

“Gandhi’s thoughts relevance in corona days”

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Abstract

Rising incidents of COVID-19 among many countries is an increasing concern in the social, political, economic, psychological and cultural life of the people around the world.

The purpose of this study is to correlate how the Gandhi’s thoughts are relevant in tackling the issues of COVID19 during the lockdown and after the unlock in developing countries like India. Using the comparative analysis this study analyzed that Gandhi’s thoughts have close relations with COVID19 impact mitigation. The proximity of Gandhi’s thoughts on cleanliness, truth, religion, trusteeship and rural india is found to play the greatest role in reducing the impact of the COVID19 on social, political, economic, psychological and cultural life of the people.

This study definitely answer the question regarding correlation between proximity of the Gandhi’s thoughts and measures to be taken in solving the issues of the COVID19. Further studies are needed to establish the causal relationship of other political thinkers thoughts which relevant in reducing the impact of the COVID19.

Keywords

- Cleanliness
- Truth is god
- Social responsibility
- Village swaraj
- Made in rural India

Cornavirus disease 2019 [COVID 19] is an RNA virus, with a typical crown like appearance. At the end of 2019, a series of pneumonia cases of unknown cause emerged in Wuhan (China). On Feb 11th 2020, WHO director general, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, named the disease as COVID 19 and by March 11th, 2020 when the number of countries involved was 114, with more than 1,18,000 cases and over 4000 deaths the WHO declared the pandemic status. There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID 19 and no vaccine is currently available. Corona impacted social, economical, psychological, cultural and political life of the people. In this article I have tried to show how the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi are relevant in minimizing the effect of the COVID19.

Mahatma Gandhi was a nationalist, political ethicist, social reformer who inspired the millions across the world through his non violence and satyagraha technique. Gandhi expressed his thoughts on cleanliness, village swaraj, trusteeship, truth, religion and politics. Gandhi's thoughts are relevant in every aspect of life not only for the past and present generation but also for future generation.

Lets see how Gandhi's teachings are relevant in corona days.

Gandhian thoughts about cleanliness

Gandhiji dwelt on cleanliness and good habits and pointed out its close relationship to good health. Gandhi said no one should spit or clean his nose on the streets, as in some cases the sputum is so harmful that the germs infect others. Those who spit after chewing betel leaves and tobacco have no consideration for the feelings of others. (Navajivan dated 2 Nov 1919)

Corona days

Now we can see that under the consolidated revised guidelines issued by the ministry of home ministry spitting has been made punishable with a fine under section 51(b) of the disaster management Act. Refusal to comply with the govt orders may result in imprisonment up to one year fine or both. We can see that in Noida (UP) to contain the spread of coronavirus, spitting saliva, gutka or tobacco in public places has been prohibited and violation of this can attract a penalty of Rs 500 for the first time offenders and Rs 1000 for repeat offenders. Mahatma Gandhi said "sanitation is more important than independence. He made cleanliness and sanitation an integral part of the Gandhian way of living. His dream was total sanitation for all. It has been bearing on public and personal hygiene. Gandhiji said it is essential for everyone to learn about

cleanliness hygiene, sanitation and the various disease that are caused due to poor hygiene.

Gandhiji said if we inculcate certain habits like regular washing hands, bathing it maintained our personal hygiene.

Corona days

WHO says open defecation by the COVID 19 positive person there are chances of spreading the corona virus. if he sneezes or cough and other person goes for toilet in that area there are many chances of affecting them. if every one uses the toilet spreading of COVID 19 disease can be minimized.

Gandhi said hand hygiene is extremely important. WHO said cleaning hands with soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub should be performed frequently to stop infection and spreading of the COVID 19.

Gandhian thought about truth

Truth he considered as absolute reality. Truth is god and it is also the substance of all morality. it did not merely imply truthfulness in speech, but in thought and action also .He equated god with truth. Of all the moral principles , Gandhi placed truth as the first and foremost.

Corona days

We saw that people who travelled abroad and came back to there native country ,among them some of didn't disclose their travel history ,some of them voluntarily didn't come forward for medical check up and screening, some of them who was asked to stay in quarantine didn't follow it. This led to the spread of COVID 19.thus as Gandhi placed truth as the first and foremost among moral principles , people's truthfulness would have stopped that spread of COVID 19.

Gandhian thought about religion

Gandhi argued moral life without reference to religion is like a house built upon sand and religion divorced from morality is sounding brass good only for making a noise and breaking heads. Gandhi's ethical religion pervades the entire gamut of man's actions and all departments of human life. Religion provides a moral basis to all human activities .A man of true religion identifies himself with the whole of mankind.

Corona days

With the Vatican closed ,Rome's easter celebrations on hold ,pilgrimage to mecca suspended and the swaminaryana sect closing temples globally. but we

still saw some blind religious people who attended the prayers in mosque temples, fairs, large religious gathering in Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh continues to take place with the state authorities giving them green light. The blind , stubborn and irresponsible faith may lead to spread of COVID19. Gandhi said as soon as we lose the moral basis we cease to be religious .To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.

Gandhian thought about trusteeship

Trusteeship is a socio economic philosophy that was propounded by Mahatma Gandhi. It provides a means by which the wealthy people would be the trustee of trusts that looked after the welfare of the people in general. The rich must be the trustee of the poor and their excess wealth has to be laid in trust for the benefit of the society. Gandhi believed that the wealthy people could be persuaded to part with their wealth to help the poor. when an individual had more than his respective portion ,he became a trustee of that portion for god's people.

