



Political Thoughts and Activities of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

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Abstract: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one of the prominent leader of Indian Independence Movement. People called him 'Father of the Nation'. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore gave him the title 'Mahatma'. He was the first educated barrister who completed his study in London. He belongs from a Pranami Vaishnava family. From earlier time he was inspired by religion. 'Shravana', 'Harishchandra', Ramayana etc, stories, and western philosopher Leo Tolstoy's book 'The Kingdom of God is Within You' and Ruskin's 'Unto This Last' also influenced him and changes his thoughts. After completed his education he went to South Africa, from there Gandhiji started his activities. He took a way of 'Satyagraha' which means accepting the truth, Ahimsha Rules. He established many farm houses, such as Tolstoy farm, Sabarmati Ashram, Sevashram and Finix Farm etc. From Champaran Satyagraha to Kheda, his activities were deeply influenced the masses of rural India. In this Article, I have discussed about the political thoughts and activities of M.K. Gandhi.

Key Words: Mahatma, Satyagraha, Father of Nation, Ashram, Vaishnava family.

1. INTRODUCTION:

After the end of the Revolt of 1857, Indian people familiar with the British policy. Due to the impact of Renaissance, social reformation movement and western education, middle class educated people understood their position. They started writings, papers, literature. They had to join many sabha and samiti. At that time, all over the India, many reformers were born. In Indian History, all we know him as the 'Father of Nations', M. K. Gandhi is not only an Indian national leader but also the leader of all colonial countries. His contributions was spread in South Africa. Where he started his first political life. It is not possible to describe his ideology and achievement in one article but yet I also try to highlight some basic things and activities of Gandhiji. M. K. Gandhi's full name is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, in his family titles was take from their father's name. His father name was Karamchand Gandhi, thats why Mohandas Gandhi took the name of 'Karamchand'. He was born on 2nd October, 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat. His father Karamchand Uttamchand Gandhi was the member of the Rajasthanik Court. His Mother Putlibai was belonged from Pranami Vaishnava family. As a great Indian leader, his contribution is acceptable. In his autobiography, he mentioned that, his mother didn't take any meal without her daily prayers. In their Haveli, there had a Vaishnava temple. So Gandhiji was deeply influenced by Vaishnava Religion. In his childhood time, He saw 'Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka', 'Harishchandra' and other moral stories that captured his young mind. Besides his studies, he was influenced by the ideology of western philosophers (Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin, Henry Devid Thoreau). When he became 13 years old, he married with 14 years old KasturbaiMakhanji Kapadia, he called her 'Ba'. In 1887 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was graduated from Ahmedabad. After that Mavji Dave Joshiji's advisement He went to London in 1888. If we cast our eyes in 19th century, we must notice that Most of the middle class Indian went to England for law studies. Law was the highest position and good paying jobs. Most of the National leader had to choose their profession as a barrister. There had vegetarian and non- vegetarian all people lived in London. Gandhiji belonged from a Vaishnava family and he promised his mother not to touch non-vage and drink. So, He was joined a Vegetarian group of community. During the time (February, 1891), Gandhiji Contributed an article "Indian Vegetarian". After completed his study, he met with Dada Abdullah, He offered to Gandhiji for a case in South Africa. For this case, Gandhiji went to South Africa. From there, he started his political life.

In South Africa, a new struggle was started by Gandhiji. He noticed the discrimination between peoples about their skin colour. At the 1st half of 20th Century, British government send many Indian labours to South Africa. They worked in Jails, Cole mines, roads and bridge constructions. British government exploited those people both physically and mentally. At that time South Africa was one of the colony of British Empire. Gandhiji fought against this discrimination between black and white people. Nowadays, if we discussed about Gandhi's ideology that time we have to mention his paper, Ashram etc. Paper was one of the important source in 19th century. Middle class educated people explain their ideology through the newspapers. Gandhiji published papers from South Africa which was influenced



