Relevance of Gandhism in the Era of Globalization

Madhurima Dowarah
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Panigaon OPD College Lakhimpur

Abstract: Gandhism is a living thought for solving the social, economic, and political problems of the day. Gandhism is becoming more and more relevant with the passage of time with its use of moral principles in each and every field. Gandhism become a global necessity for peace, prosperity, freedom, harmony and survival of the whole human race. Gandhism is a new hope, new force and a new challenge in the modern world. Gandhism is reminder something which the modern world has forgotten. So, reconstruction of Gandhism is necessary, we have to interpret Gandhi in terms of ecological challenge, imperatives of globalization, privatization and liberalisation in economy, growing terrorism, consumerism and gender discrimination and so on. There is no way to peace. Peace is the way. Gandhi spent his whole life for truth and Ahimsa. For Gandhi, Ahimsa means not injuring any living being whether by body or mind or bear any ill to him/her which cause them mental suffering. In its positive approach, Ahimsa means unbounded love for all. Ahimsa is more than avoiding harm. It is the largest love, the greatest charity. Gandhi says” If I am a follower of Ahimsa, I must love even my enemy”. Ahimsa implies not to harm others by thought, word or deed. It is consider as a virtue to be practiced for fostering universal brotherhood in human societies and nations all over the world.

Gandhi advocate the idea of non-violence for social peace. Peace is a state of existence without communal disharmony, without conflict arising out of caste, colour, race, gender, rights, violation and not disturbing the unity in diversity, status and harmony with nature. Gandhi’s ideas are known as Gandhism. The basis of Gandhism is non-violence. It cannot be separated from non-violence even for a moment. In the words of Gandhi himself “My life is dedicated upholding Ahimsa.” Gandhian concept of non-violence is the basic tenet of human existence. He conducted a series of experiments with non-violence and made it applicable to resolve the national and international problems. He demonstrated that non-violence is the only indisputable way to attain peace and tranquillity is more palpable. The concept of non-violence is not merely an anti-thesis violence but it is multi-dimensional.

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi is the most outstanding figure of the 20th century. He occupies a unique place as a political leader and philosopher in the present century. He is a person characterised by integral and coherent thought not segmented much less fragmented. He is a Yoga Purus. He is a man of God. People lamented that he was a hundred years ahead of his time. He is a pre-eminent theorist of non-violent disobedience, the leader of India’s successful campaign for national independence and an architect of modern Indian self-identity. He offers a powerful defence of autonomy and a critique of modernity and modernization. He also occupies an important place as an interpreter of Hinduism and as a moral religious thinker. Gandhi has absolute faith in God. For him God is truth, God is love, God is ethics.. He seeks a peaceful world, a stable society and a coherent spiritual life. Gandhi approaches the problems of man's nature and destiny in a comprehensive way and follows certain moral and spiritual techniques. Professor A.R. Wadia has rightly named Gandhi’s philosophy as “pragmatic Idealism”.

In addition he was a “karma yogi” to whom the theory and practice are ever the two different things. Therefore, in human history Gandhi remain as one of the rare personalities, who practiced his theory in his own life while planning before human world. According to Gandhi realization of ‘Truth or God’ is the ultimate goal of human race. So, man’s life is to undergo certain ethical and spiritual principle for achieving that end. Satyagraha is the perfect weapon to conquer political freedom as to attain spiritual destiny.

“ Gandhi has been called a moral revolutionary” and also a “Moral genius”. His life is a message of truth, non-violence, universal brotherhood, liberty, equality and cooperation. Gandhi gave us the message of economic independence and taught us nationalism. Gandhi was called ‘a man of peace’ ‘a miracle’ a spokesman for the good in man” “an outstanding personality”. He has faith in himself and is his ideas. He was a revolutionary thinker a consistent non-conformist a socialist and one of the founder members of peasants and workers republic. He was the greatest democrats that lived. Gandhi reminds us the fundamentals of ethics that love is better than hate, peace is better than war, and cooperation is better than conflict. His work and dedication for the welfare of mankind will always be a living memory in our everyday life. According to him morality is the basic principle of life. He endeavours to establish ‘Ramaraja or the kingdom of God’ in our country through certain rigid moral discipline. Morality controls passions and impulses of man which lead to violence strife and destruction and urges him to work for peace, harmony and happiness.

