

A POSSIBILITY IN THE ECO-SYSTEM OF SWADESHI AND SWARJ

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been made compulsory. The law forces the corporate and the business world to spend two per cent of their profit for social betterment.
- CSR is nothing but an **affirmation Gandhi's idea of Trusteeship**. However, Gandhi's idea is deeper as Gandhi also had something to say about **ethics in business**.
- Gandhi had developed the **thesis of trusteeship as an alternative** to capitalism and communism. There is a feeling that there is no alternative to capitalism. In this context understanding Gandhi's idea of trusteeship is important.
- When Gandhi developed this concept, he was essentially trying to argue out a theoretical case.

Theory of Trusteeship: Basic Argument

- The basic and fundamental argument he made in this regard was that **both capitalism and communism were founded on violence**. However, trusteeship principle basically stands on non-violence.
- So for a sustainable society, Gandhi's argument was that trusteeship stands a better chance at the theoretical level.

Idea of Trusteeship: In the words of Gandhi

He described a society based on trusteeship as follows "*the rich man will be left in possession of wealth of which he will use when he necessarily requires and reasonably satisfies his personal needs and then act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society and by the society.*"

Analysis

- The fundamental assumption regarding the theory is **honesty and integrity** of the trustee.
- A number of scholars and philosophers have thought that Gandhi's idea of trusteeship is not operational. However, Gandhi is not arguing of the workability of trusteeship, but he is only promulgating the theory of trusteeship.
- The idea of trusteeship is based on one particular value that is embedded in Indian tradition. It is the value of **aparigraha non-acquisitive nature of the human being** that has to be developed.
- It has so happened that **the positive economics has ignored values of this nature**. *Aparigraha* becomes the integral part of the human behavior and this has to be considered also as a part of the behavior of the economic man. Gandhi departs from the conventional positive economists from this point.
- *Aparigrahi*, i.e., the person who is acquiring wealth but is not acquisitive, has a variety of uses of his wealth. One would be the utilization for self satisfaction - gratification of self-needs.
- The other part of utility involves an individual deriving the satisfaction and utility by satisfying the needs of others. The important aspect of **aparigraha is its multi-utility concept**.
- If this normative nature of *aparigrahi* is accepted on the mainstream economic analysis, cultivating an **aparigrahi individual becomes a major task**.
- In contemporary corporate environment, the dominance of the positive economics is reflected in the **acceptance of the exogenous nature of values**, i.e., *the values have to be treated outside and separately*.
- This is not true because actual human behavior is not bereft of such kind of value systems. The market failure signals the failure of acting like an economic man.
- In corporate practice often there exists irrationality-value other than profit motive. If space is to be created for such value, then it is possible to create space for *aparigraha* as a value to be operational. Trusteeship is based on this premise.

What Would Happen If Aparigraha Is To Be Imbided?

- If *aparigraha* is to be imbibed, the approach to view the production system would differ. Also, within the production system, the issues like **what to produce and how much to produce** would be tackled from a different **perspective**.

How To Create Space For Trusteeship?

- The society would need to find the way to bring down the acquisitive nature of the population. One solution lies with the **introduction of the moral value of *aparigraha* into lives of the mass through education**. However, that is going to be a long process.
- Gandhiji was repeatedly asked the process of bringing about trusteeship. **Persuasion and non-cooperation** was Gandhi's answer. If the **trustee fails to behave as a trustee, the State be justified in dispossessing them**.

Characteristics of Trusteeship:

A. Trusteeship is based on Ahimsa

- A **variant of trusteeship was tried out by Vinoba Bhave** soon after the Independence that related to the land, which is well known as **bhoodan**. He started asking for land in donation and redistributed the donated land landless farmers. He was appealing, using moral persuasion and he called this 'karuna' (compassion).

B. Trusteeship Allows Creation of Wealth

- Trusteeship is essentially about how to possess and how much to possess. It is not against creation and possession. **Creation and possession of wealth** is justified.
- In the **Neo Classical Economics**, to imbibe the value of labour indirectly and to minimize the cost, it is to be exploited physically and economically. In such circumstances, any expectation from labourers to become efficient and develop a commitment for production cannot materialize.
- The entire process of production generates definite negative externalities by not paying proper wages. These externalities are also being imposed in the society and the state.
- If the concept of trusteeship is to be applied in these circumstances as a trustee, as a producer the corporate sector should make an offer to fellow human beings who are part of the production process for their decent standards of living.

C. Trusteeship and Nature

- The other input of production is nature. In a corporate framework, intrinsic value of that natural resource is not being evaluated.
- In Gandhian theory of trusteeship, handling of nature and use of nature in one's own production system can be different, perhaps more conservation/preservation oriented.
- If the industry as a whole takes a decision to price it more appropriately, **then let that product be produced if there is a demand** rather than cutting it down at the firm's/industry's level or transferring all the costs to the society. In this regard, carbon trading is a very inferior option, although a better option than no option.
- The third issue is about pollution. Pollution obviously is the result after the production. One can also be trustee by choosing appropriate technologies. Hence, on production side too there is ample scope of trusteeship.

