

CHAPTER IV

RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NONVIOLENCE (AHIMSA)

It is about six decades since Mahatma Gandhi died and still there are discussions about what he left for humanity and whether those are relevant for the society and will be able to survive the test of time or not. Mahatma Gandhi, a man of unique thought, action, compassion, acumen and commitment could be idealised as a symbol of world peace. Throughout his life he fought against injustice and exploitation done by man on another man. His entire life was indulged in the search for truth and it was during that period he discovered the jewel of ahimsa. According to him both nonviolence and truth were the two sides of the same coin and compliments and completes each other. He always insisted that truth can be different for different people and imposing one's view of truth on other was completely unjustifiable. Because there may be possibilities that what appears truth for one person may be untruth for others. So it was both ethically and epistemologically wrong. Thus accepting others truth as well and providing space for everyone was the real way of nonviolence according to Mahatma Gandhi. Nonviolence according to him was the only justifiable way to reach and vindicate truth. It was for this reason he gave the dictum that, "Truth is the end and ahimsa the means thereto" (Yurveda Mandir, 1932, p.7). Although the English word nonviolence starts with a negative prefix 'non' but for Mahatma Gandhi there was nothing negative in it. He explained that, "Ahimsa is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt any living thing is, no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs"(Gandhi M.K., 1932 p.7). He further explained that ahimsa was full of positive connotations and love for everyone, even the evil-doers, because he believed in resisting what was wrong and not the person involved in doing it. In order to explain the aspect of love in ahimsa and reason for using negative word 'nonviolence', Mahatma Gandhi said that, "Ahimsa means "love" in the Paulin sense, and yet something more than the "love" defined by Paul...Ahimsa includes the whole creation and not only humans. Besides "love" in the English language has other connotations too and so I was compelled to use the negative word. But it does not, as I told you, express a negative force, but a force superior to all the forces put together

(Gandhi M.K., 1936). According to him it was the bond of love and ahimsa that united every human being. He always tried to preach that nonviolence was mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction created by man. He believed that there was good in every human being and no one was born evil. It only depends upon the perception of every man how he identifies and calculates the situation around him. If there is death and destruction all around, there may be possibilities of a person being carried away with it and act negatively, but there is also a possibility of him seeing the life persisting in the midst of all destruction and act positively. In this context he wrote that, “Consciously or unconsciously, we are acting non-violently towards one another in our daily life. All well-constructed societies are based on the law of nonviolence. I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and therefore there must be higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life we have to work it out in daily life” (Gandhi M. K., 1931). If this would not have been the situation then nothing would have been left in the world because of hatred and malice. In order to justify the supremacy of love and role of nonviolence in human life Mahatma Gandhi made a comparison between the physical force of gravitation and the moral force of nonviolence. As the force of gravitation hold everything in the physical universe together in its proper place and regulates its motion and maintains its kinetic energy, the power of love and nonviolence acts as the cohesive force in human life, organising and guiding human relations with least friction (Mathai M.P., 2012). Therefore he wanted all the people to accept nonviolence completely as their faith i.e. in thought, words and deeds. But for this he did not try to impose it on people rather he himself practiced nonviolence in every aspect of his life and set an example of its success. Earlier nonviolence was considered to be a thing of saints but it was Mahatma Gandhi who developed it as a matchless method of fighting injustice and exploitation. He considered it as a universal method for resolving conflicts. He himself used it for the first time in South Africa, to fight injustice and racism and later to bring independence in India and other social evils prevailing in India like untouchability, female feticide, alcoholism, discrimination against women etc. Some of his major nonviolent movements during Indian independence were Champaran or Kheda Satyagrah in 1917-18. In this movement Mahatma Gandhi supported the farmers and peasantry against the British landlords. The farmers were forced by British landlords to grow indigo and sell them on fixed price. In the year 1918, when

Kheda was hit by a flood the farmers demanded relief of tax from the British landlords but they refused. So Mahatma Gandhi with his weapon of non-cooperation supported the farmers and asked them not to pay the tax. He ultimately won the battle and the Government made a provision related to tax. Vykom Temple Satyagrah was another important nonviolent protest in which Mahatma Gandhi tried to restore the dignity and status of the untouchables. Besides this The Non-cooperation movement of 1920, Salt Satyagrah of 1930 and Quit-India movement of 1942, are some other forms of nonviolent Satyagrah.

According to him it was the soul force and everyone has soul within them so, it was possible for everyone to practice nonviolence. Mahatma Gandhi was very farsighted and practical man. He did not wanted just political independence rather he always urged for spiritual and moral freedom. It was very early in 1909 itself in his famous book ‘Hind Swaraj’, that he predicted about the incoming disaster due to unprincipled growth and tried to warn people about it and also suggested methods to avert it through nonviolence and truth. He further warned and wrote that, “My aspiration is limited. God has not given me the power to guide the world on the path of nonviolence. But I have imagined that he has chosen me as his instrument for presenting nonviolence to India for dealing with her many ills. The progress already made is great. But much more remains to be done” Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot sit as a helpless witness to such a situation...If today I sit quiet and inactive God will take me to task for not using up the treasure he had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world” (Prabhu R.K. & Rao U.R., 1988). It was because of this reason that Dalai Lama in his praiseworthy words for Mahatma Gandhi stated that, ““Many ancient Indian masters have preached ahimsa, non-violence as a philosophy. That was mere philosophical understanding. But Mahatma Gandhi, in this twentieth century, produced a very sophisticated approach because he implemented that very noble philosophy of ahimsa in modern politics, and he succeeded. That is a very great thing” (Barua R., 2008).

PRESENT SCENARIO

The 21st Century has evolved more as a materialistic and pompous world filled with greed, malice and hatred people have become more possessive of their material goods and are losing faith I spirituality and moral values. The 21st Century man with all his eccentricity, lust of power, science, and technology of modern warfare laughs at the basic postulates of Gandhism. But for this only the present generation cannot be held responsible. After independence and death of Mahatma Gandhi there was a complete departure from Gandhian ideas to the Nehruvian ideas mainly focusing on the political and economic development rather than moral and spiritual progress (Parida D., 2009). When the first atom bomb was exploded on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Mahatma Gandhi's reaction was "I did not move a muscle. On the contrary I said to myself that unless now they adopts nonviolence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind" The irony of the very perfection of the weapons of war rendering them useless as arbiters between nations has become increasingly clear during the last forty years. The atomic stockpiles which the major nuclear power have already built up are capable of destroying civilization, as we know it several time over and peace has been precariously preserved by what has been grimly termed, "The balance of atomic terror". The fact is that with the weapons of mass destruction, which are at hand now, to attack another nation is tantamount to attacking oneself. This is a bitter truth which old habits of thought have prevented from going home." This splitting of the atoms has changed everything bewailed Einstein, "Save our models of thinking and thus we drift towards unparalleled catastrophe." (Nanda B.R., 1974). The four basic principles of ahimsa or nonviolence i.e. respect, understanding, acceptance and appreciation has lost its identity, depth and value in the 21st century. Respect, which not only includes respecting oneself but also one's relationship with others. It also includes respect for other cultures, religion, and way of living and different belief system. But nowadays there is a tendency to consider oneself as an independent individual, not bothered about anyone and with no responsibilities towards the society. Everywhere there is a competitive environment, which is not in a healthy sense for sure and struggle to prove one's way or method as the best and imposing them on others. Religion which is the base of all humanity has lost its charm and value. It is more use as a tool to win

elections or create drifts among people. Understanding among people is achieved when they learn who they are and what is their role in the society? But people nowadays have become so arrogant and hostile that they have forgotten that they are the part of the society and Mother Nature. In their insanity they are trying to conquer nature and resulting in its destruction which is very alarming for future survival. Acceptance is reached when we accept the differences, physical and philosophical between human beings. And lastly when the differences melt away the appreciation among people is achieved. But in the present scenario these two principles are also seen to be shadowed by the feeling of hatred, disrespect, misunderstandings and ignorance. A peaceful society needs all these in order to run smoothly. Man has to understand that they are inter-dependent and inter-related to one another (Gandhi Arun, 2004).

Some of the major challenges that appear during the 21st century and need to be dealt with very seriously are as follows:

- i) Subduing the master of violence and keeping it within limits besides eliminating terrorism.
- ii) Ensuring equitable distribution of wealth and natural resource, also to cry a halt to the exploitation and insensitivity shown in preserving balance in nature.
- iii) Elimination of poverty and hunger
- iv) Increase reliance of rulers and politician religious fundamentalist elements and forces to capture power and sustain themselves in power by exploiting religious sentiments: &
- v) Decline of moral, spiritual and ethical considerations and the extending tentacles of consumerism and materialism.

All these are the biggest challenge in front of every nation who wants to survive in this world and the most disturbing of all these is the spread of violence which is no longer confined to the industrialised or developed nations or those kept under long years of colonial rule but it has spread everywhere (Radhakrishnan N., 2013). Apart from these there are other aspects also which has led to this havoc situation. Some of them are as follows:

- a) The unsustainable economy driven by the corporate world, increase in the value of material things, imperialism based on consumerism and militarism has made a devastating effect on the world. The present economy is nothing but a laissez faire state in disguise. The concept

of development for the welfare of all is just a myth. The market possesses the central role and has accepted the commodity centred approach, leaving no space for ethical consideration. Other aspects of human endeavour are moved to an insignificant position. Society which was once enriched and nourished by age old religion, ethical values and traditional cultures have lost significance and breaking into pieces due to widespread violence. According to Professor N. Radhakrishnan, “The political order has become unprincipled and there is fostering of irrelevant cultural semantics appearances of militarisation and stalking of dehumanising poverty and mal-nutrition which still affect more than one-third of the global community. The general discrimination despite all brave talks and initiatives, the apathy and the kind of cynicism with which morality and ethics are being viewed and abused, the callous indifference shown to Mother Earth and the manner in which nature is being exploited thinking that there is inexhaustible wealth hidden beneath the surface and many similar disturbing and unhealthy trends with which modern civilization is associated with, have been sending dangerous signals and all those who care for human survival are desperately looking for signals which would send some rays of hope-hope that everything is not lost and that it is not too late.”

