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INDIAN IDEALS AND VALUES

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ABSTRACT

There are certain Indian ideals and values following which the world could become a better place. Ahimsa, unity in diversity; yoga, ayurveda and vegetarian diet; Vasudeva Kodambakkam, Atithi devo Bhav, Parliamentary democracy, spiritual path, care for the environment and Jugaad are India's core values that can guide humanity on the path of peace and prosperity in the new millennium.

INTRODUCTION

The world could become a better place. Ahimsa, unity in diversity; yoga, ayurveda and vegetarian diet; Vasudeva Kodambakkam, Atithi devo Bhav, Parliamentary democracy, spiritual path, care for the environment and Jugaad are India's core values that can guide humanity on the path of peace and prosperity in the new millennium.

Ahimsa: Ahimsa which translates into non-violence has ancient roots in Indian tradition. Two of India's great religions Buddhism & Jainism profess non-violence. Jain monks even cover their mouth and nose so that they do not inhale any living beings. Mahatma Gandhi throughout his life professed and practised non-violence for India's independence struggle. Speaking recently at 10th India Today Conclave in New Delhi Mohamed El Baradei admitted that Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience movement helped him plan Egypt's political transformation

Unity in Diversity: India is an extremely diverse country in terms of languages, dialects, races, castes, religions, food and clothing habits. India has as many as 22 official languages while the United Nations has only 6. Indian leader such as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel achieved a great feat when over 500 princely states decided to form Union of India and governed by a written constitution. Today's India is what the world would look like in coming decades in terms of achieving unity in diversity.

Yoga, Ayurveda and Vegetarian Diet: Indians have mastered the art of healthy living since ancient times eating vegetarian food, practicing yoga and taking recourse to Ayurvedic treatment when falling sick. Ayurveda is comprehensive knowledge of long life. Yoga today is well known across the world while Ayurveda is getting popular. Vegetarian diet is recommended to citizens of the economically advanced countries to avoid becoming obese and leading healthy lives.

Vasudaiva Kutumbakam: Vasudaiva Kutumbakam or the whole world is a family, a unique Indian concept, reverberations of which reached America through Emerson and Thoreau and got manifested in Wilsonian school of thought in American foreign policy. This was what Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore professed in his message of universal humanism. Today over a hundred thousand American missionaries are spread across the planet in the service the human family. As the world becomes more interconnected and interdependent, it would only be wise for nations to develop a new esprit de planet.

Atithi Devo Bhav: Atithi devo bhav or guest is God is an ancient Indian tradition of great Indian hospitality. Even today this tradition continues in contemporary India and tourists who visit India, spend time in India can experience this wherever they go. Those who visit India fall in love with the country, its people, its culture and come back to India again and again.

Parliamentary Democracy: India's tradition of democracy goes back to Licchavi Republic in ancient Eastern India which practised a system of Sabha & Samiti to discuss and debate public issues. After India's independence in 1947 democracy has taken deep roots.

Bicameral Indian Parliament is the backbone of Indian parliamentary democracy. 28 States and 7 Union Territories with varying population sizes, economic strengths and languages are represented in the Indian Parliament. The largest state Uttar Pradesh has 80 seats in the Lower House while the smallest state Sikkim has just one seat. Indian Parliament could well become the model for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) in coming years as Indian Parliament already represents a great diversity in population size as well as culture

Spiritual Path: India has since ancient times been home to spiritual masters such as Buddha, Mahavir and Gurus, Maharishis, Swamis, Yogis or Mahatmas. Swami Vivekanand and Maharshi Mahesh Yogi are known across the world as spiritual leaders. Scores of people visit places like Rishikesh, Hardwar in the Himalayas and Ajmer in West India for spiritual guidance and blessings.

Care for the Environment: In India plants and animals are treated as sacred by associating them with deities. Thus, cow is worshiped as Kamdhenu, tiger is the vehicle of goddess Durga, swan and owl are associated with goddess Saraswati and goddess Lakshmi. There are communities in India such as Bishnois for whom preservation of plants and animals is religious duty.

Jugaad: Jugaad means use of innovative and entrepreneurial streak in solving problems on day-to-day basis. Indians are good at finding a way out. Be it zero or the decimal system, ayurveda or biotechnology, astronomy or silicon chips, Indians have always been innovating something or the other. India has an innovation culture deep rooted in its tradition. Today India is a leader in innovation in cutting edge fields of information technology, biotechnology, space research and nanotechnology. Indian entrepreneurs such as Lakshmi Mittal, Ratan Tata or Ambani brothers are leading global business leaders.