D. Trusteeship in consumption

- Consumption has two distinct levels: Personal and societal. The theory of *aparigraha*, non-acquisitiveness, tends not to acquire and consume things which are useless to an individual. This is where Gandhi bring in the concept of limiting personal demands/needs.
- After satisfying needs for a decent livelihood, the rest of the wealth is required to be spent for social good. In Gujarat, a number of educational institutes and healthcare units have been financed and managed by the Mahajanms.

Conclusion

- Beginning the process with the basic principle of *aparigraha*, non-acquisitive life by the trustee, by the creator and possessor of the wealth would impact the entire society in a positive manner.
- Such society would be a simple society and the craze for useful and not-so-useful technologies will also be automatically regulated. The vision has to change. Gandhi's Trusteeship becomes relevant and a possibility within his overall vision of a non-violent society, swadeshi, decentralized economic system and *Swaraj* as self-rule.

QUEST FOR AN ALTERNATE VISION

It is well-known that the central aim of the Gandhian programme of action is the attainment of *Swaraj* and *Sarvodaya* which in general parlance mean the all-round, holistic development of humanity.

Contemporary Society

- Contemporary society has been characterized as knowledge society. But in spite of such easy and widespread access to information and knowledge, in daily living we confront natural phenomena which are practically incomprehensible, inexplicable and hence mind-boggling to most people.
- It is true that the scientific revolutions in the fields of quantum mechanics, bio-genetics and artificial intelligence are dramatically reshaping the destiny of humanity positively. But they too are not sure about the fate of our universe and the intelligent life in it.
- **Knowledge**, traditionally viewed as an aid to service, came to be considered a mere instrument for the attainment of power and domination. Sir Francis Bacon put it succinctly: '**knowledge is power.**'
- The idea that unlimited physical comforts and sensuous enjoyment could be chased and realized disclosed into a new theory and ideology known as **developmentalism**.
- **Development at any cost has become the motto of modern civilization**, Irrespective of the divergent political ideologies followed by different nation state.
- Modern civilization with its uni-dimensional focus on physical comforts and sensuous enjoyment, developed by the West, in the West, and thrust upon the rest (of the world) by them, was glorified by the elite classes around the world as the ideal way of life to be aspired and attained by all.

Alternate Vision

- Gandhi's **Hind Swaraj** contained, among other things, a sever critique of modern western civilization. He diagnosed the **root cause of the disease of modern civilization as violence**.
- The other dangers that Gandhi identified in modern western civilization were that it **dismissed religion and morality** from human life and transaction as redundant and **elevated physical comfort to the level of the ultimate foal to be sought after in life**.
- In keeping with the Marxian perspective, it measured the level of human civilization on the basis of *its increased technological capacity to dominate over, manipulate and control nature*.
- Several studies, while warning humanity against the impending possibility of a total global catastrophe, also presented alternative visions of a sustainable future civilization and it is fascinating that **these visions arte mostly in consonance with the Gandhian alternative**.
- The **UN Declaration Document** clearly states that the focus of the programme is on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, points repeatedly emphasized by Gandhi on many occasions. It also state that the member nations are determined to take steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.

Conclusion

- As the UN, rightly posed it, the question before us is simple and obvious: Are we ready to read the clear signs on the horizon and change on to a sustainable path.

- This was, precisely, what Gandhi had asked in his Hind Swaraj and it was the basic principle of a sustainable civilization that he enunciated in it. Our responsibility is to translate them into reality.

THINKING BEYOND THE SELF AND THE OTHER

- One of the contemporary major challenges is multilevel violence that range from micro to macro level. According to Galtung, **violence is of three kind; direct, structural and cultural.**
- Gandhi's nonviolence responds to the contemporary problem of violence at this three-level - direct, structural and cultural.

A. Gandhi's Response to Direct Violence

- The underlying principal of Gandhi's non-violence is advaita. Thus, Gandhi does not see any separation between the self and other.
- He noted in Hind swaraj that 'sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others'. In Gandhi's paradigm, both **self and the others are tied to a relationship of responsibility.**
- Gandhi also argues why violence as a contemporary means to settle issues should be avoided. **First**, he observes that violence **does not accept the 'essential dignity'** and worth of the individual. **Second**, violence recognizes no boundaries and finally become self-justificatory in itself. The reason is that violence claims to possess the truth about right and wrong and on this basis, it also decides who should be punished and who spared. **Third**, when violence becomes habitual and institutionalized, it becomes a general means/method to settle the issue of any kind of conflicts in society.
- It must be recalled, for Gandhi, non-violence is not confined only to a personal virtue or individual behaviour. He considered non- violence as '**law of our being**' that must be applied in all social relation: familial, political, economic, and educational. To contemporary violence inflicted society, his message is very clear - apply nonviolence in all possible fields of human relation.