Gandhism is a living thought for solving the social, economic, and political problems of the day. Gandhism is becoming more and more relevant with the passage of time with its use of moral principles in each and every field. Gandhism become a global necessity for peace, prosperity, freedom, harmony and survival of the whole human race. Gandhism is a new hope, new force and a new challenge in the modern world. Gandhism is reminder something which the modern world has forgotten. So, reconstruction of Gandhism is necessary, we have to interpret Gandhi in terms of ecological challenge, imperatives of globalization, privatization
and liberalisation in economy, growing terrorism, consumerism and gender discrimination and so on. There is no way to peace. Peace is the way. Gandhi spent his whole life for truth and Ahimsa. For Gandhi, Ahimsa means not injuring any living being whether by body or mind or bear any ill to him/her which cause them mental suffering. In its positive approach, Ahimsa means unbounded love for all. Ahimsa is more than avoiding harm. It is the largest love, the greatest charity. Gandhi says” If I am a follower of Ahimsa, I must love even my enemy”. Ahimsa implies not to harm others by thought, word or deed. It is consider as a virtue to be practiced for fostering universal brotherhood in human societies and nation all over the world.

Gandhi advance the idea of non-violence for social peace. Peace is a state of existence without communal disharmony, without conflict arising out of caste, colour, race, gender, rights, violation and not disturbing the unity in diversity, status and harmony with nature. Gandhi’s ideas are known as Gandhism. The basis of Gandhism is non-violence. It cannot be separated from non-violence even for a moment. In the words of Gandhi himself “My life is dedicated for upholding Ahimsa.”

Gandhi’s concept of non-violence is the basic tenet of human existence. He conducted a series of experiments with non-violence and made it applicable to resolve the national and international problems. He demonstrated that non-violence is the only indisputable way to attain peace and tranquillity is more palpable. The concept of non-violence is not merely an anti-thesis violence but it is multi-dimensional.

According to Gandhi, realisation of truth or God is the ultimate goal of human race. Gandhi declares that truth is God, he means that truth transcends our biological nature and rises the force of gravity. Gandhi himself says “I have nothing new to teach the world . Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills” Katturan explains “Truth cannot be realized without non-violence”. Means and ends being convertible terms, truth and non-violence become part of the spiritual make up of Gandhian Ahimsa. Ahimsa is the means and Truth is the end, Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle them. Means and ends work together in Gandhi’s paradigm for the realization of Truth.

The idea of Satyagraha was not originally coined by Gandhiji. Before him, the idea of Satyagraha was found in religious books, like the Upanishad, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Gita, the Quran and many others. It was also practiced by Indians as well as Westerns like Prahlad, Raja Harichandra, Socrates, Plato, Asoka and many others. Prahlad the first individual Satyagrahi, offered Satyagraha against the tyranny of his cruel father. It was not known then that what Satyagraha meant. According to Gandhiji, “The principle called Satyagraha came into being before that name was invented. Indeed when it was born, I myself could not say what it was”. Some of the western believe that Gandhiji derived the idea of Satyagraha from Christ’s New Testament, specially the Sermon on the Mount. Some others believe that he got this idea from the writings of Tolostoy, though Tolostoy himself deduced it from the New Testament. In fact Gandhi derived his idea of Satyagraha neither from Christ nor from Tolostoy, but from his own Vaishnavite faith.

The word Satyagraha is Sanskrit in origine. Actually, the Gandhian concept of Satyagraha is based on Truth, and non-violence. Literally Satyagraha has been derived from a compound Sanskrit word ‘Satya'meaning Truth and ‘Agraha’ meaning clinging, holding fast, adherence etc. In other words Satyagraha means clinging to truth, holding fast to truth. Gandhi discovered this term during his endless non-violent resistance movement against racial discrimination in South Africa. In the beginning Gandhi used the term passive Resistance but as the time passed and his struggle for justice advanced, this gave rise to confession and was considered as the weapon of the weak.