many people to opposed the colour prejudice. In June 1903, Gandhiji started a weekly newspaper 'Indian Opinion.' In this paper he highlighted the activity of British Government. In 1904 he build a 'Finix Farm' in Natal. Gandhiji made many farms, he started his journey and published many News paper. In 1906 , he set up 'Tolstoy Farm' , from this place He had play an important role In Indian National Movement, with the help of German architect Kallenbach, for build this farm, Many Indian sent him money, As an example, Sir Ratan Tata gave him Rs. 25000 and Congress and Muslim league also helped him. After the 'Gandhi-Smuts Agreement' (june, 1914), Gandhiji return in India. In 1915, Gandhiji was a 50 years old. During this time, Congress was divided into two parts, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim league also found, for that reasons communalism was spread in India. Another side, World also faced first World War. In 1915 to 1917, Gandhiji visited many village area and try to find out the problem. During two years Gandhiji visited many rural area. Firstly, he noticed that the condition of lands, farmers life were not good. Their had many allegations against the land tax. Secondly, When Gandhiji Noticed the allegations of labourers. Mill owners couldn't gave them proper salary, labourers hadn't get holiday in an Week, that's why they united against the British Government. In this time, Gandhiji was very enthusiastic to joined them in National Movement.

In his life Gandhiji adopted the policy of 'AhimsaSatyagrahi', this way he leading all the movements. During the first two years, Gandhiji joined three Regional Movements, this first peasants movement was starts in Bihar. It is known as 'Champaran Satyagraha' held in 1917. Causes of 'Tinkathiya system', for this system land was unable to produce good harvest. Rajkumaar sukhla was the regional leader of Champaran, he invited Gandhiji for joined in this movement. Other leaders were Brij Kishore, Rajendra Prasad, Mahadev Desai and Narhari Parikh all of them played a vital role in this movement. It was his first Satyagrahi Movement in India, Gandhiji also played an active role in this movement. In 1918 Gandhi joined in Gujarat Mill Workers movement. During plague Disease, Mill owners gave 'plague bonus' to workers so that no one could not go anywhere from their duty. After that the atmosphere was changed Mill ownerswere stopped to gave them extra plague bonus. That reason labourers didn't go to the Factories, yet Mill owners disagree to gave them extra bonus. From this point of view mill workers united and started their movement. Ambalal sarabhai and his sister AnasuyaBehn were discussed with Gandhiji about this movement. Many *Hartal*shappened in that time. At the end time Mill owners raised wages of 27.5%. Gradually, This atmosphere was changed. His Third active role in Khedasatyagrah Movement. Here, Vallabhbai Patel, IndulalYagnik was Playing a vital role in Satyagraha. It was a peasant Movement due to the reason of land tax, this Movement happened. Itwas the regional Movements where Gandhiji tried to understand the problems of Farmers, Labourers etc.

In 1919, two unhuman incidents, like– Rowlatt Act and Jalianwalabagh massacre happened in the Indian history. After this incidents people took the way of violence. After the first World War 'Treaty of Versailles', A harsh terms of the Treaty was signed between Turkish and Allies Group. This treaty added to fuel on fire. Muslims sentiments in India flare up. In this time Gandhiji started fadded on khilafat and Non– Cooperation movement. From 1921– 1922 Indian peoples joined with gandhiji's. Many women(Basanti Devi, Urmila Devi etc) were influenced by Gandhiji's ideology. They came out from their home and joined in Non- Cooperation Movement. After that, ChauriChaura incidents in 5th February (1922), Gandhiji stopped this Movement (11th 1922). Though this movement was failure but it was the first real mass base movement where participated of different sections people, Such as– Peasants, workers, Students, teachers, womens Merchant and so on. However, the big industrialists, Capitalist and Zamindars still remained hostile.

In 1929 , the Lahore session of Indian National Congress witnessed the unfurling of the flag of 'PurnaSwaraj' (Complete Independence). After that Gandhiji decided to start his campaign by breaking the salt laws. On 12th March, Gandhiji along with his group of 78 volunteers started his trek from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi on the Gujrat coast. Of the Satyagrahis, who were drawn from all parts of India, two were Muslims, one Christian and the rest Hindus. On April 5, Gandhiji and his party reached to Dandi, next morning Gandhiji and his volunteers picked up salt lying on the coast, symbolically breaking the Salt laws, with this, salt became the symbol of India's will to freedom. This Salt Satyagraha lasted another two months, petering out as soon as the monsoon arrived.

Round Table Conference was held in three session. November 12, 1930 to January 19, 1931, The first Round Table Conference was held, King George V was the inaugurated this session. Gandhiji didn't take participate in this session. Second Round Table conference was in September 7 to December 1931. Gandhiji was attends in Second round table conference as the representative of National Congress. Sarajini Naidu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Ali Imam, J. D. Birla etc join this time. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar also joined as the representative of Dalit class people. In this session Ambedkar demands that Dalits were the separate class people. Gandhiji opposed this statement, at the end time, Government couldn't take final decision and this session was broken. After that from 1932, Gandhiji established 'HarijanSevak Sangha', for fought against untauchability.