B. Gandhi's Response to structural Violence

- The problem of violence may be viewed in term of concentration of power, large scale industrialization, and exploitation of one group by another. These have been termed as **structural violence.**
- Here, Gandhi's idea of *aparigraha* (non-possession) and its **institutionalized form 'trusteeship'**, as well as the need for self-control, are useful today. Gandhi held the view that the modern crisis can be overcome only by making our institution more in the line of law of non –violence.
- He advocated the **decentralized mode of polity (Panchayati Raj) and economy (Gram swaraj) to minimize the structural violence** in the society .For such social and political task, Gandhi invites people to take up moral leadership at different levels.
- **In response to the contemporary problem of social –political injustice** or the economic inequality, Gandhi proposes a nonviolent mode of protest what he termed as **satyagraha.**
- To modern society where ethnic or political conflict has become common, his satyagrah offers a method of nonviolent, creative conflict transformation that results in reconciliation and removal of bitterness between or among the conflicting parties.
- On the issue of state and individual, which is a central challenge to modern polity, Gandhi **regarded individual as the centre of authority and value.** According to him, the State and Government derive their existence and power from the individuals. Thus, when the state begins to exploit the people and impede their progress, *it is the holy duty of the people to withdraw their cooperation from the state and reform the state by moral force.*

C. Gandhi's Response to Cultural Violence-

- Multi –dimensionality of violence signify psychological, linguistic and socio- political and economic violence indirectly inflicted on a particular community in the society which is not overt but hidden in the very structure and mechanism of the society.

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- Such violence often gets vent when cultural, political or religious war (as in the case of terrorism) takes places.
- Our normal worldview is violent in nature and we are socialised and educated in such a way that we never grasp how violently we relate to ourselves, to others, and to nature.
- Gandhi challenges such violent normal view and its normative design and emphasises on nonviolent world view. He argues that we need to analyze our existing worldview portrayed as normal which is in fact, violent from within.
- To develop a nonviolent worldview, he emphasizes on a **new kind of socialization through Swadeshi and a new type of education through Nai Talim** in the society .
- The violence against nature, known as the environmental crisis, is serious contemporary challenges before us. Rather than looking the nature separate from the human being, Gandhi submitted that we should feel a more living bond between ourselves and the rest of the animate world.

Conclusion

Gandhi's idea of non –violence attempts to eradicate the root cause of the present ecological crisis by proposing the idea similar to a notion recently termed as **'human ecology'** which is concerned with **the ecological implications of all what human beings do.**

TOWARDS AN EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

- Mahatma Gandhi was a man of many parts. With a multidimensional mission, he wanted to touch every aspect of our individual, national and even international life.
- In the political field, he applied the age-old principles of **truth and non-violence** and **their derivative Satyagraha** to build up a mass movement.
- In the economic field, he challenged the very foundational values of the western model of development viz.
 - (a) It is the **self-interest** that moves man and his society and that
 - (b) It is the **ever-spiraling desires and aspirations** of man, which lead to progress of the human society.
- He fervently made a **fine distinction between human 'need' and 'want'** and underlined the centrality of basic need in any given social order.
- In the religio-cultural field, he stood for **Sarva Dharma Saamabhava** (equal respect for all religions) and **rejected the western concept of secularism.**
- He **did not have much faith in State power** and ever **remained a votary of civil society organizations.**
- In the process, he provided **three major instruments of social change** viz. **Eleven Vows (Ekadashs Vrata), Constructive Programme** and **Satyagraha**, instead of a singular role of the State power.
- It was in Phoenix Settlement (1904) and Tolstoy Farm (1910), that some of his liberal ideas like **sharir shram (bread labour) Sarva Dharma Samabhava** (equal respect for all religions) and **Sparsh bhavana** (elimination of untouchability) started being practiced in more vigorous way.

Eleven Vows:

- When he set up Satayagraha/Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad during 1915, he introduced Eleven Vows (Ekadash Vrata) which every inmate of the ashram would have to follow and imbibe in his life and living.
- These eleven vows were: *truth, non-violence, non-stealing, brahmacharya, non-possession, control of palate, fearlessness, elimination of untouchability, bread labour, swadhesh and equal respect for all religions.*

Bread Labour

- The simple meaning of the principle of bread labour is that one must work to live. He might be engaged in any kind of mental work, but he has to put in some amount of physical work to earn his bread.
- Gandhi was aware that the **dignity of labour was missing from our sociocultural value system**. Hence, he made it a part of the Ekadash Vrata.
- Gandhi also associated this principle of bread labour with Jain concept of the Bhagavad Gita. It is said there that anyone who partakes food without performing some sacrifice (Jaina) is nothing short of being a thief.
- **Charkha and Kargha became the symbol of synthesis between mental and physical work**. They also were meant to provide employment to the millions of people during their spare time. Getting their own cloths through spinning and weaving, people were to attain self-reliance and indeed their own Swaraj.