- b) The world has moved to a stage where humanity is losing its value, in other words we can say that there is crisis of values and not money in real sense. The man is treated just as a commodity; rather he has just become a consumer whose value is measured in terms of his purchasing capacity. If he spends more and acquires big resource or property then he is valued and if he spends less and is not capable of securing more, then he is not valued. Similar is the case with the nations of the world. The bigger nations which are developed and have more money, resource, etc. are the rulers and enjoy a dominating status while the small nations which are less developed with low resource have lower market value. The relationship among nations also depends upon the market status of other nation and not on love, affection or cultural values. The people all over the world show more interest in news like stock market, market trends, celebrity details, political gossips, violent activities like theft, murder, etc. Less importance is given to news featuring art, culture or knowledge. This unfortunate development in the attitude of people has become alarming. The discrimination in the world order is also leading the entire humanity towards destruction. People seem to be

getting entangled in the golden web of materialism in the name of economic development, considering it the only index for development and power. Money is becoming more important to the extent that everything is measured in terms of per-capita income and other material benefits. Due to this there has been a great loss on several fronts like family ties, ethical and cultural values, religious and social aspects, inter-personal relationships etc. and the irony of the situation is that nobody is bothered much about these devastating pre-conditions which could lead to terrific hazards. Everywhere there is talk of globalisation but this is actually destroying people's livelihood. Commercialised western-culture is bringing life style problem through over use of technology. Poor people are becoming poorer and rich people are becoming richer. There is no evenness in the society. Treating nature as a resource to be plundered, food as a commodity and agriculture as an industry is degrading the earth causing water shortage and decertification, polluting water and the air we breathe and corrupting the food we eat (Nixon B., 2007). Even the huge campaigns and warnings made by the spirited environmentalist to stop the harmful activities are of no importance and usually get lost in vain. According to Vandana Shiva, "...the social, ecological and cultural impacts of corporate globalisation are exposing the limits of an economic and political model based on greed, inequality and non-sustainability. Framers are committing suicide, climate chaos is growing, violence is increasing and inequalities are threatening the very fabric of society." This situation has become a universal reality and no country or society can deny this fact. (Nixon B., 2007)

RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The above scenario has led to the discussion about relevance of Gandhian philosophy in today's world. And if we ponder upon the reality we will find out that his thinking is much more relevant today than it was during his lifetime. There is no doubt that Science & Technology has developed to par excellence and has brought unimaginable and astonishing results in different fields but at the same time no one can deny the fact that the world has reach to stage of global crisis. As we have discussed above several tensions and conflicts are arising day by day and imposing an alarming situation. Mahatma Gandhi was aware of all

these things from very earlier. In year 1909 he wrote a book called 'Hind Swaraj' in which he tried to draw the attention of people towards the future. In other words he tried to make people realise what harm might happen to the universe if we don't put a check on the development and strategies which are not based on equality and justice. He even quoted in Hind Swaraj that, "I must confess that I do not draw a sharp line for any distinction between economics and ethics. Economy that hurts the moral well-being of an individual or a nation is immoral and, therefore, sin full". By this he meant the development in order to be sustainable must maintain a balance between biological and cultural diversity which in turn is inescapably linked to justice and compassion, towards each other meant to the nature. Mahatma Gandhi was a person who tried to establish truth above everything. According to him if science is truth seeking, then by making his life "Experiments with Truth" he went far beyond the traditional parameters of classifications. He considers truth to be supreme power (Radhakrishnan N., 2013). Because of this he was called by many historians as social scientist. He thought of almost all aspects and was a whole system in himself. He always tried to provide permanent and systematic solutions to the problems rather than temporary solutions which do not last long. If we look into the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi we will find out that he has provided several great and sufficient tools for sustainable development. He talked about many nonviolent methods which could lead to a peaceful and prosperous life and create a nonviolent society. Some of them are as follows:-

TRUSTEESHIP

Trusteeship, one of the unique concepts of Mahatma Gandhi is also a core principle of Non-Violence. He once quoted that, "My theory of Trusteeship is no makeshift, certainly no camouflage. I am confident that it will survive all other theories. It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it... No other theory is compatible with non-violence" (Harijan, 1939). According to Mahatma Gandhi nothing in this world belongs to any person nor even his own talents rather it is assigned to him by God to help others. God have made them trustees so that they can help the poor, helpless and less fortunate people. He further tries to explain that there is a very thin line between pity and compassion. Many people believe that if they are doing something for someone then it's their greatness. But it is not so.

According to Arun Gandhi, “Pity is degrading and oppressive while compassion is uplifting for giver and receiver. Pity is when we give hungry person to buy food or when we feed the hungry through soup kitchens. When feeding becomes an end in itself then we are causing a problem. Feeding should be a means to constructive action. By feeding the hungry we make them dependent on hand-outs. On the other hand compassion requires that we get involved in finding ways in which unfortunate can be helped to become self-sufficient citizens. The help they receive should be such as to help rebuild their self-confidence and self-respect which are crushed by poverty and operation” (Gandhi A., 2004). People have the tendency that what they possess belongs only to them and they are not ready to share it with anyone. Despite having enough they thrive for more ending up as thieves. In this context Mahatma Gandhi said that, “ I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thief it from somebody else. I venture to suggest it is the fundamental law of nature , without exception, that nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more there would be no pauperism in this world, they would be no more dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this in equality so long we are thieving. I am no socialist and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possession; but I do say that, personally, those of us who want to see light out of darkness have to follow this rule. I do not want to dispossess anybody. I should then be departing from the rule of ahimsa. if somebody else possess more than I do, let him. But so far as my own life has to be regulated, I do say that I dare not possess anything which I do not want. In India we have got three millions of people having to be satisfied with one meal a day, and that meal consisting of a chapatti containing no fat in it, and a pinch of salt. You and I have no right to anything that we really have until these three millions are clothed and fed better. You and I who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary starvation in order that they may be nursed, fed and clothed” (Gandhi M.K., 1933). Mahatma Gandhi originally got the idea of trusteeship from the Vedas. The concept of ‘Aparigraha’ meaning renunciation of ownership, liberating one from all kind of bonds which possessions forge on it, influenced him a lot. He stated that, “The act of renunciation of everything is not a mere physical renunciation, but represents a second or new birth. It is deliberate act, not done in ignorance.

It is therefore regeneration.” He considered one of the verses of the Ishopnishad to be the code of conduct both for the individual and the society. The verse is “Tena Tayaketena Bhunjeethah: Ma Gridha Kasyaswiddhanam?” meaning enjoy by renouncing do not covet, or cling to possessions; for, whose is wealth? This actually tries to focus on the fact that nothing belongs to man he is just a trustee and desire for wealth or possession of something only leads to more possessiveness, greed, exploitation, destruction and revenge. Therefore, society which adopts aparigraha becomes an anti-acquisitive society where wealth is not a supreme matter of concern and humanity is not equated with accumulation of property. Everyone therefore, has a right to honourable livelihood (Harijan, 1939).

Mahatma Gandhi tried to approach trusteeship at four different levels. Firstly, he considered trusteeship as the soul means to promote equal distribution of wealth in the society. It is also seen as the corollary of the principal of non-violence and simultaneously assures the generation and intelligent use of wealth (Iyer R., 2008). Mahatma Gandhi believed that in order to fulfil this criteria of equality it is necessary to take several steps like providing equal opportunity to everyone, reduction in wage disparities, equal income for everyone be it a man or women and reorganising the production system. Secondly, Mahatma Gandhi wanted a revolution at the base itself because he believed that fear of losing would prevent successful economic distribution. He was very concerned about the workers and in order to prevent the concentration of economic and political power and maintain the status of workers he wanted to establish a production system in which the workers are not deprived of their ownership of the instrument of production (Harijan, 1935). According to Mahatma Gandhi every man should be truthful and courageous because fear and weakness leads one to violent activities. In order to bring about social change one has to adopt truth and courage in him. In the case of labour also he said that since strength rests on human dignity and respect, workers must approach exploitative capitalists from a position of self-respect based on the capital of labour, for “labour is as much capital as metal” (Iyer R., 2008). He once quoted that, “Workers, instead of regarding themselves as enemy of the rich, or regarding the rich as their natural enemies, should hold their labour in trust for those who are in need of it. This they can do only when, instead of feeling so utterly helpless as they do, they realise their importance in human economy and shed their fear or distrust of the rich. Fear

and distrust are the twin sisters born of weakness. When labour realises its strength it wont need to use any force against moneyed people. It will simply command their attention and respect”(Gandhi M.K., 1934). Thirdly, in real sense Mahatma Gandhi wanted equality in the society. He never insisted on the guaranteed success of trusteeship but he believed that it ran no greater risk than the conventional social proposal of the day. Rather, he emphasized, it is better to move towards the ideal and make appropriate adjustments necessitated by the specific failures encountered in attempting to reach it (Iyer R., 2008). He even stated that, “Everybody should be able to get sufficient work to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realised only if the means of production of elementary necessities of life remain under the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God’s air and water are, or ought to be, they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolisation by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of destruction that we witness today, not only in this unhappy land, but in other parts of the world too”(Gandhi M.K., 1928). Fourthly, he formulated six criteria that nonviolent, non-exploitative society should use to assess machinery and technology, they should sub serve the interest of all; should not lead to concentration of ownership; should not lead to unemployment; should not result in distance between centres of production and centres of distribution; should not result in alienation and dehumanisation; should not result in atrophy of the creative and participatory element in the work, and reduce man to robot (Young India, 1924). According to Mahatma Gandhi all the above six criteria would be fulfilled only when there is decentralisation of power at all levels. This will also lead to a successful democracy leading to a reduction in regional disparities, in development and enhancing the growth of economic self-government. He believed in the concept of nation-building which cannot be done on the basis of greed and inequality. Therefore, he suggested that by adopting trusteeship we can bring total equality and integration (Mishra A.D., 1995).