Corona days

Labours , contract workers, construction workers ,agriculture labours, farmers, daily wage earners, film industry wage workers, factories workers and so many other poor were effected directly or indirectly,CORONA19 snatched millions of peoples bread. As Gandhi argued in trusteeship concept, rich people's excess wealth has to be laid in trust for the benefit of the society. Many including celebrities ,industrialists, politician donated to the PM (CARES FUND),while some have chosen to help in other capacities in their fight against coronavirus. for example Cricketer Suersh Raina donated Rs 31lakh to PM CARES FUND and Rs 21 lakh to UP disaster relief fund to combat coronavirus, Akshay kumar announced that he will donated Rs 25 crore , Salman khan will be extend help to 25000 odd daily wage workers of the film industry , Bhushan kumar who heads film studio T series ,said he will donate Rs 11crore ,TATA Sons and TATA trusts have pledge to contribute Rs 1500crore,Reliance industries had made an initial contribution of Rs 5crore besides opening India's first COVID hospital in Mumbai, JSW group to donate Rs 100crore,L&T to donate Rs 150crore to PM CARES, Ananda Mahindra of the Mahindra & Mahindra had offered to provide Mahindra resorts as care facilities for those infected .still many more persons have come forward to help the poor. if this lockdown continues for one year or more and when government lacks in fund to look after its citizen, then Rich people will have to play the role of trustee.

Gandhian thought about village

Gandhi's idea of village swaraj is that "it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It will have its own water works ensuring water supply. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co operative basis. khadi and village industries are not an end in itself but a means for the all round socio economic development of rural india." Gandhi intended to link agriculture and industry by making village industries agro based as an effective way for meaningful development of agrarian societies. He believed that industries in rural areas must be linked with the primary occupation of the vast mass of the people. Gandhi believed that industrialisation has been planned to destroy the village and village craft instead it should sub-serve the village and their crafts. Gandhian solution to industrialisation and its evil effects is the reconstruction of rural economy with an emphasis on the primacy of agriculture and the supplementary and the complementary importance of cottage industries by the revival and rejuvenation of the village economy. Gandhi wanted to rejuvenate and restore the simplicity of village life and to establish decentralised, self sufficient, self reliant and autonomous communities. He advocated by the masses instead of mass production. Such Gandhian alternative may be qualified as 'appropriate technology, intermediate technology ,which could be adopted by the village homes.

The village will be surveyed and a list prepared of things that can be manufactured locally with little or no help and which may be required for village use or for sale outside such for instance toys, honey,mats,handpounded rice,hand made paper,village soap ,match making,tanning, oil pressing, hand grinding, village medicine,making of musical instrument .utilization of hides, bones,farm yard manure art section etc.The concept of decentralization occupies paramount importance in Gandhian scheme of rebuilding india from below upwards.Each villages must manufacture its own wants and there will undoubtedly be a surplus for the cities at least to ascertain extent which ,in its turn will reduce the pressure on the city local mills.Cities will then then be able to take part in supplying the want of cloth and other things in other parts of the world, the government should provide raw materials to the village industries.

Corona days

Several millions of daily wage labourers went back to their native villages and homes during the nation-wide lockdown over novel coronavirus .Taking note

of the situation ,doctors said that the unprecedented movement of labourers has triggered fear of community transmission of the COVID 19.

If the shutdown prolongs, those who have returned home would be under pressure to earn. with few livelihood options in villages ,they would want to return to the cities again.Unskilled and semiskilled migrant labourers are some of the worst hit by the shutdowns.

Above picture clearly states that village economy are totally neglected,villagers are neither self sufficient nor self reliant.As Gandhi intended to link agriculture and industry by making village industries agrobased and creating more and more employment opportunity to rural youths in rural area would have stopped the migration of rural youths to the cities for jobs.

Government brings various opportunity, policies, schemes for the Make in India programme but Gandhi argues for the Make in rural India where goods should be manufactured in village industries.So the Industries ,factories should be brought up in the rural India .Govt should make more expenditure and must give high priority to India's rural economy. For overall development of the villages, separate "RURAL BUDGET "should come into existence. if the villages were truly developed Indian economy would not have been suffered much in these corona days.

In rural areas medical colleges, engineering colleges, central schools, ITI colleges, IIT's ,training centres, girls colleges, high tech hospital , micro and medium industries should be establish .Teachers, bank employees, agriculture and horticulture officers,Rural veterinary doctors and other employees working in rural area must be provided with more allowance .Various incentives should be given to industrialist who establishes the factories in rural area. Abdul kalam's idea of PURA (providing urban amenities in rural area) aims at creating economic opportunities outside of cities by providing urban infrastructure and services in rural area. Above discussion clearly state that "Only Bharat can give stability to India". Village development can lead to sustainable development of the country.

"Progress of INDIA can be built only on the bedrock of self reliant ,self sufficient and autonomous BHARAT "

Conclusion

Corona impacted the social, cultural, economical, psychological, political life of the people ,more than 200 countries got effected by it. Individual and community cooperation are very imp in fighting against the COVID19. Though the Gandhiji's thoughts provide remedies in overcoming the problems which have been created by COVID19 his thoughts on cleanliness, sanitation, trusteeship, religion, truth and rural development are very relevant in corona

days. Gandhiji's teachings gives a golden path to his followers who through the good habits takes care for himself and have a love and care for his fellowbeings which makes him a responsible person towards the society. further studies are needed to establish casual relationship of other political thinkers thoughts which are relevant in reducing the impact of COVID19.

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