Sparsh Bhavana (Elimination of Untouchability):

- He considered the entire spectrum of untouchability as a blot on the fair face of Hinduism.
- He launched one of the most vigorous campaign to eliminate the scourge of untouchability from the soil of India. He set up **Harijan Sevak Sangh** and published a journal called **Harijan** with the same purpose.
- The elimination of untouchability amounts to **removal of barriers between man and man**. Hence, it is a major step towards equalitarian society.
- He found scavenging as the most essential act in human society. But being confined to a section of people, it has become the symbol of indignity of labour. Hence, he pleaded for self-scavenging.

GANDHI AS AN INTERNATIONALIST

- “For me **patriotism is the same as humanity**”, observed Gandhiji nearly fifty years ago: “**In trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large.**”
- These words sum up Gandhiji’s outlook on world affairs-**which was neither national nor international but simply human**. He looked upon all men as members of one family.
- “It is impossible,” he wrote in “Young India” in 1925, for one to be **internationalist without being a nationalist**. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, that is, when people have organized themselves and are able to work as one man”.
- He did not want India to cut herself adrift through attainment of independence. “**Isolated independence is not the goal of the world status,**” he wrote in 1925, “it is voluntary interdependence.” Indeed, one could say that this is precisely the objective for which the United Nations was set up.
- **All that substitutes law for force, reason for violence, understanding for fanaticism is in consonance with Gandhiji’s ideals.**
- Gandhiji felt and hoped that a **free India by example and achievement could inculcate a moral sense among nation.**
- Through the deliverance of India he sought to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of Western exploitation. This ambition, it may be contended, has, to a large extent, been fulfilled. For achievement of independence by India through pacific means and by mutual goodwill did provide an inspiration and an example to several nations in Asia and Africa.
- Gandhiji’s **most vital contribution** to international relations is his **philosophy and technique of non-violent resistance**.
- When the atom bomb was used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Gandhiji was deeply distressed and observed that “the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children” was “the most diabolical use of science.” **He thought that the only alternative to peace was the total annihilation of mankind.**

Conclusion

- Gandhiji, it is contended, was an obscurantist when it came to cultural matters and wanted the clock to be turned back in our country.
- In his Hind Swaraj, written in South Africa, the underlying theme is almost total rejection of values of western civilization. But he was not against obtaining knowledge from wherever it came nor did he advocate adoption of primitive customs simply because they were old.

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH PEOPLE POWER

- Hardly anyone speaks about Gandhi as a Management icon. Alan Axelrod, renowned author of biographies has authored a widely acclaimed book titled '**Gandhi CEO:14 Principles to Guide & Inspire Modern Leaders**'.
- In it he has averred "There is no doubt that Gandhi was a good man and an intensely spiritual man, but he **was also a manager and executive, a supremely practical leader for change** [management]."
- This book gives prime importance to "**a humane and people-oriented approach**"-based on Gandhi's "Talisman" and to transparency to which he attributes Gandhi's moral stature and ultimate success.
- Businesses cannot be run by coercion and CEOs should earn the cooperation and trust of their employees/stake holders and welcome dissent because "**if everyone is thinking alike, no one is really thinking.**"

Gandhi's Economic and Management Ideas

- Gandhi's economic and management ideas were gestated by India's grinding poverty and were moulded by his ethical and civilizational values.
- For him: **Economics that hurt the moral well being of an individual or a nation are immoral** and therefore unacceptable. So also, the economics that permit one country to prey upon another" and Civilization in the real sense of the term consists not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of selfish wants."
- Gandhi wanted *poverty alleviation and economic development to commence at village level*.
- Besides, he wanted "**production by masses**" not "mass production", utilization of people's innate talents, traditional avocations and locally available/replaceable natural resources. Gandhi **disfavoured both capitalist and communist economics**.
- Besides, **he was opposed to state control** of the economy because "**while apparently, doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress**".
- His notion of democracy was "***the weakest having the same opportunity as the strongest***" and that: *Real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused*".
- In management of the economy he favoured moral suasion instead of coercion and the practice of Trusteeship. **Vinobha Bhave's Bhoodan movement** was a good example of the practice of moral suasion and Trusteeship.
- For Gandhi "**Labour is far superior to capital**. He wanted a marriage between capital and labour. According to him, they can work wonders in cooperation.

Still Relevant in Modern Times

- In recent years concepts of total Quality Management (TQM), Customer Relations Management (CRM), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Safeguarding the Interests of All Stake Holders (SIASH), Frugal Engineering (FG), Lean Management (LM) etc. has come to be embodied in management theory and good corporate governance practices. Gandhi has urged practice of these by the 1920 and 30s.
- **On CRM**, he had stated. "**A customer is the most important visitor on our premises**".