Gandhi’s supreme invention or creation was Satyagraha, which was stands for a ceaseless and relentless pursuit of truth without restoring to hatred, rancour, ill-will or animosity. Gandhi defined Satyagraha as “the vindication of truth not by the influence of suffering on the opponent but on one’s own self. He viewed this technique as struggle as a moral weapon based on the superiority of soul force over physical force.” Satyagraha is action-oriented search for and adherence to truth and non-violent fight against untruth. Gandhi have demonstrated the efficiency and efficacy of Satyagraha not only in getting political freedom but against exploitation, oppression, social injustice and social evil.

The word Sarvodaya is Sanskrit in origin. It is a compound word formed of Sarva and Udaya. Sarva means all and Udaya means rising. Thus, the etymologically meaning of Sarvodaya is the rising of all. Sarvodaya, today, does not represent a mere vision but makes the attempt of reorienting human mind to reconstruct human society. Sarvodaya assumed the dimensions of a movement and a socio-economic force of great potentialities. It is a dynamic philosophy which can make possible the advent of a radically transformed humanity. Sarvodaya seek to build a new society on the foundation of old spiritual and moral values of East and West and attempts to meet the challenge of the contemporary world. Sarvodaya is the only way to solve the problems of wealth, growing corruption in public life etc.

Our social progress depends upon the attitudes of people. Social life is possible if these attitudes are positive. Several question arise in a human society, like what should be our behaviour, relationship and attitudes towards other, how should we treat, work, respect with another person? What should be our limits etc?

The essence of social relations is Truth and Non-violence. One should be truthful to others. Truth says that this relationship should be based on Non-violence which ensures peace and love. Peace gives us happiness which is an object of all pursuits. Loving other people is an essential element in society. Peace should start with oneself and that should extend to family, community, society, nation and the whole world. Individual should be the origin of building a peaceful society. To be peaceful is to radiate love, one should be non-violent. We are living in a society which is experiencing escalating violence.
People are becoming impatient, angry and reactionary. They do not know what their anxiety is for. They seem to be perpetually hungry. Non-violence is a way of life. Non-violence is an attitude and state of mind. We should cultivate Non-violence in thought, word and deeds. We should refuse to allow an offensive thought, anger or ill will against anyone else. We should not hurt others. Similarly our action should also not be violent. The practice of Non-violence at the individual level is the foundation for Non-violence in Society.

Our society had value based foundation on Truth, non-violence, contentment, humility, respect for nature etc. Now these values give place to destroyed and reduced to a crowd, mutual dependence, respect and togetherness do not allow exploitative relations. When this personal touch is gone, mutual obligations disappear, human values are gone and any one can become an object for exploitation. This greed leads to manipulations, untruthfulness, frauds, corruption, segregation, denial, hatred, violence and war. All these follow as an inevitable outcome of greed.

Our society has turned into subtle forms of exploitation from the direct forms like extortion, slavery, feudalism; imperialism has turned to market operation and exploitation. We should be aware of these designs and protect ourself against these tendencies. Violence in any form is going to leave behind its evil results. Hence, there is the need for a non-violent society that ensures peace and justice. It is the need of the study in the present movement. because :

1. The so called modern man is not in a position in the Indian context to appreciate the values.
2. Modern men are guided by utilitarian consideration in many apparently attractive things of the west instead of knowing their precious culture.
3. Indian society is now full with many deep rooted evils. So Gandhi’s moral philosophy plays an important role in this context. Really, this is the need of the hour.

Objectives: 1. The basic objective of the paper is to study the relevance of Gandhian thought in the 21st century.
2. It also tries to examine how Gandhi’s concept of Truth, Satyagraha and Non-Violence helps in improving of human being.

