

Ahimsa is a weapon of the strong

Rucha Kulkarni-Shinde

Asst. Prof. (LL.M.)

(TMV'S LOKMANYA TILAK LAW COLLEGE, PUNE)

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World Peace, Harmony and non-violence

Abstract: Gandhi conceptualized and applied 'non-violence' to create, widen and deepen the scope of non-violence. Non-violence is the weapon of the bravest of the brave as a brave as such a true Satyagrahi drew his strength from within and steeled by inner conviction about the moral basics of his or her goal, be it against a colonial power, or against terror, or social injustice or communal violence. His non-violence was not that of a weak or afraid against the strong. His non-violence educated and empowered people. According to Gandhi peace and harmony can be achieved by love, non-violence, truthfulness, friendliness, compromise and cooperation. He was of the opinion that truth and non-violence binds us to one another and also to God. For him all men are essentially equal and there is an element of goodness present in

every man, therefore disturbances, hatred, violence, and immorality can be removed from life by means of love and sacrifice.

Keywords: Gandhi, Truth, Non-violence, Peace, Satyagrahi.

Introduction: Gandhi believes that man is a part of God, all men share common origin and common destiny so they are fundamentally same so Gandhi holds that what one man is capable of achieving is possible for all men to attain it. Therefore, instead of using the violent means to convert the opponent it is better to destroy him by nonviolent means. The most fundamental principle of his ideology to maintain peace is non-violence i.e. Ahimsa which is opposed to violence, the cause of hatred, death and destruction and in harmony with law of love, life and creation. Gandhi's only weapons against all social evils were truth and non-violence and he strongly believed that, If one has to reach real peace in this world or has to carry on a real war against war, one has to begin with children; and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, one won't have to struggle, but one shall go from love to love and peace to peace, without passing fruitless,

idle resolutions Gandhi was a great philosopher, lover of truth and non-violence and says that self realization cannot be attained without truth and non-violence. So if one wants to attain salvation one must be the lover of truth and non-violence. Gandhi uses truth and non-violence as social and political weapons in fighting against evils and injustice. Gandhi employed the moral weapons of truth and non-violence to end domestic , social , political , economical ,religious and cultural problems and conflicts removal of untouchability ,communal harmony, solution to unemployment, illiteracy economic and religious equality were the social economic and political targets to be achieved through this great weapon. His philosophy of truth and non-violence transcends all regional, religious and cultural barriers. It is global and it comprehends not only humanity but the whole living world.

The Concept of Ahimsa (Non-violence):

Gandhiji listed eleven ethical principles for the individual and social development. They are truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possession, celibacy, fearlessness, removal of untouchability. Gandhiji observed ahimsa as not a mere philosophical principle but as the rule and breath of his life. Ahimsa means non-injury or more narrowly non-killing, but Gandhi says it is also the renunciation of the will to kill and of the intention

to hurt any living thing, the abstention from hostile thought, word or act.

Gandhi says in its negative form it means not injuring any living being whether by body or mind. In its positive form ahimsa means the largest love for enemy or a stranger.

According to him, it is superior to violence; it knows no defeat; it never thinks of victory; it aims at achieving a good result; and by renouncing himsa, ahimsa should be displayed.

Gandhiji summarised the implications and conditions of the force;

- (i) Non-violence is greater than and superior to the physical force
- (ii) It does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith on love and sense of honour;
- (iii) Non-violence provides full protection to one's self-respect
- (iv) Individuals or nations who practice non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice all their possessions except honour;
- (v) Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all;
- (vi) Non-violence does well for society as a Doctrine or Principle
- (vii) Non-violence is the first and last article of faith

Satyagraha: (Doctrine of Satyagraha)

Gandhiji evolved the technique of satyagraha, a novel and a unique way, to resist the evil. It is a device through which the unjust, impure, untruthful and evil are visited through love self-purification and self-suffering.

Satyagraha consists of two words, i.e.,

Satya, which means truth and Agraaha which means 'force', 'request or 'strength'. The meaning of the word, Satyagraha' is persistence for truth. A satyagrahi should oppose violence by non-violence as well as by the strength of his moral convictions. According to Gandhi, it was not merely a way of resisting authority but also a way of using love and moral strength to vindicate truth in society. Gandhiji was convinced that violence inflicts injury on others. On the other hand, use of satyagraha may involve suffering of the satyagrahi himself. The satyagrahi does not merely try to win but seeks the larger good or truth .According to Gandhiji, a satyagrahi would resolve all conflicts by satyagraha. The activity of satyagraha helps in the elevation of the spiritual and moral qualities of an individual. A believer in satyagraha does not injure the opponent either by appealing through reason or by a gentle rational argument. It is something like a sacrifice of a self.