- His **CSR is seen** in his **educational health and sanitation efforts** for the Champaran Indigo peasants.
- His **FE and LM are seen** in his choice of the charka for India's emancipation from colonialism and abysmal poverty, and his insistence on stringency in all expenditure and strict accounting of every rupee spent.
- The Secretary of State for India revealed in the House of Commons that whereas the Great Depression caused a 25% drop in Britain's textile exports to India, the **additional 18% fall was due "directly to the boycott program carried on by the Indian National Congress."**
- The German economist Ernst Schumacher, in his book 'Small is Beautiful' lauded **Gandhi as a people's Economist**. He argued "**The technology of mass production is inherently violent, ecologically damaging, self-defeating in terms of nonrenewable resources.**"
- The technology of **production by the masses**, making use of the best of modern knowledge and experience is conducive to decentralization, compatible with the laws of ecology, gentle in its use of scarce resources and designed to serve the human person instead of making him the servant of machines.
- One of the Management concepts now in vogue is "**Core Competence**". Over a century ago **Gandhi identified textiles as the Indian people's core competence.**
- He urged that **humans should be industrious, "not like a machine, but like the busy bee."** The Charka was his mascot for employment generation. Ridiculed by many as "antediluvian", it revived India's moribund cottage and village industries which today employ over 30 million artisans their families.

Conclusion

- Gandhi's continuing pertinence in the management field in the 21st century is clearly visible in the present Global Warming.
- Gandhi had written: "**Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need but not for every man's greed.....The wars of our times spring from greed.**"
- It is notable that this assertion of Gandhi is being used as one of the **prime slogan of United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).**
- World Economic Forum has estimated that due to automation there will be net loss of over 5 million jobs by 2020 across 15 major developed and estimated economies.
- Over a century ago, Gandhi had foreseen that "**labour saving" machines "save labour" by making laboures redundant.** He had urged "production by the masses" instead of "mass production".

THE PATH TOWARDS NATIONAL REGENERATION

- Gandhiji penned a small booklet during a train ride from Sevagram to Bardoli, in which he appealed to all engaged in the freedom struggle to address some basic issues. There were thirteen items in the original and later he added five more; thus **18-point constructive programme** was developed, which became his framework for socio-economic reconstruction of Indian society.
- In 1942 he wrote, "if we wish to achieve *swaraj* through truth and non-violence, a gradual but steady building up from the bottom upwards by constructive effort is the only way."
- He designed the constructive programme to **generate inner strength, to elevate internal growth in the masses and to make them aware of their rights as well as duties.**

Background

- Though he had formally categorised constructive programme in 1941, he started his constructive activities during Champaran Satyagraha by establishing schools, health and hygiene programmes.

Illustrative, Not Exhaustive:

- Gandhi had listed 18-point programme but these **were only illustrative and were not meant to be comprehensive and exhaustive**. There was enough scope to add or subtract activities based on local needs.
- Gandhi's 18-point programme may be broadly classified into **Social** (Communal Harmony, Removal of Untouchability, Prohibition, Women, Students, Kisan, Labour, Adivasis And Lepers); **Economical** (Khadi, Other Village Industries And Economic Equality), **Education** (Basic Education, Adult Education, National Language And Provincial Language) and **Health** (Village Sanitation And Hygiene And Health).
- **Communal Unity:** Peace and Communal Harmony are the backbone of national unity and it is the foundation for development. Mahatma Gandhi sacrificed his life for the cause of Communal Unity.
- **Removal of Untouchability:** Gandhi emphasised that there was no religious sanction for practising untouchability and the causes and origin of this inhuman custom has to be rooted out.
- **Prohibition:** Gandhi felt so strongly about this addiction because it not only affects the social and economic condition of the families but destroys the moral fibre of the society which is essential for nonviolent struggle.
- **Khadi:** Khadi symbolises self-reliance, self-sufficiency and swadeshi. Charkha became the symbol of the independence movement and khadi became the identity of nationalism.
- **Other village industries:** Gandhi conceived khadi as centre, like sun in the solar system, and other village industries revolving around it like other planets. **Self-reliant village republics were his vision of India**. Therefore, village industries are essential to keep the rural workforce engaged in economic activities, which will in turn support the sustainable development of the rural economy.
- **Village Sanitation:** Gandhi was very much concerned with sanitation. He said, we should "make our villages models of cleanliness in every sense of the world."
- **New or Basic Education:** He was aware that education is the backbone of our civilisation. Gandhi wanted a new education to transform the mindset of the people. He developed system of education for new social order. Gandhi said that the new education, "**develops both the body and the mind, and keeps the child rooted to the soil** with a glorious vision of the future in the realisation of which he or she begins to take his or her share from the very commencement of his or career in school."
- **Adult Education:** Adult Education does not stop with teaching illiterates to read and write. Gandhi said, "if I had charge of adult education, I should begin with opening the minds of the adult pupils to the greatness and vastness of their country."
- **Women:** Gandhi demonstrated the power of women to the world. He said, women should not be called weaker sex; actually they are very strong in their own field, in which men are very weak. He also said that men and women are not equal but complementary to each other. He believed that women empowerment will give them rights and honorable position in the society and lead to development of the nonviolent social order.
- **Education in Health and Hygiene:** Gandhi had a holistic vision of health and hygiene. The art of keeping one's health and the knowledge of hygiene is by itself a separate subject of study and corresponding practice.
- **Provincial Languages:** Gandhi always insisted that everyone should learn through mother tongue. Gandhi observed that, "Our love of the English language in preference to our own mother tongue has caused a deep chasm between the educated and politically-minded classes and the masses."
- **National Language:** Gandhi insisted that mother tongue should be the medium of delivering instruction and at the same time he was also in favour of a National Language.
- **Economic Inequality:** He said, economic equality "is the master key to non-violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour."
- **Kisans:** Agriculture has been one of the most affected sectors by one of the most affected sectors by the modern development strategies. In Gandhi's schemes of villages swaraj, agriculture is the

