

Relevance of Gandhism Today

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Gandhiji's socio-political thinking was full in force in India about sixty years back during the second part of the 20th century. He was the main spokesman to change Indian society by way of several reformative measures irrespective of any discrimination. In the political sector he was convinced that India being ruled by foreign power of any variety can't accomplish justice and social welfare. In other words, foreign-rule, in any form, leads to social disparity and consequently turns out to be inhuman. In this connection it has been repeatedly said that Gandhi has primarily adopted two means i.e truth and non-violence to accomplish its objective.

Such means adopted by Gandhi was initially found to be very much impractical and unwarranted by some of his followers even. As a result some also left his mission. But Gandhi remained firm in his stand. And finally India achieved political independence, of course, being divided as two different countries (i.e India and Pakistan) . None- the -less Gandhiji struggled for India's independence and his adoption of means: truth and non-violence have made him great not only in India but in the world. It is a fact that the world body U.N.O has recognised Gandhi's contribution in this sector as unique and exemplary. Though he was brutally killed by one terror its Indian, the spirit and nobility of Gandhian thought has remained current even today. Many prominent socio-political thinkers of international repute like Martin Luther Nelson Mandela Dalai Lama, Albert Einstein, and others have acclaimed the Gandhian move.

Without derecognizing such acclamation about Gandhiji, there are critics and researchers who have moved on different direction to suggest that there are, of course, different factors for the attainment of India's independence which eventually have boosted the Gandhian Philosophy. In this connection the America war of independence can be taken as good example. The

Britishers, The French, The Spanish and some others those days for about 2/3rd generations found full dissatisfaction with the foreign rules from Europe (mainly the Britishers), on account of not providing minimum sense of financial support and social justice. Consequently they have fought against their own ancestors for such exploitation and they in the long run became successful. One healthy socio-political move against foreign imperialism was started and it deed inspire people of other ruled countries to voice against the foreign rule elsewhere. It is no doubt that then Indians got boost from such incidents, for undertaking their mission against foreign rule. This has echo among the Indian workers and officers in the army section particularly in the naval field. Such steps were found to be difficult and dangerous for the then foreign rulers to check and control. It is therefore thought in certain circle that not simply the course of non-violence but also violent rebellious move in certain area here created obstacle for the continuance of foreign rule. Further move in the global level, there also gradual and effective move against the ideology of imperialism as well as foreign rule.

Conceding the point that there were other moves apart from Gandhi's mission for taking the course of truth and non-violence. It seems necessary to analyse the implications of truth and non-violence in this context. Apparently adherence to truth absolutely and unconditionally may be found some-what impracticable at least in the political sense of diplomacy. A kind of tactics becomes necessary for achieving the successful result in case of political dispute and rivalry, that means, there ought to be some sense of compromise between the ideal sense of truth (which can't be altered) and its workability in actual state at affair.

So far as Gandhi's move is concerned, it does not suggest that there is no room for political diplomacy. But for that, truth as guiding principle need not be sacrificed on all fronts. In any case by means of rational discussion cum debate between two forces is to be given primary importance. That means, appeal to reason and justice remains all along as the most workable and dependable procedure to be carried, although. An incident during Gandhiji's life-time can be illustrated here. He ordered for killing a cow in his own ashram which was found as having unbearable pain. As per the then one doctor's advice, the cow was not to live any longer. Continuance of life with unbearable pain is neither doing anything good for the cow nor is it morally convincing. Therefore, in such exceptional case, one can take recourse to violence as against non-violence. But that step need not be taken as universally binding for all instances.

A course of non-violence is inalienable related with truth and justice. All along Gandhiji's move is an appeal to reason and not to be carried away by any tinge of emotion and sentiment. Probably, for this reason, Gandhiji's mission for freedom and socio-political justice has inspired and attracted at the global level as noted before.

A question is raised, as to how far the Gandhian move is relevant today. If one can ponder over the situation and the context carefully, then one is to adopt the course of action independently. Truth and non-violence on the basis of justice can't forsake reason. And, that is how it has the sense of universal appeal. Such appeal to reason and morality is not something spiritual in esoteric sense of the term. It is moral in the secular sense without having any sort of weakness for a particular group, caste, community religion dogmatism/ fundamentalism and individualism. It, in that sense a flavour of secular spirit which is socially conducive to reason and justice, Gandhi was succumbed to death by the fanatics but the death of the Gandhi does not stand for the death of socio-individual wellbeing and welfare. His mission for social justice remains alive even today, if we, in general, are not callous and opaque to the spirit of his point of view.

Extending the ideal of truth and non-violence to the practical level of initiating the movement of civil disobedience and satyagraha, he could carry the freedom struggle effectively. Without being careful about personal sensual pleasure, aspiring for any praise or promotion but being simply determined to do what he decides to be right and just, Gandhi attracted thinkers of repute like Prof. Murray of England. The biographer Mr. Fischer on Gandhi has expressed him to be truly human without being confined to a particular religion or any religion as such or even no religion as such. That means, he is primarily a sincere humanist. He fought for untouchability both for the sake of caste and out-caste.

Many have pictured Gandhi as a firm believer of reason and advocate of the essence of religion as one and same (*Isvar Allah terenama*). But it seems to us that it would be more reasonable to mean Gandhi as a sincere secular humanist without necessarily being tied to religion of any formulation. His mission is for the welfare of all whether religious or irreligious or having no concern with either. Human welfare and dignity on the basis of reason and justice seems to be the key factor in his thought. If that is the case, then we feel firmly that is the Gandhian thought with such reading is not confined to a particular race or land or a period of time but rather it is relevant and necessary for any time.

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