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MAHATMA GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY OF SARVODAYA



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Abstract: "Sarvodaya" is an offspring of Gandhi's thinking. There was a great impact Jainism on Mahatma Gandhi. He borrowed the term Sarvodaya from the writings of Jaina sage 'Acharya Samantabhadra' and used it first in his autobiography. Though the term Sarvodaya is popularly related to the political and social thinking of Vinoba Bhave, we find its seeds in Gandhian philosophy. Even the translation of Ruskin's *Unto the Last* into Gujarati by Mahatma Gandhi contains the title 'Sarvodaya'. Some believe that Sarvodaya means the rise of all but it also means 'Welfare of all'.

Keywords: Philosophy , autobiography , non-violence , economical.

INTRODUCTION:

Sarvodaya is a system which is based on truth and non-violence and does not have any space for competition, diversity, conflict and persecution. It gives an equal opportunity for the development of even the person on lowest level.

Sarvodaya means implementing Gandhian philosophy to solve the social political and economic problems of the society. It is a weapon of social welfare by making maximum utilization of the available physical, economical and spiritual means. The Scope Sarvodaya is more than the fundamental principle of utilitarianism i.e. maximum welfare of the majority. Sarvodaya believe in the welfare of one and all in the society.(Dharmadhikari; 2000). What Sarvodaya is not ?

1)Sarvodaya does not believe in communal school of thought, so it is free. Whatever is based on truth Sarvodaya accepts it. It believes that each thought tells a new truth and there is truth in each thought. Sarvodaya is based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Ruskin. Its base in Ruskin's *Unto the Last* but it is fused with Gandhian ideology. Sarvodaya cannot differ from trust and Non-violence. It believes in the principles of truth, non-violence and Ruskin's philosophy. Whatever is opposite to these three is not Sarvodaya.

2)Sarvodaya does not dream of Utopia. For e.g. Marx predicts the stateless, persecution less Utopian state: Sarvodaya describes the present social status and guides how it should be. It works as a social critic of the Utopia. It prescribes how the society should be by describing what is lacking there.

3)Protest movement: - Sarvodaya is a protest movement against injustice and ill will. Its main aim is to oppose the

established in the society. As a critic of true thought, Sarvodaya is a protestor. Sarvodaya wants to protest against capitalism, liberalism and trade culture. The institute namely 'prostitute' is the final stage which makes a human being a commodity. Commoditication of individual stupefies the capitalist. Sarvodaya opposes all these.

The Philosophical base of Sarvodaya:-

Sarvodaya expects to reach unto the last person of the Society. Gandhi, inspired by Ruskin's *Unto the Last*, advocates the principle that,

- 1)the welfare of one is involved in the welfare of all
- 2)the value of the work of a lawyer and a barber is same, because the right to earn the livelihood is equal to all. It cannot be changed according to the professions.
- 3)life based on labour is real life. This life is lived by farmers, workers, labourers etc. Those who work hard, live this life.

Sarvodaya includes the people from high and low, capable and incapable, clever and mentally retarded groups. It has accepted the principle higher than Live and let others Live and that is Live for Others. It expects the practical implementation of Vedanta philosophy.

Sarvodaya believes that human being by nature itself is selfless, moral, cooperative, compassionate and peaceful. Human beings have the capacity to inculcate the principles like truth, non-violence selflessness, self-control etc. These principles can be developed by meditation and appeal to mind.

Characteristics of Sarvodaya:-

- 1)Tries to establish party-less Democracy- What is party-less democracy? How to establish it? Party believes in politics

'Mahatma Gandhi's Philosophy Of Sarvodaya

not in democracy, so undue importance is given to politics, and social welfare is kept aside. According to Vinoba Bhave at one stage of history Religion persecuted society. It has become the politics of suppression. Here it is not used for the freedom of nation-state. On the name of nationalism it caters the interests of the few. That is why Sarvodaya opposes this and advocates people oriented politics (Dharma dhikari,2000)..

Individual does not behave according to his/her consciousness. He/she believes in what the party says. Loyalty to the party, thinking according to the party's mind, keeps the individual's consciousness aside. One should oppose one's opinion not the individual. But while opposing the opinion the individual itself is being opposed. This attitude is anti-sarvodaya. While advocating how to approach party-less democracy Gandhi tells –

- 1) Sarvodaya worker should not bind himself to party politics but must cast the vote. Casting a vote is the use of consciousness. So one should cast the vote.
- 2) All party people should give a free way to the Sarvodaya workers in the campaigns of 'Bhudan' and 'Gramdan'.
- 3) Those who are not the workers of Sarvodaya and accept these rules can participate in Sarvodaya movement.
- 4) They should represent the constituency in the assembly rather than representing the party.
- 5) The representative should be suggested by the people and not by the party.

