

BLOCK : II
NATIONALISM AND LIBERATION

Unit 1:
Gandhi: Critique of Modern Civilisation, Satyagraha,

Unit Structure :

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- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Sociological Ideas of Gandhi
 - 1.3.1 Gandhi on Women
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1.1 Introduction:

In this block we are discussing the modern Indian political thinkers and Mahatma Gandhi is an integral part of modern Indian political scenario. Mahatma Gandhi is the pre-eminent leader of Indian Independence Movement. He has been described as a prophet, a mystic, a saint, a religious devotee, a moral preacher, a social reformer and a non-violent revolutionary. Mahatma Gandhi is not a theorist but a man of action and he is the pioneer of Satyagraha movement. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is commonly known as Mahatma Gandhi or the 'Great Soul' around the world. He is also popularly known as 'Bapu' in India. He is officially honoured in India as the 'Father of the Nation'. His birthday 2nd October is celebrated as 'Gandhi Jayanti', a national holiday in India. It is celebrated worldwide as the International Day of Non-Violence. As a practitioner of ahimsa his aim is to speak the truth and ignite the spirit in others.

This unit makes an attempt to deal with the sociological ideas of Gandhi's

political thought. It will mainly analyze his views on women, untouchability, family etc. He believes that men and women are essentially endowed with the same spirit and therefore they should be treated as equals. According to him, untouchability is a social evil and he wants to remove it from the society. This unit will further try to explain Gandhi as a critique of modern civilization. He opposed the idea of westernization. He also opposed the existing economic system and proposed economic reconstructing emphasizing on promotion of khadi and small and cottage industries. He also criticized the British education system and wanted to introduce a radical education system in India with prime focus on handicraft curriculum. This unit shall also familiarize you with Gandhi's idea of satyagraha. Gandhi termed satyagraha as a moral weapon to fight the evil and unjust. This unit will also deal with Gandhi's views on Ahimsa.

1.2 Objectives:

Mahatma Gandhi is the product of Indian culture and civilization and connected with the saintly traditions of India. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Analyse the Sociological Ideas of Gandhi
- Understand Gandhi as a Critique of Modern Civilization.
- Explain Gandhi's Views on Satyagraha
- Examine Gandhi's Idea of Ahimsa

1.3 Sociological Ideas of Gandhi:

Before discussing Gandhi's political ideas it is pertinent to know that Gandhi does not start any 'ism'. He simply expresses his views on political, social, economic and religious matters according to the need of the occasion and political situation. But it can definitely be said that he has a peculiar philosophy of life and on the basis of the philosophy he tries to solve national and international problems. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism have coloured his thoughts and shaped his actions. His views on women, casteism, prostitution etc. help in shaping his political ideas. In this section we will discuss these sociological ideas.

1.3.1 Gandhi on Women

Apart from being one of the greatest leaders of Indian nationalism, Mahatma Gandhi is noted as a major social and political reformer. He

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started a crusade for improving the degrading position of women in India. He wanted to eradicate all the social evils of the society and as a part of the project, he tried to develop the conditions of Indian women. Before Gandhi, many reformers dealt with this issue. But Gandhi's approach was different from the rest of the reformers.

Before discussing Gandhi's role in improving the position of Indian women, let us discuss the condition of women during that time. The evils like child marriage, dowry system, the Purdah System etc. were the striking features of the then Indian society. The Purdah system prevented the Indian women from going out of their houses alone. They had to be accompanied by their male guardians. The society regarded the women as inferior to the male members. Moreover, the percentage of women with basic education was minimal. It was because of these degrading and deplorable situations faced by the Indian women that Gandhi started a reform movement to eradicate all these evils from the society.

Stop to Consider :

Life Sketch of Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi better known as Mahatma Gandhi was born on 2nd October 1869 in Porbandar, a coastal town in Gujarat, India. His father Karamchand Gandhi was a Diwan (Prime Minister) of Porbandar state. In May 1883, 13 year old Mohandas was married to 14 year old Kasturbai Makhanji. At his middle school in Porbandar and high school in Rajkot, Gandhi was an average student. His family wanted him to become a barrister. On 4th September, 1888 Gandhi went to London to study law at the University of London. Gandhi was called to the bar on June 10, 1891 and left London for India on June 12, 1891. After coming to India, he associated himself actively in the struggle of India against British imperialism which ultimately led to India's independence. On 30th January 1948, Gandhi was shot while he was walking to a platform from which he was to address a prayer meeting.

We should remember here that Gandhi never disrespected the tradition of the country, but he felt that some traditions can act as a barrier for the development of women. It is evident from the following quotation of Gandhi.

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“It is good to swim in the waters of tradition, but to sink in them is suicide” (M K Gandhi, Navajivan, 28th June)

It needs to be mentioned here that Gandhi took a new approach to the study of problems of Indian women. He considers the women capable of occupying the same platform with men. Again, to him, a woman is the embodiment of virtues like knowledge, humanity, tolerance, sacrifice and faith. But for the proper development of these virtues women need education. He never accepts the view that women are the weaker sex. In contrast, he feels that women have strong and equal mental abilities like men. In this context, he cites the example of Sita, Draupadi etc. He therefore believes that women should be given equal right to freedom. We have already learnt that, according to Gandhi, women play an important role in the political, economic and social emancipation of the country. Gandhi believes that women are more capable than men to carry a non- violent crusade. He guides the Indian women to shoulder critical responsibilities in India’s struggle for freedom. Under his guidance women take part in various activities like organising public meetings, picketing of shops, selling khadi etc. They also face the atrocities of the police and are put behind bars. Gradually they become an important part of Indian National Movement and this definitely helps in improving their position. Hence it can be said that Mahatma Gandhi is certainly one of the greatest advocates of women’s liberty. Throughout his life, he has worked hard and led reform movements for the cause of the women. He helped them in boosting their morale and self-esteem. It is evident from the fact that he engages women leaders in many nationalistic endeavours.