Techniques of Satyagraha

- (1) Non-cooperation**
- (2) Civil disobedience or civil resistance**
- (3) Hijrat**
- (4) Fasting**

Satyagraha may be viewed as a weapon for the vindication of individual's rights as against the oppressive, coercive and vindictive attitude of the oppressor. Gandhiji firmly believed that the two mighty weapons of satya

and Ahimsa are highly powerful to make any power on the earth to realise the lapses and take to the path of truth, righteousness and justice.

World Peace and Harmony:

Global peace has become a major concern these days. In the present time, humanity is facing a terrible challenge of its own existence. There is a general restlessness in the entire world which is leading to widespread violence. Today communal amity has become essential for national integration and hence Gandhi gave it the highest priority. Need of Gandhian Philosophy Especially today when we are surrounded by the forces of darkness, we need a leader like Gandhi, a man of rare courage, character, and charisma, who dares to tell the truth, who can overcome violence with non-violence, and who shows us the way to light. Therefore, Gandhian philosophy and thoughts are relevant in the changing world of today and can help in difficult time, and the philosophy is also needed for global peace.

Gandhian philosophy about peace Mahatma Gandhi believed that the universality of religion can best be realized through the universalization of education, and that such universalization is the spring board for national integration. He and his followers threw the King of England and his great armies out of India using weapons of truth and non-violence. According to Gandhi the universal human value of Ahimsa ought to be

cultivated not merely at personal level, but at social, national and international level too. It is a very powerful means to avoid conflict, since it springs from inner realisation of the equality of all human beings. He lived, thought, acted and inspired by the vision of a humanity evolving towards a world of peace and harmony. Peace and Gandhian philosophy Peace can be described as:

Absence of war

Sense of inner peace and wellbeing

Sense of tranquility

Harmonious relationships

Balance in nature (ecology)

Forgiving nature

Working for social justice – human rights, poverty etc.

According to Gandhi ji Values like truth, non-violence, humility, forgiveness, tolerance, love, fairness, and unselfishness are meant for the peace, prosperity and harmony of the world. If human values are not there, humanity will be destroyed. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence has found expression in other movements around the world. The force of power never wins against the power of love. There can be no democracy where there is no harmony, no peace. Mahatma Gandhi taught us that we can bring harmony to our world by becoming champions of love and peace for all. Peace and Gandhian philosophy Mahatma Gandhi has a source of inspiration, not only for the nation, but for the entire world. He

inspired the world with his faith in truth and justice for all Mankind. Communal harmony had the pride of place in Gandhi's constructive programme.

Salt March/ Dandi March:

The Salt March began on March 12, 1930 and continued till April 6, 1930. It was a 24-day non-violent march led by Mahatma Gandhi.

During that time, the British had prohibited Indians from collecting or selling salt. Indians were also forced to buy the staple diet ingredient from the British, who, not only exercised monopoly over its manufacture and sale but also levied a heavy salt tax. The Salt March was a collective beginning of a mass resistance movement against the British tyranny.

Upon reaching the seashore in Dandi, Mahatma Gandhi broke the law by producing illegal salt. This later turned into a mass civil disobedience movement throughout India as millions broke salt laws by either making salt or buying illegal salt.

The Salt March began with around 80 people, but as more and more people joined in for the 390 km-long journey, it grew into a strong force of 50,000 people.

The Salt March got national and international recognition and

shook the Britishers with its non-violent nature. It got massive press coverage and drew the world's attention towards the Indian Independence Movement.

Conclusion: Peace and non-violence are the two pillars of any peace process that upholds the human race's very livelihood. These two are inseparable. Peace must be the fruit of any non-violent action or protest to settle a dispute. Only such a resolved state of dispute will be full of peace and harmony. As an outcome of the peace process, parties concerned must also understand one main fact that there is not a clear winner or clear loser. When the conflict between two individuals or groups or nations comes to an end, both the winner and the loser will have to be peaceful upon agreeing wholeheartedly to the terms of the winning conditions. And, this is also the fundamental spirit of humanity. Therefore, the final accord the parties willing to agree is nothing but the final outcome itself. They shall not build up their conflict on top of the outcome of the peace process. To achieve a peaceful treaty is not that simple. Global peace has been hindered by many challenges that include both natural and human-made causes. The rationale behind achieving peace is in the positive understanding of "give and take", humanity, forgiveness and nonviolence. The right understanding will take the world in the right path. As an exem-

plary figure in politics, spirituality and nation building, Gandhi must also be understood rightly. So, Non-violence is applicable in today's age of insanity and insecurity at so many levels.

"Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon. Indeed, it is a weapon unique in history, which cuts without wounding and ennoble the man who wields it."- Martin Luther King

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