Methodology: The is purely based on secondary data which are collected from various books Journales governmental bulletin etc.

Relevance of Gandhian thought in the 21st Century: The concept of Truth is fundamental to the thought of Gandhi. It is significant that the subtitle of his Autobiography “The story of my experiments with truth” and his whole life might be interpreted as an attempt to live in accordance with truth.

According to Gandhi, truth acquired a comprehensive meaning in a wider sense. One should be truthful in thought, action and motives. In his personal and public life Gandhi conducted experiment in truth to find out his own determination to be truthful. For him truth was most important name of God. His faith in God was rational and humanistic. He asked people to follow the path of Truth in case they wanted to profess their faith in God. Gandhi made it clear that “My uniform experience was convince me that there was no other God than truth”. The transcendental nature of truth makes it eternal reality. He considered no other justification of human existence except to devotion to truth.

Gandhi is an apostle of Ahimsa. The basic principle of life is based on Truth. Truth is God. Gandhi identified God with truth. But in 1929, he reversed the earlier proposition and asserted that truth is God. According to him, our fight for social change, we must hold fast to truth and truth alone. Truth should be object of worship. The transition from God is Truth to Truth is God.

Realization of Truth is impossible without a complete merging of oneself in an identification with this limitless ocean of life. Gandhi identified ultimate reality with Truth and as one infinite spirit. On the whole prophets and seers identify truth with reality. As an example, Professor J.H. Muirhead quotes the gospel saying “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”. The Upanisad also described God-Brahman as reality knowledge and infinite. The Upanisadic seers conceive of God as the reality within us, which directly manifest itself in our inner knowledge, consciousness, and life. So knowledge is nothing but God itself and knowledge of God is not different from this God itself, and knowledge of God is not different from this God in us.

God is Truth and Love. He can be known only through Love. Means and ends are inseparable. They are convertible term. God is the end. Therefore he can known through truth and Love. Truth is God. When we want to find truth as God the only invertible means love.

According to Gandhi, Truth is the sovereign principle, truth includes numerous other principles. This truth is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the eternal principle, that is God. Gandhi distinguish between relative truth as perceived by finite individual in relation to a particular set of thought and circumstance and Truth as Sum mun bonum or Absolute Truth.

In the sense of Absolute Truth, Gandhi identified Truth with God. He emphasized that the word Satya is derived from sat, which means being and this led him to identity satya with reality. Gandhi categorically says “where there is truth, there is also knowledge which is true. Where there is no Truth there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word cit or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (Aananda). There has no place to sorrow.
Truth as the Ends and the Means: - The discussion of absolute truth and relative truth can also be seen as a discussion of means and ends in so far as relative truth is the means and absolute truth is the end. This logic, however confronts yet another form of dichotomy where by a mean cannot an end in itself. Gandhi insists that this is not the case. The relationship of Means and ends in Gandhi’s thought is most apparent though his insistence on characterising absolute truth rather than defining it. His characterisation is a means to the achievement of the end and an end in itself. Kotturan explain this phenomenon accurately when he writes “Truth cannot be realised without non-violence. Means and ends being convertible terms. Truth and non-violence become part of the spiritual make up of Gandhian ahimsa.” Gandhi uses of the term truth express both means and ends exclusively and means and ends conterminously. Ahimsa is the means and truth is the end. Ahimsa and truth are so intertwined that is practically impossible to disentangle them. They are two side of a same coin. One side is Truth and other is Ahimsa.

Truth and Ahimsa are the keystones of Gandhi’s ethics. Truth is God. Ahimsa is love. Realization of Truth means realization of God. God can be realized through love and service of humanity. In his view truth is the Supreme God.

Prayer for Gandhi is the essence of religion and the core of a man’s life. It requires no words, it is not the repetition of an empty formula while it can be positional in its widest sense it is inward communion and in both cases it clean the heart of passion and produce peace. It would appear that for Gandhi prayer is a form of meditation, which has its aim, self purification and knowledge of the Truth. Basically it is a means of self purification and a call to inward searching. Gandhi calls prayer “a longing of the soul” and an admission of one’s weakness.