BREAD LABOUR

Among the eleven vows of Mahatma Gandhi one of the most important is Bread labour (Sharirshram). It means that every person should earn his bread and do some body-labour to earn his living. Even the Bhagwad Gita says that, “He who eats without performing this sacrifice eats stolen bread.” And the Bible says that, “Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow.” Mahatma Gandhi once stated in Harijan that, “The economies of Bread labour are the living way of life. It means that every man has to labour with his body for his food and clothing. If I convince the people of the value and necessity of bread-labour, there never will be any want of bread and cloth” (Harijan, 1947). The original idea of bread-labour came from a Russian Philosopher named T.M. Bondoref. Later it was borrowed and publicised by Leo Tolstoy. According to Tolstoy labour was a necessary condition for virtual life. Mahatma Gandhi was very much influence by Tolstoy’s writing on bread-labour. But his view was quite broader than Tolstoy’s. He said that, “The great nature has intended us to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow. Everyone therefore, who ideals away a single minute becomes to that extent a burden upon his neighbours, and to do so is to commit a breach of the very first lesson of Ahimsa” (Young India,1929). The concept of bread-labour was an integral part of Gandhian economics. For Mahatma Gandhi a good economy is one which stands for social justice and promotes the good of all and leads to a decent life. He suggested that the capitalists should consider themselves as the trustees of the property entrusted to them. And at the same time he also emphasised that everyone should reduce their wants in order to solve the economic problem. In other words a man should adjust his wants according to his needs because Mother Nature has provided limited resources. Besides this if a man works for his bread and does some physical labour, it will be beneficial for his own health and he would be able to lead a more healthy and natural life which will automatically reduce his desires and wants. This concept of bread-labour can also bring about equality among people. For instance if all people will not hesitate in doing any kind of physical labour then no one will be looked down upon for doing any physical labour occupation. Similarly if the capitalists involve themselves in the work of their factory then they will become more close to their employees and consider them as his equals and will

also appreciate their problems and difficulties (Natraj V.K. & Kapoor N., 2005). Through his concept of bread-labour and philosophy of economics Mahatma Gandhi, dreamt of a classless society where there will be no inequality. He believed in an intelligent bread labour. In this context he even quoted that, “The idea is that every healthy individual must labour enough for his food and his intellectual faculties must be exercised not in order to obtain a living or amass a fortune, but only in the service of mankind. If this principle is observed everywhere, all men would be equal, none would starve and world would be saved from a sin” (Harijan, 1935). Therefore, Gandhian concept of economics and bread labour is of utmost importance and need serious attention because of the fact that all the evidences we now have seen seems to justify the conclusion that unlimited economic growth will collide with the barrier of resource depletion and over-pollution. And then Gandhian economics will prove to be our only escape route to survival (Natraj V.K. & Kapoor N., 2005).

COSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Mahatma Gandhi’s Constructive Programme was a ramification of trusteeship and an important and positive aspect of his Satyagraha. Basically it meant finding constructive solutions to different problems. During Satyagrah Mahatma Gandhi adopted it for the achievement of economic self-sufficiency and inculcation of Swadeshi spirit among the masses. It was employed for the promotion of communal harmony and removal of social evils like untouchability, unemployment and illiteracy. It was also adopted to replace the government institutions with the voluntary public institutions. According to him the main framework of Constructive Programme was truth and nonviolence supported by determination and dedication, vairagya and thyaga. Truth is goal and nonviolence is the means (Mishra A.D., 1995). The Gandhian approach, therefore, was dual or two-sided; one side being what may be termed “civil resistance,” the other being “constructive work”. (Ostergaard G., 2013). For Mahatma Gandhi, the constructive work was even more important. He made various statements in order to support this assertion. In 1931 he wrote: “My work of social reform was in no way less than or subordinate to political work. The fact is that when I saw that to a certain extent my social work would be impossible

without the help of political work, I took to the latter and only to the extent that it helped the former.” (Gandhi M.K., 1931). A few years later, he made another statement to his followers that: “If you can make a success of the constructive programme you will win *Swaraj* for India without civil disobedience” (Pyarelal, 1956, p.44). And in 1940, in a significant confession that he had not achieved a correct balance between the two sides, he admitted: “In placing civil disobedience before constructive work I was wrong. ... I feared that I should estrange co-workers and so carried on with imperfect *ahimsa*.” (Gandhi M.K., 1940). In other words Constructive Programme also aimed at construction of Poorna Swaraj on the basis of truth and nonviolence. According to Mahatma Gandhi independence which is achieved on the basis of truth and nonviolence is a complete independence of every unit and from all the social and political maladies. It was during the non-cooperation Movement in 1920 Mahatma Gandhi adopted constructive programme as one of the method of Satyagraha. He believed that in order to achieve real freedom, the people of India have to first fix their problems, fight with their weaknesses and then look for freedom. In that case it will become easier for them to win freedom. He believed that only political freedom will not make India independent in true sense, in this context he stated that, “I know that if I survive the struggle for freedom, I might have to give nonviolent battles to my own countrymen who may be as stubborn as that in which I am now engaged.” (Gandhi M.K., 1930). According to him the nonviolent soldiers or the Satyagarhis must have some training in constructive programme like, maintaining cooperation with one another, doing things for other’s happiness even if one does not like it , maintaining work pressure, etc. All these small activities lead to a prosperous and successful society. This kind of programme also helps in maintaining responsibility and continuity among people. It is often seen that there is a tendency among people to put their responsibilities on other’s shoulders. For example people in our country usually put all responsibility on Government’s shoulders to look into different matters of the society and blame it if something goes wrong but they forget that the government is only the representative of all people. So it is also the responsibility of people to perform their duty in order to help Government do their work properly and uniformly. There are several factors in Mahatma Gandhi’s Constructive Programme which helps in building a peaceful and nonviolent society.

MAINTAINENCE OF PEACE- Firstly, it leads people to maintain harmony and peace with one another. In order to achieve both social and economic prosperity it was very necessary to become secular and maintain communal peace or brotherhood. In the present scenario different violent incident like the Godhara incident, Akshardham temple incident, 9/11 incident, Mumbai Bomb Blast, etc. both within India and around the world emphasised the necessity of these Constructive Programme.

ERADICATION OF SOCIAL EVILS- Secondly, removal of social evils like untouchability was also one of the important factors of constructive programme. He for the first time used his nonviolent Satyagrah against eradication of untouchability in Vykom in 1924. He tried to change the attitude of orthodox Hindus towards their untouchable brothers. This simple act of Satyagrah proved to be a turning point against the evil of casteism. According to him the evil of untouchability is a black spot on the Hindu religion. So it should be abolished 'if Hinduism is to survive. He proclaims, "If untouchability lives, Hinduism must die" (Gandhi M.K., 1947). Although today it has been declared unlawful to practice untouchability due to strict action of Government but still there are places where it is rampant. This can be eradicated only by bringing change in the minds of the people. And constructive programme can play an important role in bringing this change.

SWADESHI AND SWARAJ- Thirdly, both Swadeshi and Swaraj were the important aspects of constructive programme. Swaraj for Mahatma Gandhi was not simply a question of ousting the British from India and declaring independence. What it implied was a wholly different type of society. He did not want the British to be replaced by Indians doing exactly the same. If that was all they achieved, they would not have achieved true freedom but merely the same type of government run by a different set of men. He wanted the value system and life style of the British Raj to be done away with and totally replaced by a simpler, more spiritual, communal life. This new type of society, reflecting the old values of pre-colonial days, was to be based on the village. He stated that: Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic ... having full powers. It follows, therefore,

that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world... In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom (Bruke B., 2000). According to Mahatma Gandhi the roots of India were planted in its villages and in order to make an overall development of the country it was very necessary to develop the villages because a tree can nurture only if its roots are healthy. He believed that depending on anything or anyone leads a man to become weak and violent in some situations. If a person or a society of nation is independent with respect to fulfilling its basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, it will remain more prosperous and healthy society. With this idea in mind he advocated for 'Swadeshi'. He therefore, gave importance to Khadi industry during his time in order to abolish foreign dependency. Although, the concept of global self-sufficiency may sound unpractical but the Khadi approach can still prove relevant for the Indian villages. Decentralisation of power to the villages can also lead to its strength and independence. In the present scenario its relevance can be seen as the government is trying a lot to revolutionise villages in order to develop it.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN- Fourthly, according to Mahatma Gandhi women were the most important part of the society. They were like the other side of the same coin and can play an important role in the economic and social development of India. He himself knew their importance used them very intelligently in his freedom struggle against British. He saw women as a potential force in the struggle to build a new social order and believed that rapid development of society can take place only if it takes under consideration all sections of society be it rich poor, high caste, low-caste, men and women (Madhu Kishwar, 1985). He once even declared that, "I am uncompromising in the matter of women's rights. I have always had the passion to serve the womankind. Ever since my arrival in India, the women have come to look upon me as one of them. I hold radical view about the emancipation of women from their fetters which they mistake for adornment. My experience has confirmed me in the view that the real advancement of women can only come by and

through their own efforts”(Dastoor A.J. & Mehta U.H., 1993). He therefore tried to raise voice against all social evils practised against women like Purda system, Sati Pratha, Dowry and even child marriage once he realised by his own personal experience. He stated in Young India that, “To call women the weaker sex is a libel. If by strength is meant moral power, then women is immeasurably man’s superior, has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater courage? Without her, man could not be. If nonviolence is the law of our being, then the future is with women”(Bakshi S.R., 1987). He also suggested that it was very necessary to educate the women so that they can find their proper place in the society and also earn self-respect for themselves. In this context he even once said that, “Only when the women is liberated from the slavery of the kitchen that her true spirit may be discovered. But at the same time he justified that it does not mean that women should not cook, but only that household responsibilities be shared among men, women and children. He suggested three important factors for the development and empowerment of women i.e. education, employment and change in social structure. All these were correlated and inter-dependent because only education of women cannot lead to her full empowerment. Change in the social structure through changing the mentality of people is also necessary. Employment at the same time also helps them to become independent and strong but if we look into the present scenario a lot more has to done in order to make an overall development of women because this development is still limited to the elite and middle class women. The lower class women are still deprived of their rights and subjected to several evils like domestic violence, prostitution, dowry harassments, female feticide, witch-hunting etc. Many of them are still uneducated and suffering from malnutrition. Therefore, in 21st Century it should be an important agenda for the empowerment and protection of women. In this Mahatma Gandhi’s guideline can play a very big role because he suggested that not only men to respect the women but also women to respect themselves and live with dignity (Barman P., 2013).