Gandhiji organising an Ashram in Ahmedabad in 1916, it is known as 'Sabarmati Ashram'. He introduced a few handlooms there. The object that they set before ourselves was to be able to clothe themselves entirely in cloths manufacturers by their own hands. Therefore, they use of mill woven cloth, and all the members of Ashram resolvedto

wear hand woven cloth made from Indian yarn only. According to Gandhiji, “Even today the output of higher counts by Indian mills is very limited, whilst the highest counts they can’t spin at all. It was after the greatest effort that we were at last able to find some weavers who condescend to weave Swadeshi yarn for us, and only on condition that the Ashram would take up all the cloth that they might produce”. In the year of 1917, he saw a remarkable lady GangabehnMajumdar. She was a widow, her education in the accepted sense of the term, was not much, But in courage and commonsense she easily surpassed the general run of our educated women. She had already got rid of the curse of untouchable, and fearlessly moved among and served the suppressed classes. She had means of her own, and her needs were few. Once KalidasJhaveri discovered a woman who, he said would demonstrate to us how spinning was done.

Satyagraha was based on truth and non violence. It was influenced by Thoreau, Emerson and Tolstoy. The literal meaning of Satyagraha is holding on to truth. In the earlier time he could see that all the principal events of his life culminating in the vow of brahmacharya, were secretly preparing Gandhiji's mind. According to Gandhiji, “But I could not for the life of me find out a new Name, and therefore offered a nominal prize through Indian Opinion to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject on the subject . As a result Maganlal Gandhi coined the word ‘Sadagraha’ (Sat = Truth, Agraha = firmness) and won the prize. But in order to make it cleaner I changed the word to ‘Satyagraha’ which has since become current in Gujarati as a designation for the struggle”. The history of his struggle is for all practical purposes a history of the Reminder of my life in South Africa and especially of Gandhiji’s experiments with truth in that Sub continent. He wrote the major portion of his history in Yeravda Jail and finished It after his released. It was published in Navajivan and subsequently issued in book form He would recommend a perusal of his history of Satyagraha in South Africa. Gandhiji published many newspapers. June 1903, Gandhiji started weekly paper Indian opinion in South Africa later in February 1933 Gandhiji started ‘Harijan’, ‘Harijanbandhu’ and ‘Harijansevak’ for the against of courage ofuntouchabilities young India it was a weekly or journal in English started by Mahatma Gandhi to popularise India demand sale government published from 1919 to 1931 so to grow he was published from April 7 1919 against rowlatt act Navajivan was the first appeared on October 1919. Young India was therefore restored to Eats original weekly formto have published the 2 weeklies from 2 different places would have been very inconvenient to him and involve more expenditure as Navajivan was already being published from Ahmedabad young India was also removed there at his suggestion.

2. CONCLUSION:

Mahatma Gandhi brought a new change on Indian national Movement. In the first half of twentieth century, Indian political system was very complicated, there was no unity between leaders and peasants. Gandhiji was the first person who removed the barriers between lower class and higher class attitude. He always talked against communalism, he never wanted the partition of India. Here, we noticed it when Gandhiji started Satyagraha and preachers against colonial government that time his wife Kasturba Gandhi supported him and sacrificed her life in Indian National Movement. Though ‘Charkha’ originated in China, but it’s great influence in National Movement. Charkha, Khadi etc. also deprived the National Movement into a new way. If we cast our eyes on the Educational Section, we can say Gandhiji always contributed for adults Education. All over India, many regional leaders followed his ideology. In Bengal region, during the time of ‘Quit India Movement’ (1942, 9th August) Matangini Hazra, also known as ‘Gandhiburi’. In North eastern province, Khan Abdul Gaffarkhan also known as ‘Frontier Gandhi’ etc. His continues effort give us freedom. He fought in South Africa against British Empire. Not only a leader but also all common person, he met with all class peoples. He never wanted a communalism fiction between Hindu and Muslim. He always try to United of Moderate and Extremist. In 30th January 1948, Gandhiji also assassinated by NathuramGodse. It was very unfortunate that we lost him only one year later after Independence. But as the Father of the Nation he always alive in every Indian minds.

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