When Gandhi maintains that by means of prayer he invokes the divinity within himself it is evident that he draws no hard and fast distinction between the self and Truth. This would be considered with Advaita teaching concerning the Brahman, Atman, and identity, namely that soul within and at one with the essence of the universe. Gandhi therefore conceives the purpose of life to be know the self which for him is equivalent to realizing God or Truth. Gandhi himself refers to Rama as the powerful essence whose name is in describe in heart. Hence the forceless, omnipresent Rama in Gandhi’s thought is at one with the highest self in turn is identical with Truth.

Relevance of Satyagraha in present day context: The doctrine of fearless pursuit is called satyagraha. Fasting unto death is an integral part of satyagraha programme. Fasting is spiritual and address to god. According to Gandhi, A satyagrahi must observe five vows of truthfulness, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possession and sex-control. Gandhi says, ‘Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. It is meant for the act of creation. Any other use of is a sin against God and humanity.” Brahmacarya must be observed in thought, word and deed. It means not only control over sex but work over senses. It literally means conduct that brings us into contact with God. Gandhi advocates rigid ethical discipline, severe sense control, almost an ascetic morality. A satyagrahi should cultivate humanity, silence, renunciation, self sacrifice, sense restraint, non-violence in thought, word and deed, love, good will, and compassion for all, and abstemiousness for drinks and drugs.

Gandhi described satyagraha as “firmness in a good cause”. In Indian opinion, Satyagraha was just a new name for “the law of self suffering”. In Hind swaraj, he proclaimed that “sacrifices of self is infinitely superor to sacrifice of others. and that a self sufferer does not make others suffer for mistakes.

Gandhi’s satyagraha was creation, stands for a ceaseless and relentless pursuit of truth without restoring to hatred, ill-will or animosity. In J.B.Kripalani’s words, “Satyagraha is strike plus something more. This something makes for better morals amongst those who carry on the fight. A satyagrahi is better non-cooperator than a striker.” In fact satyagraha is action oriented search for and adherence to truth and non-violent fight against untruth. Gandhi has demonstrated the efficiency and efficacy of satyagraha not only in getting political freedom but against exploitation, oppression, social injustice and social evils in his life time. Satyagraha, moreover, is not the weapon of the weak or coward, rather it is a weapon of the strong or brave which demand for a new real civilisation and culture for the humanity as a whole.

In fact, Satyagraha is the most powerful and permanent weapon to solve political, social and economic as well as religious problems. Its hold good even today in our democratic setup against any perpetrated evil.

Satyagraha implies an assertion of the power of the human soul against political and economic domination. Domination amounts to a denial of truth, since it takes recourse to falsehood and manipulation for maintaining itself. Thus satyagraha is the vindication of the glory of the human conscience. Satyagraha implies the exercise of the purest soul-force against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. Literally it means “truth pressure” and denotes the operation of the soul suffering, confidence; self purification and trust are attributes of soul-force.

According to Gandhi Satyagraha is not an idealistic concept but it is practical and dynamic one. It has to be implemented in order to achieve not only local peace but also the international one. Therefore an internationalist interested in this effort should hold firmly the truth and bravely wage the war of peace against unjust and violent world order. Gandhian advocacies for better management, therefore rest in the following recommendations. He notes that one has to avoid the seven social evil: Politics without Principles, wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, and worship without sacrifice. He put forward another eleven Vratas for everyone to observed: Truth, ahimsa, brahmacharya, asward, asteya, Aparigraha, abhaya, asprishyata-Niwaran, sharer-shram, sarva dharma samabhav, swadeshi etc. Gandhi noted that ‘if you want to change be a change yourself” change in attitude is necessary pre-condition to become a better
manager of the present world who should give more important to both holistic doing. Therefore, globalizing Gandhian ideals have become much more important in this ‘crisis prone world’ for every management conscious individuals. Swamy Chinmayananda notes in his book ‘Awakening Indians to India, Indians should guide the world responsibly realizing the ideals of Mahatma.