EDUCATION- Another important factor of Mahatma Gandhi’s constructive programme was education. According to Mahatma Gandhi education is the character building process for a person. It helps in enlightening people and shows them the right path and encourages

them to make right decisions in life. He always focused on an all-round education. In this context he said that, “By education I mean an all-round drawing of the best in child and man in body, mind and spirit”. He further said that, “The real difficulty is that people have no idea of what education truly is. We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock-exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of the character of the educated. The girls, we say, do not have to earn, so why should they be educated? As long as such idea persists, there is no hope of our ever knowing the true value of education (Quotes by M.K. Gandhi). He therefore, advocated for education of all women, children, men and even adults. He also insisted for universalization of primary education. He called his scheme of education as ‘Nai Talim’ which blended almost all aspects of crafts, health, art, mind, body, etc. together and forms the complete education of human being till he dies. He once quoted in Harijan that, “Man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for making of the whole man and constitutes the true ecos of education (Harijan, 1940). According to Mahatma Gandhi education was also essential for peace which can be attained through morality and ethics. He also maintained that education should be based on ethics and morality and he himself considered both of these aspects as very important in his life. From the ethical perspective education may be considered as a means of attainment of salvation. It helps in achieving complete peace and nonviolence which according to Mahatma Gandhi was an essential part of education. It can never be separated from ethics, morality and spiritualism. For this purpose he advocated certain rules for the students so as to ensure that morality and righteousness should always be considered as an essential part of their education. Those rules helped people in right thinking, self-control, service to the society, respect to others and constant awareness for their duties and responsibilities. Therefore his concept of education was entirely based on complete development of human personality (Dr.Devi A.H., 2015). He believed in the concept of learning while working. He wanted to equalise the difference between the manual work and mental work and bring self-sufficiency and autonomy through it. According to him working during studying helps in stimulating human minds towards creative thinking and respect for

manual work. He advocated that the aim of education is only to produce good individual but also one must understand one's own responsibilities in which one lives. It is closely related to Hindu concept of 'Varnashram Dharma'. One who understands his or her responsibilities would lead to the spirit of social consciousness and social mindedness. Then all the activities of such person will have a social content as well as cooperation to others (Dr.Devi A.H., 2015). In today's world where there is a crisis situation due to violence, hatred and hostile attitude of people Mahatma Gandhi's concept of education can play an important role in shaping the situation. Through his concept of basic education which preached various activities like celebrating different important days like Birth/death Anniversary, Environment Day, Women's Day, Parents Day, World's Population Day, National festivals, etc.; organising cultural programmes for those occasions; holding of creative activities like cleaning surroundings, untouchability prevention programme, spreading communal unity, adult education programme, health education programme, addiction relief programme, Khadi activities etc. one can instil national, social, spiritual and cultural values among children who are the future of the society (Deshmukh S.P. 2006).

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES- Mahatma Gandhi was a strong critique of modernisation. According to him one of the biggest failure or weakness of modernity was its misunderstanding of nature. Industrialisation has led to increase in pollution, loss of biological diversity, excessive concession of biological diversity, excessive concession of harmful chemicals because of deforestation and over exploitation of natural resources (Satapathi S., 2009). He once wrote in Hind Swaraj that "we noticed that mind is restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passion the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors therefore, set a limit to our indulges. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich or unhappy because he is poor. The Rich are often seem to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Observing all this our ancestors dissuaded us from luxury and pleasure." (Gandhi M.K., 1909). According to him Mother Nature has provided enough for everybody's need but not enough for everybody's greed. So it is duty of man to respect Mother Nature and preserve it for future generation. In

this context Mahatma Gandhi focused on different aspects which led to the destruction of Mother Nature. For instance the world in the name of development is over exploiting the natural resources which can result in serious environmental hazards. It can be clearly understood that the scientific –technological development, large scale industries, serious upheavals in the socio-cultural scenario of the world is leading to the entire environmental problem. It cannot be denied that development in the field of industry has led to tremendous material benefits and facilities for human being but at the same time one cannot deny the fact that all this has happened on the cost of destruction of Mother Nature. Reckless and limitless pursuits of industrialization by all nations are now posing serious problems for very existence of not only man but for all living creature and all kind of species on the planet (Jha ShreeKrishan, 2007). If we look into the current scenario we can realise that the reported reoccurring of acid rain, detection of depletion of Ozone layer and the warming up of the earth as a result of greenhouse effect are serious pointers to the existing problems. Most of the animals, plants and birds species have already become extinct. Formation of desert is increasing rapidly. Deforestation and increasing emission of smokes and injurious gas are not only polluting the atmosphere but also affecting adversely climatic condition to the awful disadvantages of the living being. Urban areas are becoming more populated and congested as the result of by-product of the industrialization. Even the rivers and oceans are getting polluted and contaminated due to the disposal of industrial waste and thing like plastics and synthetic containers and other useless things. Due to high-level emission of carbon dioxide the sea level is also rising. People now days have realised about the problem of the nature caused due to scientific and technological development but they are still using the same methods to overcome these problems. The fact is that the factor responsible for the problem continues to aggravate the situation with much faster pace than the effort to control it (Jha ShreeKrishan, 2007). The naked materialism of the modern civilisation is becoming a road block in the efforts for the environment protection. He believed that nature works according to its own laws and undue interference in it may lead to disastrous results. He tried to focus on the importance of air, water and food. He once pointed out in Indian Opinion that, the day is not far when will have to pay price to get pure air. He stated that, “We have seen something of the structure of the body and learnt that it requires three kinds of

nourishment: air, water and food. Of these air is the most essential. Consequently, nature has provided it to such extent that we can have it at no cost. But modern civilization has put a price even on air. In these times one has to go off to distant places to take the air and this costs money. It is a Matheran that residents of Bombay can get fresh air and only then does their health improve. In Bombay itself if one can live on Malabar Hills, the air is much better. But one must have money to do this. If Durnabties want fresh air, they have to go to live in Berea. That again means expenses. It would not therefore be quite true to say in modern times that 'air is free'. But the fact is that "weather air is free or has to be paid for, we cannot carryon without it for a moment." He further pointed his focus on water and said that, "I have seen thousands of men and women dirtying the banks of Ganga at Haridwar. Pilgrims defecate at the very spot where people sit, wash their faces etc. in the Ganga and then again fill their pots at the very same spot. I have come across pilgrims defiling lakes in the same manner at places of pilgrimage. In doing this we destroy the dharma of compassion and disregard our duty to society." He therefore criticised all the sinful activities of man, who is destroying his own Mother Nature and said that she does not often punish for the sins immediately but gradually human beings will become a prey to all the disasters. This has become true to some extent. He believed that, "the economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of three hundred million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts" (Gandhi M.K., 1965).

Mahatma Gandhi was aware of these facts from very early. In his book, 'Hind Swaraj' he provided the remedy for it because he believed in the concept of 'Prevention is better than cure'. He understood that primordial relation between man and nature and his theory and philosophy of life, society and politics was in consonance with it. His concept of non-violence was an all-encompassing and positive one. It is not merely a 'Live and let live' formula, but it involves principle of 'Live and help others to live' and these others should include human beings, animals and nature. Therefore, he visualised a non-violent economic order based on equality and justice. He advocated for simple living which fulfils basic necessities and is in tune with nature. His economic idea was basically composed of Khadi and Swadeshi. Khadi according to him was not a piece of cloth rather a symbol of de-

centralisation of production and distribution. It was a kind of non-violent life style. The application of the principle of de-centralisation helps in leading a life of simplicity in which hardly there is any scope of amassing unnecessary goods of the market and it is also helpful in checking the exploitation of nature and maintaining the equilibrium (Dharmadhikari C.S., 2014). Basically he advocated for small communities and not big cities because he felt that a good life can be lived only in the small communities which are based on renewable source of energy such as products of agriculture and forestry. And he made sincere effort to translate his percept in real life. Different ashrams established by him were the live example. Nowadays also different environmentalists are fighting for the cause but the problem is that it is more of materialist opportunist tendency. As most of the time the issues are used as political agenda to win elections and after election they are not even taken care of. The efforts of environmentalist have become confide to the scholarly lectures and research papers and books. But Mahatma Gandhi preached it by practising it and that's what makes him stand apart. There are several environmental movements going on in India which are becoming successful due to the efforts of the people; like Chipko Movement, Narmada Bachao Movement, Appiko movement, Koel-Karo Movement, etc. Thus if people, like Mahatma Gandhi, actually become concern about their Mother Nature, it will not be a difficult task to preserve it.