Gandhi's Ideas on Swadeshi and Swaraj Introduction: During India's struggle for independence, the ideas of Swadeshi and Swaraj gained prominence. Mahatma Gandhi is recognized for elevating these ideals through his thoughts, even though he did not originate them. By promoting the ideas of Swadeshi and Swaraj in a different way from the eastern proponents, he helped them gain traction in the political sphere. Gandhi also clarified social, economic, and educational issues in newspapers and his book Hind Swaraj. Let's attempt to comprehend Gandhiji's critical views on education, civilization, and machines in this chapter. We'll also look at the ideals of swaraj and swadeshi from Gandhi's perspective.

Gandhiji's Concept of Swadeshi and Swaraj: The concepts of swadeshi and swaraj were formed as part of many movements undertaken by Gandhiji in India. Both of these seemed to be the twin concepts of Gandhi's struggle. The concepts of Swadeshi and Swaraj of Gandhi's vision are discussed separately and briefly below.

Gandhiji's Concept of Swadeshi: Swadeshi literally translates to "land of birth." The environment that surrounds a person is essentially represented by the Swadeshi idea. A person's place of origin's social, religious, cultural, and political contexts are all included in the broad definition of Swadeshi. There are numerous instances in India where this Swadeshi idea was employed as a weapon in their conflict. But in 1905, when Bengal was opposed to being divided, the Swadeshi idea officially emerged as a movement. The Swadeshi movement, which was popular in India until 1908, was especially adamant about not wearing just foreign clothing. Gandhi further strengthened the Swadeshi notion as a tool of his battle and gave it a new dimension. Gandhi believed that the Swadeshi ideology was distinct from that of his forebears. According to Gandhi, the essence of the Swadeshi idea was love for all indigenous components. Gandhi said that the goal of the Swadeshi philosophy was to become independent and self-sufficient. Respecting and utilizing Indian-origin institutions, goods, and practices rather than those of foreign origin was the main goal of Gandhiji's Swadeshi idea. It is important to note that Gandhiji's conception of Swadeshi was informed by the idea of Swadharma as put forth in the Bhagavad Gita. According to

Gandhi, the Swadeshi philosophy is the practice of concentrating our thoughts and actions on the immediate area rather than the beyond reaches.

Gandhiji was ready to use the Swadeshi concept successfully in the struggles he led

During the freedom struggle, Gandhi initiated the following developments in the light of Swadeshi concept

- Boycott of foreign goods: Gandhi had advised not to buy English cloth under the Swadeshi concept. The suggestion was Gandhi to buy and use the prepared clothing of self-domestications.Along with this, Gandhi wanted to increase the employment opportunities of domestic workers by encouraging them to wear self-made clothes through Charaka.
- Call for Establishment of Indian Courts: During the Non-Cooperation Movement, Gandhi had suggested abandoning the British courts. Lawyers were advised to come out of the courts and start giving justice under Swadeshi concept.
- Advocacy for National Education: Under the Swadeshi principle, Gandhi supported the abolition of English education and the establishment of national educational institutions. He also insisted on providing vocational and Indian values education in the light of the Swadeshi concept.
- Favoring the strengthening of Indian political institutions: Gandhi favored the formation of panchayats that existed in ancient India. He also advised them to get away from dependence on foreign political institutions by forming committees made up of people at various levels and governing themselves.
- Consent to Violation of Laws: Gandhi encouraged the violation of laws under the concept of swadeshi when foreign rulers legislated against using local resources. E.g., Upholding Swadeshi concept by supporting violation of laws restricting Indians from making salt on the seashore and exploiting forests in India.

Above, the thoughts and conclusions taken by Gandhi under the concept of Swadeshi have been briefly explained.Along with this, this concept of Swadeshi influenced other ideas advocated by Gandhi.Shades of Swadeshi concept can be traced indirectly on Gandhiji's ideas on machines, use of khadi, education system, Swaraj.

Gandhiji's Concept of Swaraj: Swarajya is a concept that represents self-rule. It is significant that this concept was first used by Dayananda Saraswati. Later, the moderates, radicals and revolutionaries who were part of the Indian freedom struggle advocated different positions on Swaraj. After the partition of Bengal in 1905, Aurobindo Ghosh held the view that Swaraj should be achieved by any means. Swaraj was coined at the 1906 Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress by the politically backward leader Dadabai Naoroji. The interesting point is that Gandhi popularized the concept of swaraj by incorporating the other swarajists' propositions effectively in his struggles. Gandhiji's concept of Swaraj: Gandhiji's Swaraj was formed as a result of many situations faced during the freedom struggle. Gandhiji's concept of Swaraj was based on Gandhi's fundamental ideas about human nature. Man by nature wants to rule himself and resists the control of others. Thus, Gandhi asserted that Swaraj, which supports self-rule free from foreign rule, becomes important. Swaraj, in Gandhiji's view, was a concept with a negative form of freedom from foreigners, landlords or heads of domestic states, and a positive form in which every citizen was free to rule himself.