centre of all activities and it should support the farmers to lead a decent living. Therefore, farmers should be taken care of if you need a real development. He explained his own experiments in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad and said, "The secret of success lies in a refusal to exploit the kisans for political purposes outside their own personal and felt grievances."

- **Labour:** He established a unique model of Trade Union for the Textile workers in Ahmedabad. Labour force should be organised not to disturb the development but for the overall development of all stakeholders.
- **Adivasis:** Due to their innocence and ignorance, Adivasis are always exploited by the selfish people. To protect the Mother Nature, we need to protect the Adivasis and their traditions.
- **Lepers:** Gandhi used to clean the wounds of the leprosy-affected Sanskrit scholar Parchur Shastri while he was in Sevagram Ashram.
- **Students:** Gandhi observed, "it is from these young men and women that the future leaders of the nation are to rise. Unfortunately, they are acted upon by every variety of influences."

Constructive Programme and Civil Disobedience Movement

- The Constructive Programme was Gandhi's method for the regeneration of swaraj by engaging each and every unit of society irrespective of caste, creed or race and for developing a constitutive and necessary part of the civil disobedience movement. He believed that there is no need for civil disobedience if we sincerely involve ourselves in the Constructive Programmes.
- **Constructive Programme and Civil Disobedience will go hand in hand.** It connects to the people in need. Civil Disobedience, on the other hand, will mobilise the people to resist the unjust practices. Therefore, constructive programme is the training ground for civil disobedience.

Conclusion

- Many modern nonviolent movements pay little or no attention to Constructive Programme.
- Many a time they focus their energy on non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience. Unless we connect with the people and their issues, it is very difficult to mobilise the masses at the time of resistance.
- The development of voluntary sector in India is also the outcome of Gandhi's constructive programme.

PRODUCTION BY MASSES, NOT MASS PRODUCTION

- In capitalistic countries the population irrespective of their development stage, are to some extent reaping the fruits of industrialisation driven by liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation (LPG). Although most economists argue for market economy, unsustainable growth is a big concern among many.
- However, there are some who have raised voice against majority-supported discourse of '**endless growth**'. They have been **arguing about 'limits to growth' with renewed rigour**.
- The fundamental issue is the ownership over natural resources. The countries that are technologically advanced have always been taking a domineering position since the time of industrialisation. Gandhi's Swadeshi may offer new insight and possible solution under these circumstances.

Gandhi and Swadeshi

- Gandhian concept of *Swadeshi* was a result of long-observed and well-thought out process.
- *Swadeshi* got its first mention in 1905 and last in 1947. According to Gandhi, *swadeshi carries a great and profound meaning. It is not merely the use of what is produced in one's own country....another meaning implied in it which is far greater and much more important. Swadeshi means reliance on our own strength.*

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- He considered swadeshi as the key to economic salvation of Indian and declared law of Swadeshi as the law of laws. Gandhi's idea of Swadeshi led to his ideal village.
- **Acharya Kripalani** understood **Swadeshi as a universal phenomenon**. According to him even in countries, **believing in Lassier-Fair an unwritten law of swadeshi was observed**.
- For **Gandhian economist J.C. Kumarappa** 'cottage industry' was not merely a method of production but stood for a type of economy as its integral part...values and valuation was the pair that drew the chariots of Human Progress.
- Gandhi's associate **Narhari Parikh in the Manav Arthshastra** argued that the concept of Swadeshi was one of the pillars of Gandhian ideology. **It opposed large-scale production**. Agriculture was primary occupation and source of income, and village industries played a supportive role.
- The fundamental point is to have **development from below and from self-sustaining** local production systems using, if necessary, appropriate technologies. Swadeshi meant local for basic needs and self-reliance.

Swadeshi in Present Times

- **The market-dominated try to maximise material prosperity**. Globalisation for the world means adopting the **GDP growth paradigm** as practiced and favoured by the advanced economies.
- It simply ignores environmental and ecological ethics in production and consumption. Voluntary poverty of Gandhi meant that the **'haves' of the society should restrict their consumption moderated by ascetic and paternalistic values**.
- For Gandhi, village-level self-sufficiency was providing maximum opportunity for production at local level. His self-reliance would produce the necessities of life by one's own labour or produce goods that could be exchanged for necessities.
- For Gandhi, local requirements provided the key. Limitation of wants would provide signal to producer and the system of production would guide the consumer.