SANITATION

Mahatma Gandhi was also very particular about sanitation. In a speech at Mandavi village in the year 1925 Mahatma Gandhi said that, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness. We can no more gain God's blessing with an unclean body than with an unclean mind. A clean body cannot reside in an unclean city" (CWMG, Vol. 28). He once said that, "Sanitation is more important than independence". He believed that cleanliness was very important for a healthy environment and a healthy man. He not only advocated for the cleanliness of one's body but for the whole society. He said that everybody should be his own scavenger then only the world will be a clean place. Even though he was against the western culture but still he

admitted the fact that he learnt about sanitation from the west and he wanted to introduce the same in India. For this reason he always tried to spread awareness among people about the importance of sanitation. He stated that there are certain responsibilities of people which they should perform in order to maintain cleanliness and protect the environment. Firstly, he said that, “So long as you do not take the broom and bucket in your hands, you cannot make your towns and cities clean”. Secondly, to the students he advised that, “If you become your own scavengers, you will make your surroundings clean. It needs no less courage to become an expert scavenger than to win a victoria cross.” Thirdly, when he inspected a model school he suggested the teacher that, “you will make your institution ideal if besides giving the students literary education, you have made cooks and sweepers of them.” In order to set an example Mahatma Gandhi himself many times did the scavenging work. Once a village near his Ashram refused to cover excreta with earth. They said; surely this is bhangi’s work. It is sinful to look at faeces, moreso, to throw earth on them. He personally supervised the scavenging work in the villages. He himself used to go to the village with bucket and broom to do the cleaning. He introduced bucket latrines and bicameral trench latrines and this experiment of his slowly removed overversion of scavenging from the minds of orthodox co-workers and women inmates of the ashram (Shubhangi Rathi, 2014). Regarding the purity of water he once wrote in Harijan that, “village tanks are promiscuously used for bathing, washing clothes and drinking and cooking purposes. Many village tanks are also used by cattle. Buffaloes are often seen wallowing in them. The wonder is that inspite of this sinful misuse of village tanks, villages have not been destroyed by epidemics. Medical evidences show that lack of pure water supply in villages is responsible for many of the disease suffered by the villagers” (Harijan, 1935). He always tried to convince people to lead a simple life. In this context he once said in Navjivan dated 17.12.1942 that, “Many households are so packed with all sorts of unnecessary decorations and furniture which one can very well do without, that a simple living man will feel suffocated in those surroundings. They are nothing but means of harbouring dust, bacteria and insects. I meant to say is, that my desire to be in tune with the infinite have saved me from many complications in life. It led not merely to simplicity of household and dress but all round simplicity in the mode of my life. In a nutshell, and in the language of the subject under discussion, I have gone on

creating more and more contact with akash. With the increase in the contact went improvement in health. I had more contentment and peace of mind and the desire for belongings almost disappeared. He who will establish contact with the infinite possess nothing and yet possess everything. In the ultimate analysis man own that of which he can make legitimate use and which he can assimilate. If everybody followed this rule there would be soon enough for all and there would be neither want nor overcrowding (Gandhi M.K., 1942). Thus Mahatma Gandhi's view on cleanliness was of great importance. But since last few decades people have forgot about this and there was no effort made in this field which led to many epidemics and diseases. But in the year 2014 on 2nd October, which is the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Mr.Narendra Modi launched a nation-wide cleanliness programme known as '*Swachh Bharat Abhiyan*'. This programme aims at providing sanitation facilities to all people including toilets, safe and adequate drinking water, solid and fluid liquid waste disposal system, cleaning of the villages and dirty area in the cities. He also gave a slogan during this programme i.e. 'Na main gandgai karooaga, na main gandagi karne doonga' (I shall not litter and won't allow anyone to do so) (Modi Narendra, 2014) This activity of our Prime Minister portrays the relevance of Gandhian thought. Besides it has become the demand of the situation. Present condition shows that even if basic things are not taken care of can lead to disastrous situations like dreadful diseases, global warming etc. Therefore, it is the duty of every individual to take resort to cleanliness for a healthy and safe future.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION-

Conflict is something which may arise due to clash of interest, injustice, inequality, deprivation of certain rights or ill treatment of different people. According to Louis Kriesberg, "A conflict exists when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible goals (Kriesberg, 1998) Journal of Peace Research stated that, "A conflict arise when members of one or more of the adversaries minimally combine four qualities: a sense of collective identity, a grievance, the belief that the other side is responsible for their grievances and the conviction that they can affect the other side so as to

lessen their grievances” (Pathak D.N. 2013). Different people have different thinking so there is always a possibility of conflict, especially in today’s world where it has become a common phenomenon. Mahatma Gandhi’s is very useful in resolving several conflicts and it actually proved to be very relevant in the 21st Century in the area of peace research. His concept of conflict resolution was based on his nonviolent Satyagrah because he often used the method of Satyagrah to resolve the conflicts. He believed that there is common truth to humanity which is veiled or hidden when there is conflict, and that nonviolence is the way to restore this truth. According to him the battlefield of nonviolence is in the human heart and the goal is not to defeat human beings but to defeat the evil that corrupts their minds. Mahatma Gandhi came to a realisation that “Nonviolence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute.” He taught people that we have to liberate ourselves before we can liberate others; thus, he stressed self-control and daily self-discipline (UPF International, 2005). He believed in the complete transformation of the opponent through nonviolence and resolves the conflict. During conflict situation he stressed on the aspect of self-purification, self-discipline, reformation and proper conduct of the individual. He used nonviolent resistance as a great symbolic gesture to help increase Indians self-awareness, raise their pride and unity and give all of them a chance to participate in the national resistance effort (Brown J., 1989, p. 56). His concept of Satyagrah is one of the most practical and feasible technique of conflict resolution. In his process of conflict resolution there is no loss of either party or humanity because a Satyagrahi aims to resolve the conflict through love and reconciliation and not through humiliation or annihilation. According to Mahatma Gandhi there are two kinds of forces, physical force and spiritual force. Physical force leads to the destruction and harm of both the side and it solves the conflict only for a temporary period. So he insisted on spiritual force which is also called the truth force. He believed that if this kind of force which is full of love and compassion is applied during conflict, leads to a permanent and peaceful nonviolent solution of the conflict. In this situation the truth is reached by self-suffering and not by inflicting suffering on the opponent. So the person in order to practice nonviolence has to be pure from inside. Inner purification means practising self-discipline in right belief, right speech and right conduct. Mahatma Gandhi deeply expressed his concern that love, friendliness and charity are the

necessary components of inner purification of human beings (Chowdhary P.R. & Satlar A., 2005, p.89). According to Mahatma Gandhi nonviolence can be established only by bringing inner transformation in man's heart through love and if that inner feeling is awake and is full of love it will not do any wrong or harm to anyone.

He also suggested certain steps to be followed during conflict resolution. Negotiation is one of the primary steps. In this process both the parties go for a face to face meeting and try to keep their points before each other in order to resolve the conflict. Bilateral or multilateral dialogue was the main form of Gandhian Satyagrah (Agusti J., 2005, p. 238). He believed that if there is open communication between the two parties then there is no scope for hidden things or misunderstandings because often it happens that misinformation or lack of communication becomes one of the reason for conflict. Secrecy is the biggest enemy of conflict resolution. The Gandhian approach aimed at creating favourable conditions for the establishment of fruitful dialogue between the two parties because the immediate goal of Satyagrah was to reach a synthesis of the opposing claims (Agusti J., 2005, p. 237). He advocated for direct communication with opponents, open discussions and revealing of plans and intentions, liberal use of the mass media to explain goals because all these served to minimise misunderstandings and suspicion (Weber P.E., 2008, p. 460). During the process of negotiation there is often a situation where both the parties disagree to share their thoughts in this case the third part i.e. the mediator plays an important role. At the same time each party retain the decision-making power (Agusti J., 2005, p. 238).

The second step which Mahatma Gandhi advocated for conflict resolution was persuasion. Persuasion means convincing the opponent through any possible reasonable means. If the opponent is not ready to resolve the conflict due to ill-will, ignorance or selfishness then the Satyagrahi tries to persuade him through other means. He considers his opponent to be his friend and apply positive approach to convince him. It enables an enduring and workable relationship among opponents after the conflict. Persuasion can be both personal and public. At public level it means drawing highly credible support, public communication, Media's attention, pressure on individuals, symbolic public acts, public gatherings and repudiation and so on. It gave rise to public visibility of the conflict and begins to involve others in

conflict resolutions. It opens the confrontation to other perceptions and other helpful ways of addressing and resolving the issue (Teixeira B., 1999, p. 562).

Another aspect of Gandhian concept of conflict resolution is Conversion. His main aim was to bring about change in the hearts of both the parties and then solve the conflict which is a permanent solution. The goal of Satyagrahi was to convince the opponent through love and change of heart and not through fear and coercion. This kind of conversion was nonviolent and leads to a real change in behaviour. For Mahatma Gandhi nonviolent conversion was a philosophical commitment and not just a strategy. He sought to convert his opponent by being truthful and trustful. He was completely away from violence and hostility because he believed that deliberate rejection of violence in favour of nonviolence means will have an important psychological impact on the opponent and can bring about conversion (Nojeim M.J., 2004, p.36).

Self-suffering is another important method of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah and plays an important role in resolving the conflict. According to him suffering was the law of human being. It opens the eyes of the opponent and hit directly on the heart of the evil doer and leads to conversion. He said that in a nonviolent resistance, Satyagrah is not a method of punishing or inflicting pain on others, but a method of converting them by appealing to their better self through a process involving self-suffering (Mehta Geeta, 2008, p.552).

Nonviolent Action which is the core of Gandhian philosophy is another important aspect of conflict resolution. His Satyagrah included different types of nonviolent actions like Non-cooperation which included boycotts, strikes, leafleting, picketing, dharnas, etc. Civil-disobedience which included refusal to pay tax, work in government offices, break laws and a willingness at all times to be abused by authorities and respond non-violently with politeness, courage and determination, vigils and fasting, etc. (Barash D.P & Webel C.P., 2002, p. 519). Mahatma Gandhi believed that it was the best alternative to violence and an important technique for resolving political, economic and social conflict without using physical force or violence. According to Gene Sharp a nonviolent technique conducts protest, resistance and intervention without any physical violence by two acts or by combining these two acts which are as follows;

(a) Act of Omission- In this the participants refuse to perform, or are required by law or regulation to perform; or

(b) Act of Commission- In this participants perform acts that they usually do not perform, are not expected by custom to perform or are forbidden by law or regulation from performing (Sharp Gene, 1986, p.567).

The salt Satyagrah where he broke the salt law was one of the finest examples of nonviolent action. Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent action consists of three forms i.e. nonviolent protest and persuasion, non-cooperation and nonviolent intervention. As discussed above all these forms are very effective in resolving conflict without any violence or fear. This technique has been widely used to solve many conflicts like social, religious, political, economic, environmental and international conflicts, colonial rebellion, anti-slavery resistance etc. and it helps in gaining peace, national independence, to undermine dictatorship, to stop genocide, to gain civil rights, to get economic gains and end segregation, etc.