In general, the concept of Swaraj advocated by Gandhiji advocated the following principles:

1. National independence free from foreign rule
2. Political freedom for citizens to govern themselves individually
3. Economic freedom which enables citizens to shape their lives

4. Spiritual freedom which enables people to practice their beliefs or practices freely.

Gandhiji's Models of Swarajist State: Gandhi presented his ideas of Swarajist state in his Hind Swaraj Granth and in press articles or speeches. Based on them the main models of Swarajist state are briefly explained below

- Sovereign State: Swaraj as advocated by Gandhi is free from foreign rule, influence or control. Also free from the grip of feudal lords or dictators. The government in Swaraj is democratically based and is free to take necessary decisions internally or externally as per the demand and wishes of the people. In this background, Gandhiji's Swaraj can be considered as a sovereign state.
- United State: Gandhiji favored decentralization of power. According to him concentration of power corrupts those who wield power. Therefore, Gandhi believed that power should be distributed among the central government at the national level, the state government at the state level, the district councils at the district level and the gram panchayats at the village level. According to him, the important powers at the respective levels should have been allocated to the respective governments and all other powers should have been provided to the village level panchayats with more participation. Thus, it can be clearly said that Gandhiji's swaraj, which consisted of power sharing and administrative units, was a model state similar to a united state.
- Secular State: In Gandhi's view, religion is a purely personal matter. Religion represents the relationship between a person and his creator, God. Thus Gandhi wanted the state not to interfere in the religious affairs of the people. Besides, the Swarajist government is neutral on religion and politically all religions have to be treated equally. The state should provide assurance of equal treatment to all religions without giving importance to a particular religion. In this background, the state advocated by Gandhi is a state that can be equated to a secular state.
- Democratic State: Gandhiji's Swaraj government was a government that sought popular consent and participation. Gandhi supported Abraham Lincoln's definition of 'democratic government' as a government by the people, for the people, and by the people. Because of overpopulation, Gandhi suggested representative democracy in India instead of direct democracy. Further, he agreed to adopt a parliamentary model of government as in Britain, modified to suit India. In addition, Gandhi suggested the creation of five levels of government namely village, taluk, district, province and central government. Gandhi believed that democracy i.e., the interests of the citizens would be protected if the respective levels of government worked for the welfare of the citizens under their purview. Thus, Gandhiji's Swaraj was a democratic model state with democratic foundations.

Gandhi's Swaraj resembled many of the models of state discussed above. It is important to note that the proposed Gandhian concept of Swaraj was advocated as an effective means rather than a goal. In Gandhi's view, self-rule without a government i.e., without a state i.e. an ideal state was the goal of Gandhiji.

Shramadana: Vinobaru wanted to eliminate the influence of money as a medium of exchange. Thus, he advised to prevent the influence of money through physical labor. According to him, instead of acquiring a particular good or service by paying money, one can control the demand for it by performing physical labor. Eg: If a person makes the clothes, he needs by self-effort, then there is no need for money. Similarly, village development is possible if we show our own physical labor rather than demanding various development measures from the government by paying taxes in the form of money. Thus, those who could not donate land or money were advised to help in the construction of public utility roads, temples, lakes and gardens by donating physical labor. Overall,

Shram Dana was a recreational thought based on the ideal of self-sacrifice.

Bhoodan Movement: Acharya Vinoba worked hard for the establishment of Sarvodaya Samaj without letting Gandhiji's Sarvodaya Siddhanta remain in written form. Sarvodaya made a revolution by starting the land grant movement with a view to implementing the principles of Sarvodaya Siddhanta. Vinoba Bhave advocated that people should accept the principle that all land belongs to servants. People in today's society would be unhappy if all the land came under society's control. An era of love and cooperation begins. Therefore, in the beginning, some of them said that they should give up the land and then they should engage in the service of others. In April 1951, the Sarvodaya Conference was held at Sivarampalli, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh. Vinobaji stayed with the Harijans at Pochampally in Telangana. A milestone of Sarvodaya history of that congregation. The landless people who joined the meeting then needed 80 acres of land. On April 18, 1951, Acharya Vinobaji inaugurated the Bhudana Yagna. The moral pledge taken by the leaders of the Sarvodaya movement at the Bhudana Yagna caught the attention of Sri Ramachandra Reddy of Pochampally and he first donated a hundred acres of land. Thus, on April 18, 1951, the seed of Bhudan was sown. Similarly, 60 acres of land in another village and 12,201 acres of land was donated by Acharya in 15 days in Telangana, which was a stronghold of the Communists. Next, he aimed to get about 50 million acres of land from the people. Like Vinobaji, another Sarvodaya leader Shankarao Deo (1894-1974) actively spent 20 years of his life in furthering the Bhudan movement. Vinobaji strengthened the Sarvodaya movement with the cooperation of Ravi Shankar Maharaja and Jayaprakash Narayan. Marathi writer Miss Nirmala Deshpande and I. Jagannath gave hearty support to Vinobaji in the Sarvodaya movement. April 1976 marked the 25th anniversary of the Land Donation Movement. The then Prime Minister late Mrs. Indira Gandhi and several Chief Ministers attended the anniversary function. Late Mrs. Indira Gandhi founded the great work of Sarvodaya activists. The government rescued the poor, who had been exploited for centuries, abolished serfdom and enacted the Land Tenure Limitation Act. Surplus land was allotted to the landless. The Prime Minister, Chief Ministers and other ministers embarked on padayatras across the country to demand land from landowners.