According to Gandhi, there are some essentials or basic postulates of Satyagraha like Truth, Non-violence, and Faith in God, Brotherhood of man, Supremacy of moral law and Purity of Means. We may discuss them as mention below

Gandhi identified God with truth. According to him the reason for his identification was that God alone is that law which governs all life. But in 1929 he reversed the earlier proposition and asserts that “Truth is God.” Gandhi said that rather than saying “God is Truth”, we should say “Truth is God” because it is our fight for social change, we must hold fast to truth and truth alone.

Relevance of Non-Violence:- Non-violence and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. So, Satyagraha is impossible without non-violence.

Non-violence literally means non-killing or non-injury. According to Gandhi every act of injury to a living creature and endorsement of such act by refraining from non-violent effort, whenever possible. Gandhi said, “without non-violence it is not possible to seek and find truth. They are like the two side of a coin. The principle of non-violence is hurt by every evil thought, undue haste, lying, hatred and wishing ill-will to anybody. It is such a state of physical and mental discipline that can move the chord of human heart and bring a change of heart in the so-called enemies.

Supremacy of moral law:- Satyagraha does not depend upon physical force. It is based of moral force-the force of truth and justice, the force of self purification and self suffering, love and service, courage and discipline. Gandhi says “Purity of means is based upon the recognition of the supremacy of moral law.” Therefore the entire gamut of the philosophy of satyagraha is based on the fact that truth and morality alone can be victorious, and we cannot adopt immoral principles to creat a moral society. Hence Gandhi made satyagraha the moral equivalent of war. On the other hand, Gandhi believed that evil must be resisted and eliminated but resisted through means that are in consonance with morality, not with hate, war, violence and ill will.

Brotherhood of man and faith in the Goodness of man:- Gandhi believed in the principle of one universal soul. For Gandhi brotherhood of man means “that we are one of another”. It means that you cannot injure your neighbour without injuring yourself. Satyagraha aims at change of heart through non-violence, noble and friendly action.

Hence, Satyagraha is a growing science. Gandhi has demonstrated the efficacy of satyagraha not only in getting political freedom but against exploitation, oppression, social injustice and social evils in his life time. Satyagraha is not the weapon of the weak, it is a weapon of the brave which demands for a new real civilization and culture for the humanity as a whole.

Relevance of Satyagraha in current perspectives:- Gandhian approach would need both courage and freedom from ill-will. Before launching satyagraha and during the course of satyagraha he was ever ready to negotiate and discuss. In the late twenties he was opposed to the exploitation of the textile works of Ahmadabad by the mill owners, but he was not for a strike to end it. In all other matters of dispute whether they were small or big in nature or local or national in level he advocated discussions, negotiations or dialogues conciliations, arbitrations or adjudication as a last resort. He applied the same method in actions taken for the independence of the country. He inspired confidence and faith with his words, he was always dependable. Even today in changed circumstance it is necessary that when we talk of Ahimsa, Non-violence and Satyagraha we should bear this background in our minds.

Today most countries of the world are facing various kinds of internal and external crisis. Due to unprecedented changes in social, political, economic and cultural spheres awaking amongst the various groups of people has reached a high level. That is why many times one particular group or groups of people create a problem which becomes so serious that authorities become helpless. Two years ago we witnessed such situations in the province of Punjab, Assam and other parts of India.

In such a state of affair can the way shown by Gandhi he relevant? Can his Ahimsa and satyagraha be applied to tackle such kind of problem? Yes it is possible, but prior to that it is necessary to became familer with the method of their application of both, Ahimsa and satyagraha are not the exception in the law of change, they are two within the domain of it.