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The emergence of New Social Movements in India can be considered as the relevance of Gandhian thought. It consists of movements related to the survival issues of man including environment and social and human rights, women movements, etc. The broad ideological spectrum of Gandhian socio-political and economic thought helped in developing environmentalism in India. As a vanguard of the 'first wave of environmentalism', Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a moral critique of modern industrialization and suggested to lead a simple life (Guha R., 2000, p.5-6). Gandhian views of economic development and social transformation have bolstered the Indian environmental movement where rural peasants, tribal and other subaltern people are the real participants. Indian environmental movements are the struggle of the people on the issues of their livelihood and access to forest and other natural resources (Shah, G., 2004; 250). These movements are basically survival related movements and the movement participants apply Gandhian way of non-violent social resistance like Satyagrah (truth force), Pradarshan (gathering in a public place), *dharna* (sit-down strike), *gheraos* (surrounding public official) and *aamaran anashan* (indefinite hunger strike) (Baviskar, 2001; 100). All these reactions are the

protective measures that have been practiced by the subaltern people whenever their survival issues were threatened. People's survival issues have been raised through multiple forms of social movements like forest movement, anti-dam movement, anti-industrialization movement, anti-globalization movement, peasant movement, human rights movement, and anti-displacement movement and so on. The main reason behind the growth of these movements is the decline of growth in the status of industrial workers and wage earners, dissemination of the process of marginalization, harmful technological progress, lack of interest on the part of state for social transformation or progress in the society, noninterference in the affairs of civil society by the state, and restriction of development only to the privileged class thus neglecting the poor and lower class people. Under this scenario people do not have any option than resuming the protest movements in order to assert their rights. Now-a-days peoples' struggle taking the issue of rights over forest and community resources can also be known as politics (Kothari, 1984; 219-20). These struggles are in nature a critique as well as protest against the prevailing model of development and the emergence of alternative approach to rural development and more importantly it is self-consciously political on behalf of those sections of society whom modern development has rendered impoverishment, destitute and starving (Sheth, 1984; 261). Therefore this can be described as the new politics of social transformation or the 'new social movements'. Although Mahatma Gandhi was concerned about the environmental issues but he did not suggested what should be the measure to develop environmental attitudes rather he can be described as an interdisciplinarian who talked about interconnectedness among all forms of life.

There are many environmentalist who adopted Gandhian path, as their struggle for protecting the resources eventually led to a form of environmentalism that made it possible for them to see the interconnectedness among environment, development, sustainability of resources, survival and peace. Environmental movements in India arose as an adverse reaction against the destructive developmental projects initiated by the state, *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (Save Narmada Movement) is the best example. Here two distinct groups were contending with each other, one is the state and another is the people. At this juncture of the state versus people conflict, state fix up its position adhering Nehruvian ideology on

the one hand and the people choose the Gandhian path of non-violent resistance on the other. Jawaharlal Nehru favoured modern industrialization through technological development and all these are required to accelerate socio-economic transformation. Hence, he hailed big dams as 'Temples of Modern India'. Before Indian independence he viewed that the rebirth of the old order of cottage industries was not permitted by British government only because of the interest of British industry. Similarly rebirth of new village system is not expected, so both cottage industry and village system were killed (Nehru, 1942; 421-23). On 5th October Gandhi wrote a letter to Nehru in which Gandhi delineated his aspirations of independent India. He wrote: 'I believe that, if India is to attain true freedom, and through India the world as well, then sooner or later we will have to live in village, in huts, not in palaces. A few billion people can never live happily and peaceably in cities and palaces....My villages exist today in my imagination...I can think of many things which will have to be produced on a large scale. May be there will be railways, so also post and telegraph. What it will have and what it will not, I do not know, nor do I care. If I can maintain the essence, the rest will mean free facility to come and settle. And if I leave the essence I leave everything' (Baviskar, 1995; 20). Contradictions of thought between Gandhi and Nehru regarding developmental paradigm is highly measurable. For a transformation from elite to mass nationalism Gandhi favoured integration between village community and craft production. He always gave a theoretical primacy to the peasants. Indian politics of Gandhian age was a contiguity of a peasant based politics with the increasing influence of Indian capitalists over the congress organization (Gadgil & Guha, 1992; 181-82). Gandhian model of economic development was based on enhanced biomass production and this model can be applicable to all situations from ecosystem to industrial societies. On the contrary, Nehruvian model of industrial development was relevant and suitable only for industrial economic sector. From J.C. Kumarappa's viewpoint Gandhian model of economic development is the 'Economy of Permanence' which leads to decentralized economic planning, whereas in the Nehruvian model rich may become richer and poor poorer (Khoshoo, 1999; 277).

Nehruvian model of economic development gained laudable dignity from Indian elites. Such model followed Soviet pattern with state-run enterprises taking over the task of producing

electricity and steel, fertilizers and radio broadcasts and running trains and aeroplanes (Gadgil & Guha 1995; 14). Concrete fruition of such developmental planning heightens the setting up of big dams and large industrial projects. Considerably, it supports state control over natural resource, which is no-doubt harmful for people's survival economy based on natural resources as it drastically humiliates people's right over natural resources. Environmental degradation and massive human displacement are inevitable as an adverse impact of the implementation of such developmental policy. Therefore, Indian environmental movements are based on the opposition of monopoly of state control over natural resources. As usual these movements are against big dams and large public sector projects as it leads to the displacement of marginalized people (Prasad, 2007; 118). In this backdrop, emergence of crusading Gandhians is closely observed. Vehement voice of protest against Nehruvian model of economic development comes from the crusading Gandhians. Among other dominant ideologies of Indian environmentalism like Ecological Marxists, Appropriate Technologists, Scientific Conservationists and wilderness enthusiasts, Crusading Gandhians view that societies of eastern world are non-materialist which vilify industrialism as a strategy of development. Here lies the difference between the Eastern and Western world. Crusading Gandhians have categorically explored the man nature relationship and highlight how nature and natural substances are intertwined with each other. By doing so, they frequently exemplify Hindu scriptures. Thus they encompass ecological and environmental values with ancient religious traditions (Guha & Gadgil, 2008; 354).

According to J. C. Kumarappa, Gandhiji divided utilization of natural resources into two groups, i. e. 'current economy' and 'reservoir economy'. 'Current economy' resources are unlimited but 'reservoir economy' resources are limited. At the increasing pace of competition for the possession of short supply of goods, violent reaction may come to be a reality. Violence may increase if state system or society runs into reservoir economy abandoning current economy. To Kumarappa, hydro-electricity is largely a reservoir economy, the actual power of turning the wheel comes from water. The excessive amount of expenditure on the hydro-electric scheme is in the generating equipment which is therefore mainly of reservoir economy. Ultimately the electric group may be classified as belonging to

the reservoir economy (Kumarappa, 1951; 14-16). To Nehru, multi-purpose projects are the pilgrims of modern India which helps in increasing the agricultural and food production. These projects are the source of revolution. Multi-purpose river projects include power generation scheme and irrigation for agricultural development. Thus both agriculture and industry will grow up simultaneously. To Nehru, 'hundreds and thousands of community projects are changing the face of India; it is a great revolution that is taking place in the village and in the heart of India' (Maheshwari, 1997; 90-91). After independence India took development strategy with comprehensive centralized planning. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru the Congress party followed developmental plan on heavy industry, the public sector and national planning, by doing so they ignored Gandhian strategy of decentralized village society. Nehruji's approach on central planning highlighted industrial development in order to promote economic interdependence and to distribute economic growth among the regions. It has been observed that, social environmental issue was missing in the Nehruvian approach (Swain, 2010; 24).

But with the passage of time Nehru also realized the importance of Gandhian method. When the people in 1960's protested against the Sardar Sarovar Dam and followed the Gandhian method of economic development, Nehru by observing the scenario confessed in a speech on December 11, 1963, that, 'These days I am increasingly thinking about Gandhi's method. The context in which I think of him may appear somewhat strange because I am an ardent supporter of modern industries and choose the best machines and the most efficient technology looking at the condition of the country today, however fast we may progress in the direction of an industrial era yet it will always be true that most of the people of the country will remain untouched by the progress for a very long time, the modern development will not benefit them. So we have to search for a different method of production in which all people can directly participate. It is possible that their tools may be inferior to modern technology yet we will have to use these tools, otherwise these people will become unemployed. We will have to always remember this. We will have to plan for the extreme poor of the country and fully strive to remove their misery. Today, I am endlessly worried about this fact, much troubled by it' (Shah, A., 1995; 365).

Large industrial projects and big dam projects are considered as the developmental processes which are not possible without ecological or environmental destruction. Thus developmental process governed by the principles of the market have created and or creating new forms of poverty (Shiva, 1991; 29-30). According to the grassroot organizations poverty is not merely an economic problem instead it is a function of a social structural locations of the poor who met with several barriers that distinguished the world of development from the world of poverty. The world of development signifies local, political and economic immunities and insulations, on the contrary, poverty refers to vulnerabilities and exposures to exploitations and their unorganized and helpless nature (Sheth, 1984; 260). After independence certain dilemma has been observed taking economic growth and poverty reduction issues. The Congress party was confused to make reconciliation between Gandhian romantic conservatism and Nehruvian socialism in a combined developmental policy. Concerned Nehruvian socialism focused on industrial growth based on the development of heavy industries initiated by the state, but Gandhian version of romantic conservatism is a village oriented ideology which expresses a thoroughgoing distrust of industrialism and emphasizes on the basic needs (food, shelter and housing) of the rural poor through industrial instruments, available at the village level. Therefore, Gandhian view supports basic needs approach of development. Emerging environmental movements in India guided by neo-Gandhism challenge the Nehruvian notion of socialist development. However, Nehruji was not a socialist in depicting a major role in governance by the working class, he was a socialist in the sense of public management by an elite, and the movement organization assume that application of Gandhian model can be the best method to eradicate poverty from the rural India (Omvedt, 2005; 181-82). The environmental movements of the last century was mainly against state initiated developmental projects and was a grass root mobilization to spear the sources of livelihood. From survival and security concern the protesters also highlighted the issues of justice, equality and democratization which are the core tenets of 'new social movements'. But economic issues and political aspects were also interlinked with the environmental movements as social movement. Therefore, Indian natures of new social movements are slightly different than the new social movement of the western world. *Chipko*, *Appiko* and *Narmada Bachao* movements were the best example of grass root