Conclusion

- **Prosumer** is the word used by Alvin Toffler when he talks about the third wave. **A prosumer is both producer and consumer**. For Gandhi, the ideal of economic constitution of India **"can be universally realised only if the means of production of elementary necessities of life remains under the control of masses."**
- Gandhi discovered and articulated the principles for an alternative and humane economy where the doctrine of **Swadeshi was in centre**.
- Keeping individual at the centre, he believed in one's moral development; reflected in human dignity by limiting conspicuous consumption and decentralised production system to seek a life with self-esteem and a genuinity meanings. At least Indian Humanity needs to give it a try.

PROVIDING FOOD TO HUNGRY STOMACHS

To nurture the spirit of Swadeshi one could keep on working together with his neighbour and do business also. Things which we can produce in the country should not be imported from abroad.

Negative Impact of Import:

- At present, import has laid a major impact on the economy of our country. Latest in this context is the **example of Agarbatti manufacturing industry** in India, which has been one of the core village industries in the country since time immemorial.
- Khadi's Agarbatti units were gasping to breathe prior to 29th August this year, when **these items were brought in Restricted Bracket of import**. Notably, Khadi has undertaken a **Bamboo Plantation**

Drive across the country to reduce India's dependency of import in Agarbatti Industry and to create millions of local employment - which is the core aim of Gandhian philosophy of Swaraj and Sadeshi.

Importance of Khadi and Swadeshi:

- Khadi and Swadeshi always **reduce the gap between rich and poor**, which has incidentally increased around the world during last five decades.
- According to Stephen Graffy, the greatest danger of **globalisation is that state loses control over the economy, profit can be taken out of the country and local accountability of companies seems to be over.**

Steps Taken

- In the last five years, several artisan-centric programmes were launched following the Prime Minister's call of '**Khadi for Economic transformation**'. During this, the KVIC provided more than **32,000 New Model Charkhas** and **5,600 modern looms**, which has increased the Khadi production substantially.
- The KVIC has also created employment through Khadi in the remotest part of the country such as Leh, Ladakh, Kaziranga forest, Sunderban in West Bengal etc. For the first time, **Khadi brought major textile corporates in Khadi sale by manifold**. KVIC also brought major PSUs in the Khadi fold, for purchasing Khadi gift coupons for their employees –which has given the business of over Rs. 100 crore.
- The introduction of new trendy designs such as **Westernwear for women** and other innovative products, with high-quality stitching, has changed the image of Khadi.
- New schemes such as **Honey Mission, Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana, Leather Artisans Development Scheme** etc. were launched for the benefit of farmers, Advasis, SC/ST and marginalised communities of potters and cobblers.
- To bring the deviated youths and fatigued farmers to the mainstream of development radar, at Kupwara in Jammu & Kashmir, **KVIC distributed as many as 2,300 Bee-Boxes** in a single day and created World Record, in collaboration with the Indian Army. Similarly, under **Kumhar Sashaktikaran Scheme, 10,000 electric Potter Wheels** along with other equipment were given to the potters across the country.
- Khadi has recently launched a programme for the development of another marginalised **community of cobblers** –polishing and mending shoes and footwears sitting on the footpaths in the scorching sun and shivering westerlies.
- To give them a social status, KVIC has rechristened them as **charm-chikitsak (Leather-technicians)** and set to distribute 70,000 advanced leather tool-kit this year providing proper training.
- **World's Largest Wooden Charkha** was installed at **IGI Airport Terminal-3** as the grand testimony of Charkha and Gandhian philosophy. KVIC installed monumental grand **steel Charkha at Connaught Place** along with **Charkha Museum**, which has emerged as the main attraction of Connaught Place. Similar grand steel Charkhas were installed on the bank of Sabarmati in Ahmedabad and in the heart of Champaran in Bihar.
- Under the **Moringa plantation drive**, 46,500 Moringa saplings have already been planted by the KVIC this year, which will not only help the farmers but will also supplement Honey Mission.

Conclusion

Time has come when we should eradicate the contradiction between economic growth and social welfare. We must draft economic policies and programmes oriented towards Mahatma's principles of Swadeshi, which can uplift the economic sustainability of the deprived classes, farmers and women workers.

VAJIRAM & RAVI

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME: A WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE

- Gandhi wanted women to play an important role in implementing the constructive programme.
- Unlike the nineteenth century social reformers, Gandhi had realised the negative effects of colonial rule on women's economic status. The East India Company had destroyed India's cottage industries and the **greatest sufferers had been women**. This strengthened his decision to launch the khadi movement. Revival of swadeshi would provide work and supplement the income of the semi-starved women of India.

Khadi: A tool for Women Empowerment

- A woman would earn a **basic income for survival**. It would also enable women to come out of purdah. It enabled Gandhi to challenge the dominant upper middle-class value that equated a family's status with women not engaged in productive work.
- **Saraladevi Chaudhurani** was the first women to address public meetings in Lahore wearing a khadi sari and many women followed her example.

