riots took place in Calcutta, Bihar and Delhi etc. Gandhi toured those places until peace returns he spent his time over there until peace returns.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Economic exploitation was one among the important reasons, why any countries need freedom from the colonial powers. Integrating the different classes, workers, owners, capitalists and petty bourgeoisies into one fold is a task of attempt of keeping an elephant in a small bottle.

a) Trusteeship Theory

Marx speaks about the conflict between Proletariat and Bourgeoisie. The majority of proletariat

which were under minority of Bourgeoisie will swept, the minority of Bourgeoisie in order to establish the socialism. The means to achieve this end is violence. Gandhi advocates 'Trusteeship theory' in which the owner of Industry acts as a guardian and workers were considered as the protectees. So with this Gandhi made the owner responsible for providing facilities to the workers. Owner should also work with the labour. Then after he himself integrates with workers.

He contracted class struggle with satyagraha: By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invited the capitalist to regard himself as a trustee for those on who he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realizes his strength, he is in a position to become a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of remaining his slave. If he aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays golden eggs. Inequalities in intelligence and even opportunity will last till the end of time.

The basic difference between Marx and Gandhi is that Marx wanted the majority of the proletariat consciousness to demolish the minority rule but Gandhi wanted to change the heart of the Bourgeoisie, because Marxist socialism destroys the possessive but not possessiveness. So that owners and workers live in a communal Harmony.

b) Self-sufficient Villages

Gandhi advocates the Village swaraj, in this he encourages small scale or Household industries, where a group of villagers or family members work together with the neighbours, involve themselves in a small scale production, at end shares the profit. In that peaceful environment and joyful work share by all the members of family members and neighbours them and shares their profit also unlike English and European capitalists. With this environment pollution decreases, village becomes a self sufficient unit. It turns into a peaceful society.

Gandhi made it very dear that concentration of either economic or political power would violate all the essential principles of participatory democracy. To check centralization, Gandhi suggested the institution of village republics both as institutions of parallel polities and as units of economic autonomy. Village is the lowest unit of a decentralized system. Politically a village has to be small enough to permit everyone to participate directly in the decision-making process. It is the basic institution of participatory democracy. The technical skills of the villages will be fully developed; there will be no dearth of men with high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers.

CONCLUSION

Gandhi is a person who dedicated throughout his life for the unity in the parties, different sections of the society and an economy which never destroys village self sufficient economy. He tried to avoid the extremes of both sides maintained a centre of centrist wing policy he followed. Whichever the party or person comes to join INC he never refused. In peaceful, legitimate and non-violent means conducted his protests tried to include as much people as he can. So with this approach he tried to reach the goal of National Independence through National Integration.

In the case of JNU and UoH if at all it proved that those students raised the Anti-National slogans, we should give them a flower and say to them, 'get well soon' in a Gandhian way make them shy what they did for it. That is a real punishment for those culprits.

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