protest movements where issues of survival and security from economic point of view were closely adhered, on the contrary, politics of Gandhian non-violent resistance was the technique to influence the governmental processes for changing public policy on ecological and environmental grounds. Notably, these are continuous struggles against the state. The *Chipko* movement against the commercial tree felling in the Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh emerged as a peasant resistance because rural peasants were the main protestors or the active participants of the movement. Survival economy of the rural peasants was based on the forests (free access of food, fodder, fuel, etc.) The movement had two faces i.e. 'public' and 'private'. On the one hand it was a peasant resistance and it had gained popular legitimacy through the application of the formal ideology of environmentalism and Gandhian Satyagrah (Guha, 1989; 173-77). Tribal and women were at the forefront of the movement. Gandhi's disciples like Sunderlal Bahuguna, Mira Behn, Sarla Behn and Chandi Prasad Bhatt were the *Chipko* leaders who have directed the movement on Gandhian way by following Gandhian techniques like prayers, fasting, padyatras (long march), Satyagrah, etc. In 1977, *Chipko* movement became an ecology movement when the environmental action groups raised the slogan of 'What do the forests bear? Soil, Water and pure Air' (Shah, G., 2004; 252). The movement got its success when Mrs. Indira Gandhi during 1980's, after a meeting with Sunderlal Bhuguna recommended a fifteen year ban on commercial green felling in the Himalayan forests of Uttar Pradesh (Shiva, 1991; 108-09). Inspired by *Chipko* movement, *Appiko* movement in the Western Ghats region of Karnataka was another reaction against commercial tree felling. In 1981, *Appiko* movement leader Panduranga Hegde worked with Bahuguna and participated in his long march through the foothills of the Himalayas. Later on Bahuguna also accompanied Hegde and other *Appiko* leaders in foot march in the Western Ghats (James, 2004; 241).

Narmada Bachao Andolan of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh was a popular protest against the human displacement, environmental degradation and violation of human rights. As a social movement *Narmada Bachao Andolan* endeavoured to influence the political process by lobbying and activism in order to protect the environment and human rights. Hunger strike, *dharna*, rally, etc. all the Gandhian tactics of non-violent struggles

have been applied. Once, the protestors raised the slogans of 'our rule in our villages'. Therefore, right to village self-government was another demand. However, it has been claimed that the slogan was for the non-cooperation with the state through the Gandhian method of non-violent resistance against authoritarianism. But the state authority had a violent reaction against the process of non-violent social mobilization. From 1989 to 1997 there were several cases of state repression over the protestors to suppress the movement. A number of protestors faced police harassment and had been arrested. Women participants also faced brutal assaults, threats and punitive measures from police persons. Moreover, several false cases were filled against the protestors (Baviskar, 1995; 209-25). Both tribal and non-tribal communities were resisting against the construction of dams over *Narmada* River. To Medha Patkar, (chief exponent of *Narmada Bachao Andolan*), like the Gandhian type of protest movements *Narmada Bachao Andolan* also had no particular class base. The strength of *Narmada Bachao Andolan* was the cooperative effort of the people belonging to the different sections of society (Patkar, 1992; 284-85). Therefore, Gandhian ideology and strategies have motivated the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* as it had an abiding faith in the moral force of non-violent action but once Medha tiredly remarked that, 'the days of moral pressure are gone' (Baviskar, 1995; 224). Social activist of *Narmada Bachao Andolan* filled several public interest litigation to resolve *Narmada* problem. But in 2000, despite decade long struggle over *Narmada* project Supreme Court with reference to the case of *Narmada Bachao Andolan vs. Union of India* allowed the completion of controversial and massive *Sardar Sarovar* dam on the *Narmada* River in Gujarat with minimum degree of supervision (Simmons, 2011; 146).

Above mentioned cases are highlighting the conflicts between state imposed authoritarianism and survival imperatives of the people, simply state vs. people movements. Here politics is hidden in the cooperative operations of the Indian masses that are mainly poor and belong to the disadvantaged groups. This is the politics emanated from the grassroots. In other words, this is the politics from below. Generally, the applied politics aimed not to uproot the authority from its position rather this is the non-violent politics for receiving rights from the state authority itself. On the other hand, emergence of

environmental pressure groups during social protest is highly measurable. Sometimes they pressurize the government to abandon the developmental project and sometimes assert their rights over natural resources. However, apart from the human ecological justice, demand for environmental purity is also one of the significant issues. Lobbying, dissemination of environmental awareness etc. are the highlighted programmes for the environmental pressure groups. Thus, the environmental pressure groups influence the environmental legislations and public media. Interestingly, through social mobilization people articulate power and they exercise it over the government to influence public policy. Preferably the used technique was the Gandhian legacy of non-violent resistance.

Greenpeace India- It is a non-governmental international organization fighting against issues such as deforestation, climate change, anti-nuclear issues, genetic engineering, overfishing, etc. It is also very active in India regarding issues related to deforestation, climate change, cleaning of seas, toxic waste, etc. The best part of this movement is that it mostly consists of young volunteers. The youth of India which has become ignorant regarding many issues have understood their responsibility and are taking active part in the Greenpeace activities. The volunteers are trying to mobilize people via internet media, campaigning, etc. In India the Greenpeace movement has many credits to its account. For instance, its campaign against use of genetically modified mustard in 2002, it succeeded in including "complete supplier liability" in the Nuclear Liability Bill by a petition campaign in 2010, and most recently in 2014, it launched its first solar energy micro-grid in Dharnai, a village in Bihar, making it energy independent and many more. But recently the Greenpeace India has been charged by the Government of India for acting as a hindrance in the development activities of India. This action of Government can be seen as an authoritarian one creating hindrance in the path of Gandhian alternative way of survival.

Apart from this another movement based on nonviolence gained extreme momentum was the *Indian Anti-Corruption Movement*. The 2011 Indian anti-corruption movement was one of the most relevant series of nonviolent protest across India against the perceived endemic

political corruption. It gained momentum from 5th April, 2011, when the leader of the movement Mr. Anna Hazare began a hunger strike at Jantar Mantar in Delhi in order to show his protest against the corruption practised in Indian Government and demanded the introduction of Jan Lokpal Bill. This movement was a non-party protest. Corruption has become one of the most predominant problems in India nowadays. Since very beginning socialist inspired economic policy of Government, ownership of industry by the government, protectionism and over regulation has led to a severe problems like slow economic growth, widespread poverty and massive unemployment. All this has led to series of corruption scam in India like 2G Spectrum Scam, Commonwealth games Scam, Telgi Scam, Satyam Scam, Bofors Scam, the Fodder Scam, Hawala Scandal, IPL Scam, Harshad Mehta and Ketan Parekh Stock Market Scam, etc. The list of scams in India seemed to be unending and becoming grave day by day. There has been criminalisation of politics in India. According to the Vohra report of 1993, submitted by Mr. Pranay Nahar, the criminal network has been running a parallel government in India. It revealed many political and government connections of the criminal gangs who enjoy their patronage. Many criminals had been elected to local bodies, State Assemblies and the Parliament. The RTI Act of 2005 has brought some limitations to it but still there are cases where the activist have been attacked and even killed by politicians and bureaucrats. There are many loopholes in the administrative structure which provides undue power to the politicians and the government officials and in order to maintain smoothness and transparency in the working of the government it is very necessary to treat everyone equally and put a check upon them and their work. All these circumstances set a background for protest against corruption

Self-Sufficient villages- Mahatma Gandhi always insisted on the development of villages. He said that India lives in its villages so for a proper and full development of India, it is very necessary to start the process of development from rural end. He believed that development from bottom will give both, economic fiber to the society and spiritual strength to the individuals. The first step initiated in this field was by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who through his silent but nonviolent revolution known as Bhoodan Movement' brought about a

much needed climate for realizing "Land to the tiller". Without bloodshed, "the Gentle Anarchist" and "walking saint" amazed everyone by his 13 year long trek to the remotest village and in the process checked the violent spirit generated by the extreme groups. The improvements on the agricultural front were spectacular. A country that was begging for food in the fifties of the century became not only self-sufficient in food but also emerged as a surplus nation, notwithstanding the phenomenal population explosion (Radhakrishnan N., 1999). The implementation of Panchayati raj and the 73rd Amendment Act also show the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi. Besides this, emergences of self-sufficient villages in India are the example of the relevance of Gandhian economy and nonviolence. Ankapur, a small self-sufficient village located in Armoor Mandal, Nizamabad district, Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh is a model of progressive village. It is considered as model village due an overall development in general and the agricultural development in particular. The village is also undertaking marketing area itself and providing modern amenities for the inhabitants. Another model village is Ralegan Siddhi and the man behind it is Anna Hazare, a Gandhian. He helped in uplifting the highly degraded village and changed its entire face. "The World Bank Group has concluded that the village of Ralegan Siddhi was transformed from a highly degraded village ecosystem in a semi-arid region of extreme poverty to one of the richest in the country. The Ralegan Siddhi example, now 25 years old, by demonstrating that it is possible to rebuild natural capital in partnership with the local economy, is a model for the rest of the country" (Shailesh, 2011) So, it should be the duty of media to popularise these achievements and Government should promote facilities to other villages as well so that they may develop in same manner.

RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY-

Mahatma Gandhi was a staunch believer of democracy and according to him nonviolence is the basis of democracy. In this context he said "if people are to be truly made democratic, they must be valiantly nonviolent". The polity must be fearless, full of equality, providing protection to all eternal values and only then it can be pro people (Kumar Ravindra, 2009)

Mahatma Gandhi once stated in *Young India* that, “We are restrained from violence through our weakness. What is wanted is a deliberate giving up of violence out of strength. To be able to do this requires imagination coupled with a penetrating study of the world drift. Today the superficial glamour of the West dazzles us, and we mistake for progress the giddy dance which engages us from day to day. We refuse to see that it is surely leading us to death. Above all we must recognize that to compete with the Western nations on their terms is to court suicide. Whereas if we realize that notwithstanding the seeming supremacy of violence, it is the moral force that governs the universe, we should train for non-violence with the fullest faith in its limitless possibilities. If we are to be saved and are to make a substantial contribution to the world's progress, ours must emphatically and predominantly be the way of peace” (Gandhi M.K., 22, August, 1929). According to him it is very necessary for a man or a nation to build his own way to progress. Blindly following any person, culture or government may lead to disastrous results. Regarding parliamentary form of government, Mahatma Gandhi considered it as pessimistic. In his monumental book ‘Hind Swaraj’ (Self Rule or Home Rule), he has called the British Parliament as a sterile woman and a prostitute (Gandhi M.K., 1908), though for him, good government is no substitute for self-government (Tendulkar D.G., 1969). But still India adopted parliamentary form of government after independence. This raises a pertinent question that to what extent his idea of nonviolence will be relevant in a parliamentary democracy. For this we have to focus on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi on democracy and politics and how far it has been adopted and relevant in today’s situation. He suggested for evolving a decentralized people's democracy on non-violent lines at the lower levels. He wanted that there should be true democracy in India and for its success he suggested six conditions which are as follows-

- (i) Satyagraha expressed through Charkha
- (ii) Growth of Village Industries;
- (iii) Primary education through Handicrafts;
- (iv) Removal of Untouchability;
- (v) Communal Harmony; and
- (vi) Non-violent Organization of labour

(Prakash Braham, 2013)

In the post-independence scenario the democracy in India was not what Mahatma Gandhi exactly taught. This is one of the biggest reasons for chaos, corruption, ethical and moral degradation, regionalism, communalism, terrorism and violent insurgencies, etc. in the nation. Politics today has become a game to achieve power and retain it. What is needed today is to revolutionize politics with ethics because “Unless the moral and spiritual qualities of the people are appropriate, the best of political system and constitutions will not work” (Narayan J.P., 1959, p.3). Mahatma Gandhi considered that a true democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village.” (Gandhi M.K., 1964) He therefore, suggested for decentralization of power. He declared that, "The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and Moral growth. I use the adjective moral as synonymous with spiritual. This end can be achieved under decentralization. Centralization as a system is inconsistent with a non - violent structure of society.” His opposition to centralization was based on a fundamental ground. He held that: “Centralization cannot be defended without adequate force.” According to him centralization leads to the concentration of power in the hands of a few and that in its turn, robs the people of its supreme authority in the matter of determination of public issues. Not only that, in an over - centralized state man loses his human dignity and becomes a cog in the wheel of the vast and impersonal state machines. Man becomes de-personalized. That is why he stood for thorough decentralization of political power and economic production. He wanted to give a new direction to politics and for that he went to the roots. According to Gandhi, India cannot be imagined without its village. To think of a developed India with its undeveloped village is a ridiculous idea for him. Therefore, he championed the cause of an enriched village life. He propagated for making the villages self - sufficient and self- reliant. He maintained, “Every village of India will almost be a self - supporting, Self - contained unit”(Braham P., 2013). His concept of Satyagrah (Nonviolent Resistance) was capable of resisting evil and purifying politics.

If we look into the present situation the people are realizing the importance of nonviolence and true democracy to some extent. The concept of Sarvodaya and Satyagrah for social change is now getting accepted as a multidimensional and safety valve against the abuse of State power. The latest examples of it are various new social movements for the preservation

of human rights, values and environment. With the enactment of 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution, India had created history in democratic practice and governance. For the first time the institutionalized organs of participatory democracy constituted the *third stratum* of the Indian state, empowered by affirmative action requiring one-third representation of elected women members and functionaries, and the representation of Dalits in proportion to their population in the region (Mukherjee P.N., 2008). In the past years most of the states have adopted Panchyati raj institutions and conducted elections of the functionaries. Besides this the developments of self-sufficient villages like Ankapur, Ralegan Siddhi are few examples of the relevance of his ideas. But still a long way has to be covered because there are many villages where farmers are still starving and are below poverty line. The bureaucracy is resistant and belated in implementing decentralization of power; most of the time dummy candidates are used for gaining power. For instance women are elected but the power is actually exercised by the male candidate. Regarding removal of untouchability, the government has declared it an offence to practice untouchability. Though, the fact is that it is not mature enough to bring about complete transformation or social change as directed by Mahatma Gandhi. But still, even though the process is difficult and long, cautious efforts in due course can bring desired results because in the world filled with grief, hatred and grievance it seems to be the only alternative where people can either live together or perish together.

RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE IN THE WORLD

People resort to violence because it seems to be easier and effective method to them in order to win something but they often escape the ugly truth hidden behind that victory. It is evident from history that any victory achieved through violence is temporary and destructive in nature. It leads to many disasters which human being had to suffer gradually. But with the passage of time people have started realising that nonviolence is the best alternative and can bring about change if practised with firm determination and dedication. Today throughout the world people are shifting to nonviolent resistance in order to fight against any kind of evil be it, corruption, social, economic and political

injustice, exploitation, environmental degradation, imperialism, etc. Mahatma Gandhi's view were often considered by his critique as utopian or anti-diluvium and suited to a pre-industrial and pre-modern society. But they misunderstood the fact that he had been thinking ahead of his time. His greatest achievement was to evolve and practice a non-violent method of conflict resolution at the beginning of the 20th century, which proved to be the most violent century in the archives of mankind. Two devastating world wars took place in the first half of the 20th century and in the second half the Cold war between the two super powers brought the world to the verge of atomic holocaust and only a 'Balance of Terror' between them kept the peace. The Secretary General of United Nations in 1995 even stated that there had been more conflict in second half of the 20th century than it was in the first half due to Mahatma Gandhi's method of Satyagrah which provided peaceful method to end conflicts. Mainly during the latter half of the 20th century people realised the importance of Gandhian method and it got invoked across the globe, in Asia, Africa, America and Europe (Nanda B.R., 2004). One should not forget the success of social reform and civil rights movement of Martin Luther King in USA. Mahatma Gandhi offered prophetic advise that king heeded; "There is no other way than the way of nonviolence- a way however, not of the weak and ignorant but of the strong and wise" (Raman M.V.V., 1969), anti-apartheid resistance of South Africa led by Nelson Mandela; the story of Poland where in the late 70's and in early 80's an anti-communist movement of solidarity took place and as a result Poland emerged out and became the first democratic country in the former Eastern Block of the Communist countries (Szenkovic D., 2013). Similarly in Czechoslovakia a massive nonviolent took place in 1968, which was also known as Velvet Revolution, but 21 years later on 17th November, 1989, a spontaneous upsurge against Soviet Occupation turned into the largest demonstration in the history of the country. In spite of the violence of the security forces the leader of the movement, Václav Havel, speaking in virtually the Gandhian idiom, exhorted them to refrain from violence. This movement was massive and successful only because of the nonviolent method and dedicated support of the students of Czechoslovakia who had thrown themselves into the nonviolent struggle for giving this revolution a beautiful, peaceful, dignified, gentle and loving face (Nanda B.R., 2004)

Another revolution known as Orange revolution took place in Ukraine in the late 2004 and beginning of 2005. It was a series of protest against the corrupt Ukrainian Presidential elections. The movement was highlighted by a series of acts of civil disobedience, general strikes and sit-ins. In the election held between Viktor Yushchenko and Victor Yanukovich, people had perception that the result of Yanukovich was rigged by the authorities in his favour. So the people protested against it and ultimately succeeded when the result of the original run-off was cancelled and re-election was ordered by the Court. The final results showed the clear victory of Viktor Yushchenko and with his inauguration on 23rd January, 2005 in Kiev, the Orange revolution came to an end.

In 2005 a bill board campaign showing Gandhi working on his spinning wheel in Los Angeles, Atlanta and other US cities proved Gandhiji has significant impact on Society at large. Atlanta based Professor Walter Earl Fluker who visited India in 2007 described Gandhi as someone who has a great role in teaching the world peaceful coexistence. Fluker working on a book on the 20th Century African-American civil rights leader Dr. Howard Thurman who had met Gandhi in 1936 in Bardoli to discuss the satyagraha movement said “When Dr.Howard requested Gandhiji to come with him to the US to participate in the civil rights movement, the Mahatma had declined saying that first he needed to test the effectiveness of the non-violent resistance in his own country.”³ Earlier in 1930 Gandhi was regarded in the US as ‘the man of the year’ on the basis of mileage in its newspaper headlines. Gene Sharp in his write up A Study of the Meaning of Non-Violence writes that in 1959, “Non-Violence”, “Nonviolent resistance”, “Satyagraha” and “Pacifism” were words frequently quoted in newspapers as The New York Times, The Times and The Manchester Guardian. And today exactly after fifty two years we have these words ringing in a globalized world, which has though late but made UN observe 2nd Oct as the International Day of Non-Violence. (Kandpekar Neeta, 2011)

Another striking victory of nonviolence known as People Power Revolution was witnessed in Philippines as a result of which the despotic and corrupt regime of President Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown. Marcos threw into the prison one of the protagonist of democracy and his chief rival, Senator Benigno Aquino. In prison Aquino pored

over the Bible and the writings of Mahatma Gandhi and was converted to the creed of nonviolence. When he returned home after three years of self-exile, he was assassinated. His death galvanised the country and paved the way for nonviolent struggle. The crisis came in 1986 in the wake of a fraudulent election conducted by the Ferdinand Marcos Government, which enraged the people. On 22nd February two army generals with their troops defected. This was followed by an amazing scene, five million men, women and children, many of the praying poured into the street to protect the defecting soldiers from the advancing tanks and troops sent by Marcos. The atmosphere became so electric that some of Marco's soldiers joined the rebellious troops. This confrontation between the armed forces and unarmed people lasted for seventy seven hours till the Marcos regime crumbled (Nanda B.R., 2004).

And most recent one is the Umbrella movement going on in Hong-Kong since 26th September, 2014. All these examples and many more which took place in the course of time and are still taking place world-wide prove the relevance of Gandhian concept of nonviolence.

“Throughout my life, I have always looked to Mahatma Gandhi as an inspiration, because he embodies the kind of transformational change that can be made when ordinary people come together to do extraordinary things. That is why his portrait hangs in my Senate office: to remind me that real result will come not just from Washington—they will come from the people” this statement made by US President Barack Obama in 2004 is evident enough to his relevance worldwide (Doedon Matt, 2013)

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