So those in authorities when dealing with serious issues in the whole world must have the humility to understand and accommodate the opposite point of view. They should have love and regard for those who cry for justice and rights and even those clamouing for separation. In that case there would be room for discussion, negotiation and settlement. Non-violence and satyagraha presuppose humility and readiness to understand even the most unpleasant stand of the opponent. This is applicable to those in power if they want to deal with problems of non-violently. For those who cry for justice and separation. Satyagraha would mean non-cooperation without ill will and suffering for their rights. They should be ready to compromise if their demands are substantially met by granting them the maximum without separation, because separation is not a permanent solution to any problem. It is a fact that non-violent satyagraha sometimes takes longer time but causeless damage to property and does not leave any hatred. Ultimately imbied with Ahimsa it is the pursuit of Truth and Truth always win.
Gandhi’s ideas is also known as Gandhism. The basis of Gandhism is Non-Violence. Gandhism cannot be separated from Non-Violence even for a movement. Gandhism and Non-Violence are connected with one another. It may also be said that the life of Gandhism stays on Non-Violence. In the words of Gandhi “My life is dedicated for upholding Ahimsa...”

In simple words not to take any one’s life is considered non-violence. Generally Non-Violence is consist of two words non and violence. According to Indian etymology, there are three elements in Ahimsa. They are not to kill or injure anyone. According to Shandilyauponishad Non-Violence is absence from causing dukha or suffering by thought, word and deed. Form the above observation it is clear that it is the opposite of violence.

Non violence simply means abstaining from the use of physical force to achieve an aim. It is a philosophy, a principle, and a practice. As an ethical philosophy, it upholds the view that moral behaviour excludes the use of violence. The principle of non-violence mainly refers to the ideal of positive non-violence. By doing nothing against injustice and also claiming to be a non-violent is cowardice in reality. On the contrary, a true non-violent chivalrous never bends before injustice and malevolence. In reality, non-violence can never be the weapon of the weak because a coward cannot become non-violent. According to Gandhi, truth and non-violence are the two sides of the same coin. Both have the same value. Difference lies in the approach only. Non-violence is in one side and truth is on the other.

In practice injustice and non-violence cannot go together because injustice can only be tolerated by a coward. A brave person cannot keep the yoke of exploitation on his shoulders. Non-violence is always associated with brave men and women. In this way, by combining together the justice and non-violence, Gandhiji comes nearer to those thinkers of the Vedic age and of Western world who look at non-violence in the perspective of justice.

Non-Violence or Ahimsa is supreme kindness and supreme self sacrifice. Ahimsa is the basis of the search of Truth. The search is vain unless it is founded on Ahimsa as the basis. The only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa. A perfect vision of truth can only follow a realization of Ahimsa.

Non-Violence is an active moral fight against wickedness. It is not physical resistance to evil. It is not only moral weapon of the masses, organized and well-disciplined mass. Non-violence is an infallible moral weapon against all kinds of evil, like social, economic, religious, national or international.

The goal of non-violent conduct is self purification on the one hand, and social well being on the other. In the word of M.K. Gandhi, “for me there is no escape from social service, there is no happiness on earth beyond from Ahimsa. In this scheme, there is nothing low, nothing high. For all is one, through we seem to the many. He advocated, the path of ahimsa raised above all barriers of caste, creed, religion and nationality.

Conclusion: Mahatma Gandhi was instrumental in bring socio-cultural, political and religious unity in Indian and the world through his magic of Ahimsa, Truth and Satyagraha. What is needed at the hour is to implement his deeds, action and thought into practice and thus his relevance in different fields is unquestionable and unchallengeable. For the very survival of human being, it is imperative on our part to act upon his advice because only on his relevance. To conclude he is the only hope of the future as he is the only shining star on the Horizon and his light will illuminate the darkest part of this globe.

Reference:

1. Selected works vole. (III ) PP-150
2. Ibid PP-150,153
5. Essential of Gandhi P-88
6. Ibid P-181
7. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan and Charles, A source book of Indian Philosophy P-179
8. An Autobiography PP-171-4
9. All men are Brother PP-116
10. In search of the Supreme Vol-ii P-83
12. G. K. Thakur, Mahatma Gandhi’s Philosophy of Satyagraha p-3
13. R. R. Diwaken, Gandhi a Practical Philosopher P-23