Involvement of Women: Few Examples

- **Khadi work** in Orissa was done by **Subhadra Mahtab** who formed Gandhi 'Karma Mandir'. **Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur** organised a spinners' association in Punjab. **Maniben Nanavati** and her co-workers started a 'Khadi Mandir' in Vile Parle in Bombay.
- Among Muslim women, **Bi Amman** propagated khadi. In Bihar, **Prabhavati Devi** established the **Mahila Charkha Sangh in Patna** to involve women in spinning.
- Another important agenda in the constructive programme was removal of untouchability. Gandhi regarded women's involvement essential for removing this evil.
- **Rameshwari Nehru** dedicated herself to the service of harijans. She was appointed vice president of the **All India Harijan Sewak Sangh in 1934**. She together with other social workers, tried to get the Temple Entry Bill in favor of harijans passed in the Madras Legislative Assembly.
- The participation of women in Bihar began with Gandhi's arrival in Champaran in 1917. During this period, among the women who joined him were Prabhavati Devi, Rajbansi Devi and Bhagwati Devi.
- **Anasuya Sarabhai** opened **night schools in mill areas of Ahmedabad for harijan children**.
- Saudamini Mehta opened a clinic for harijan children in a bustee (slum area) in Calcutta where children were regularly examined by doctors. She was made **President of the Bengal Harijan Sewak Sangh**.
- Inspired by his appeals, many women came forward to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. Sarojini Naidu addressed meetings and spoke from various platforms about promoting Hindu-Muslim solidarity.
- In memory of Kasturba, who died in Aga Khan palace in Pune on February 22, 1944, the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT) was set up on Gandhi's 75th birthday (October 2, 1944). It was inaugurated by Sarojini Naidu and its aim was to work for women and children in rural areas.

Conclusion:

Women also contributed to the revival of village industries, to conduct programmes of village sanitation and education in health and hygiene. Thus, women played a remarkable role not only in the political struggle but also in implementing the Gandhian constructive programme.

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONALITY

- The main theme, underlying Gandhi's philosophy is that of **Integrated Education**, that is education that **ensures the all- round development of the mind, body and soul** of pupils and is not just limited to the narrow confines of merit in academics.

Gandhi's Scheme for Education

- Gandhiji also dreamt of an Indian which **would provide free and universal education** to all its children – however, knowing this would not be feasible, he suggested the **novel method of self-financing**. Under this scheme, pupils were made to **pay in labour** (for instance by spinning cloth) for their own education.
- To quote him from 'young India', "manual training will serve a **double purpose** in a poor country.... **Pay for the education** of our children and **teach them an occupation** on which they can fall back in after life.
- Another noteworthy of aspects of his theory of education was that of **respect of manual labour** and inculcating a **sense of dignity** in being adept at such work.
- Gandhiji went so far as to say that **text books "are for the most part useless when they are not harmful"**.
- He pointed out that it would be erroneous to fix children from different geographies and different social classes into an academic straitjacket. Rather, it is the duty of the teacher to read from text books and mud the materials so as to suit the specific requirements of the pupils.
- It is, after all, **teachers and not text that are capable of imparting "education of the heart"** which was a prerequisite for developing character. Gandhiji subscribe to notion that "real education has to draw out the best" from within the pupils and this is something mere bookish knowledge could never achieve.

Naya Bharat Nayi Talim

- The **crux of Nai Talim** lay in **overcoming distinction between learning and teaching** as well as between **knowledge and work**.
- Nai Talim was not merely a scheme for education; instead, it is a part of **holistic value system** with **Swaraj as the end** and **Satyagrah as the means** to achieving it.
- For Gandhiji **quality education was prerequisite** for ultimate goal of nation –building. He dreamed of a society where **power is not distributed hierarchically** but **in the form of "oceanic circles"** with each individual empowering and protecting the other.
- He believed that the prevalent model was **obsessed about career advancement** while **Nai Talim aimed to achieve a holistic growth** of the individual's mind body and spirit.
- He saw education as a **life-long communitarian, holistic, activity** based and **grass-roots oriented activity**. The meant the creation of self-sufficient village-based schools which gave privacy to skill development for handicraft production and traditional industries where teachers and students, were in fact, fellow workers.
- The fact that we had **turned a blind eye to quality education at the grassroots** in fact had **hindered our ability** to fully utilize our demographic divided.
- Another evil of the Indian education system is its emphasis **on rote-learning**: this denies a child opportunities to develop his/her critical thinking faculties and have a well-rounded personality. The principle of **learning by doing** again a critical components of Gandhiji's Nai Talim.
- What Gandhiji said in **1937 in an Education Conference** still holds true- he mentioned that the present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. **Absence of vocational training** has made the education class almost unfit for productive work.

Conclusion

- As we celebrate the Mahatma's 150th birth anniversary, probably the best tribute to him would be to relook at what his education model stood for.
- Gandhiji's thoughts were radical at his time, and it is high time for us too to **radically reinvent our current education system** so that it can fulfill the wishes and aspirations of our people in the year to come.