Basic Features of Bhoodan Movement are as Follows

i. *Trusteeship:* Property is not a source of power and exploitation; the property owner is the trustee of his property. All property belongs to God and no one should have what he does not need in the present. Got it like that but it's' "Stolen Garland'

ii. *Justice and Morality:* Land donation dictates justice and morality. The land acquired in Bhudana movement is not a charity but a demand for social and moral justice of Bhudana.

iii. *New outlook:* Land grants changed the old social and economic concepts and started a new outlook among the people. Land donation abolishes the system of private ownership of property.

iv. *Non-co-operation Movement:* The Land Donation Movement is completely non-violent. It is an attempt to make a revolution by converting the hearts of the people without resorting to force and non-violent action.

v. *Donation of Wealth:* Vinobaji did not accept money as charity in the beginning. In course of time, he changed his policy and started taking money as donation for buying fertilizers and cattle.

vi. *Bhoodan, Gramdan and Gramarajya (Bhoodan, Gramdan and Gramarajya):* Vinobaji wanted to get Bhoodan which means complete donation of villages in the first phase followed by Gramdan in the second phase. In the beginning, people give away a small portion of their land as charity, but gradually they give away all their possessions. This is called gramadaan. He said that Gramdana would allow the establishment of a village state. In Gramdana the property is in the name of the society and not in the name of the individual.

Gandhiji had many views and followed many methods. But they cannot be followed by common people. Gandhiji had many ideals like stateless democracy, Kayaka Anna, Kayakave Kailasa, Path of Truth and Nonviolence and Guri and Village State. Today his ideals are not followed. Gandhi is doing a disservice to his soul by shouting hollow slogans on his birth anniversary. Overall, Gandhiji's ideas are applicable for all times. But his views are not followed today.

Deen Dayal Upadhyay's Concept of Integral Humanity: Prior to India's independence in 1947, only high importance was given to expel the British from India. Due to this, ideological debates about post-independence India did not take place in the country as much as it should have. Even the discussion of post-independence India was not systematically advocated in Gandhi's Hind Swaraj and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's Gita secret works. Thus, Indian leaders adopted opportunistic ideological positions for political power in post-independence India. India tended to follow either capitalism, socialism or mixed ideological ideals. As a result, India failed to have a specific ideology representing national identity. At this time, Deen Dayal Upadhyay, one of the leaders of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh Party, advocated the idealistic theory of comprehensive humanism in his four lectures. This comprehensive humanism was adopted by the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1965 and later on by the Bharatiya Janata Party which came into existence as a new party. This holistic humanism represents the ideological positions advocated in contrast to the radical humanism of MN Roy. In Upadhyay's view, developing a human-centered local economy was at the core of holistic humanism. Integral humanism included a model of economy that encouraged the social, economic, religious, cultural development of human beings and represented national identity. It was Upadhyay's position that capitalism, socialism or egalitarianism of Western origin are alien ideologies and cannot achieve comprehensive development of human beings. In this context, while accepting western science and technology, they did not accept western ideological ideas that would lead to loss of local identity. Deen Dayal Upadhyay advocated a holistic humanism that supports a national identity that includes local needs for the all-round progress of human beings. Below are the features of holistic humanism presented by Upadhyaya in brief.

- Upholding Western-style capitalism, socialism or egalitarianism cannot contribute to the progress of an independent nation. In this context, holistic humanism advocates a middle way different from capitalism and socialism.
- While western science may be welcomed, the interest of the people will be protected only if it is used in accordance with the national context.
- Both Western science and way of life are different and a valueless Western way of life cannot be followed. The way of life of Indian culture which integrates body, mind, intellect and soul is great.
- Integral Humanism is similar to the non-dual Adaita doctrine propounded by Adi Shankaracharya.
- Ethics in politics, Swadeshi concept, Proposition of economy with cottage industries.
- Condemnation of Nehru's model of development for being influenced by ideas of Western origin while neglecting the cultural and spiritual heritage of the country.

CONCLUSION

Since the Indian Constitutionalists embraced the British-style parliamentary system, they did not foresee that there would be certain governance issues. Indian academics believed that there would be no central government instability or disaster. A member of the National Congress, which he believed would be the nation's largest party, was also present at the Constituent Assembly of India.

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