2) Oppose to majority :-

Utilitarianism believes in the maximum welfare of the majority, which means no welfare of same people. So Sarvodaya opposes this principle of majority. Sarvodaya believes in the welfare of one and all.

3) Loyalty to Satyagraha is loyalty to life :-

In Sarvodaya society loyalty to satyagraha is considered loyalty to life. To inculcate this Gandhi advocated eleven principles.

1. Truth, 2. Non-Violence, 3. Brahmacharya, 4. Aswad, 5. Asteya, 6. Aparigraha (Non-accumulation of wealth) 7. Abhay (fearlessness), 8. Swadeshi, 9. Sharirshram (Labour), 10. Sarvadharm Sambhava (equality of all religions), 11. Eradication of untouchability. These were traditional principles but Gandhi gave them a modern appearance.

4) Governance free Society :-

There is a kind of distrust about governance, law, present democracy, elections, political parties etc, in Sarvodaya. The propagators of Sarvodaya believe that though these institutions are well established now, they cannot solve all the problems of Indian society. On the other hand they fear that these institutes will foster the growth of social ills.

5) Decentralization of power:-

The advocates of Sarvodaya strongly criticize extremely centralized politics, industrialization and

mechanization, preference to national planning, extremely organized party structure etc. The thought of decentralization of power is considered important in Sarvodaya for both economic and political reasons. The Governing system will be created out of autonomous and self depended villages.

According to Sarvodaya philosophy rural life is the soul of India. That's why social, economical and political thought should be centered on the villages. Gandhi had portrayed the picture of separate commonwealth of villages in India. He believed that the village can only become independent if all the primary and many of the secondary needs of the villagers were completed in the village itself. Similarly, a network of agro-related businesses should be developed there. Sarvodaya philosophy considers the rural organization the greatest one.

Gandhi advocated the no-state view that if each village becomes capable of working independently, then there will be no need of central rule/Government. There will remain no diversity in the society. The Rich would look at their property as trustees, all the minimum requirements of all would be fulfilled and no one would have to care for the future. In such circumstances power will become useless. If the central ruling system becomes inactive in this way, then there will not remain any scope for political parties. As a result of this all the inadequacies emerging out of party system will also become ineffective.

In socialist states in modern world there seen the power of single party, but in the so called democratic countries also it is seen that the party politics is becoming more prominent. In such circumstances the society should be saved by stating the importance of Sarvodaya philosophy. It may not be possible that this concept be materialized in near future but the idea of ideal human society in it, is very apt and attractive.

While considering how much Gandhi's views are applicable to the present condition in India, it should be kept in mind that there is a vast difference in the then present conditions and the present one. Considerable changes have taken place at cultural, social and economical level. But the problems raised by Mahatma Gandhi regarding all these have become more affective. If Gandhi were alive today he would have need to raise the issues like temperance, non-violence Hindu-Muslim unity, superstition, secular politics, moralization of politics, eradication untouchability, cleanliness etc.

Today, the social bond is becoming ineffective due to the corruption in Govt. sector, administrative sector, moral degradation of peoples' representatives etc. The corruption by the political leaders has reached its extreme. During last year the scams like 2G Spectrums, CWG, Adarsh Society have come into light. The principles like morality, loyalty, character, etc have disappeared from party politics.

Once again there is need of Gandhian philosophy, especially of Sarvodaya, to give justice to the downtrodden, farm labours, illiterates, dalits, tribals and humans of this country.

CONCLUSION;

The Political philosophy of sarvodaya is an

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intellectual attempt to build a plan of political and social reconstruction on the basis of metaphysical idealism. It is based on the insights of Gandhi. He was a persistent critic of modern western democracies wedded to the cult of violence. Sarvodaya is an attempt to develop Gandhian ideas regarding decentralization and villageism but although sarvodaya derives the concept of decentralization from Gandhi, its concept of partyless democracy is, to some extent, an original contribution to political thought although there are chances that perhaps this concept has been derived from the intellectual armoury of the Yugoslav Communist party. Nevertheless, the advocacy of the synthesis of partyless democracy and village self-government is a notable contribution from the standpoint of Indian political thought and practice

Certainly there are common elements in socialism and Sarvodaya. Both want to end the dominant regime of injustice and both aim at exalting the status of the peasants, workers and other suppressed sections of society. But it must be emphatically stated that socialism and Sarvodaya are not synonymous. It is true that Sarvodaya represents a higher moral idealism, but socialism is more aggressive and more dynamic than Sarvodaya as a social and political movement. While socialism adheres to the notion of class-struggle, Sarvodaya believes in class-harmony.

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