Stop To Consider:

Major Works of Mahatma Gandhi

The major Works of Mahatma Gandhi are as follows

- My Experiments with Truth- It is his autobiography which covers his life till 1920. Gandhi does not deal with the 1920 post period as it is well known to the people. Besides he feels that his experiments in this period are yet to yield definite conclusions. He has written this book at the request of Swami Anand. My Experiments with Truth appears in the weekly ‘Navajivan’ during 1925-28. This book is marked with Gandhi’s humility and truthfulness. He wants to tell the world the story of his experiments with truth. In 1999, the book is designated as one of the “100 Most Important Spiritual Books of the 20th Century” by Harper

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Collins publishers.

- **Hind Swaraj**- It is the title of the first complete writing of Mahatma Gandhi. It literally means ‘self rule in India’. This small book of about 30000 words is written in November 1909. In Hind Swaraj Gandhi points out that the real enemy is not the British political domination but the modern Western civilization which is luring India into its stranglehold. He believes that the Indians educated in western style particularly lawyers, doctors, teachers and industrialists are undermining India’s ancient heritage by insidiously spreading modern ways. Gandhi criticizes railways as they spread plague and produce famine by encouraging the export of food grains. Here he opines swaraj or self- rule as a state of life which can only exist when Indians follow their traditional civilization free from the corruption of modern civilization. Hence the reading of Gandhi’s works will give you an idea of his major concerns and socio-economic and political ideas.

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1.3.2 Gandhi’s Idea of Individual

Gandhi believes that the individuals constitute an important part of the society. Therefore, he opines that the happiness of the whole society is based on the happiness of the individuals. According to him, if the individuals consciously submit their wills and voluntarily contribute their possession to the society, it will automatically lead to social welfare. He also argues that, in return, the society shall guarantee the maximum development of the individuals’ personality. Gandhi believes that an individual should exercise five rules in his lifetime- truthfulness, brahmacharya, non- violence, non- stealing and non- hoarding. An individual’s character is to be built on the foundation of these disciplines.

Stop To Consider:

Gandhi on State

Gandhi’s ideas on state are relevant to understand his political philosophy. He is opposed to the present state because it was based on force and centralization of authority leading to negation of individual freedom. According to him, the state is only one of the means to secure the welfare of all. There is nothing sacred about the actions of the state. His views are apparent in the following lines: “Let no one commit the mistake of thinking that Ramrajya means a rule of Hindus. My Ram is another name for Khuda or God. I want Khuda Raj which is the same thing as the Kingdom of God on Earth.”

Obviously Gandhi's desire for an ideal society where everybody follows a code of righteous living and meeting all their essential needs is exemplified here. Gandhiji's state is a non-violent democratic state where social life will remain self-regulated. In his state the powers are to be decentralized and equality prevails in every sphere of life.

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1.3.3 Gandhi on Family

Gandhi views the family as a divine and consecrated institution. He has suggested that the conjugal relation should be based on true friendship and equality. He never supports the view that husband is superior in a conjugal relation. In a family, he believes that the children should be devoted to the parents and there should not be any discrimination between the sons and daughters. Both should have equal right to inheritance. He is in favour of self-reliant children and for that he suggests that they should be given proper education. They should be taught the value of honest livelihood. Moreover, he has also said that they should not be made slaves of ancestral property.

SAQ

Do you think that equality between husband and wife brings prosperity in the family? Explain. (80 words)

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1.3.4 Devdasis and Prostitutes

We have already learnt that Gandhi is a pioneer of the development of the status and position of women. While dealing with the issues of status of Indian women, he also considers the issues like prostitution and devdasi. According to him, the devdasi system denotes the use of young girls for the pleasure of the priests in the name of God. For him, it is a crime. He argues that the existence of the institution of prostitution is a shame both for the society as well as man. Gandhi believes that the term devdasi is an indirect expression of prostitution. He considers it as a serious offence in the society.

1.3.5 Gandhi on Untouchability

Gandhi is dead against the concept of untouchability. He is a believer in Varnashrama system. Varnashrama implies for the division according to one's own profession. But in course of time this Varnashrama system had been replaced by the rigid caste system and he was not in support of this rigidity. He considers untouchability as a social offence and he is not at all happy with the conditions where they are made to stay in. Various restrictions are put against them like denial of entry to the temples, denial of taking water from the village well etc. He calls the untouchables by the name harijans meaning people of God. He also creates the Harijan Sevak Sangha to fight for the removal of this social evil. And for this, he even stayed in colonies meant for the untouchables and fought for their cause.

Check Your Progress

1. Gandhi believes that women should be given equal right to freedom. (Write true or false)
2. Mention the five rules advocated by Gandhi for the individuals.
3. Gandhi opines that husband is superior than wife in a conjugal relation. (Write true or false)
4. What is devdasi system?
5. What is the difference between varna system and caste system?

1.4. Gandhi as A Critique Of Modern Civilization

Gandhi played a major role as a modernizer both in political as well as religious and social field. He was the man behind the vibrant organization of Congress. He introduced concepts like satyagraha in politics. Moreover, the introduction of Harijan Sevak Sangha also establishes him as a supporter of modernization. But at the same time he is termed as a radical critique of modern civilization. But you must remember here that his critique of modernization do not want to push back the clock of human history. He simply wants to make people aware of the consequences of modern civilization which according to him might not be very favourable for the human kind. Now let us briefly discuss Gandhi as a critique of modern civilization.

1.4.1 Gandhi's Views on Westernization

Gandhi's views on westernization are based on his practical

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experiences. He has stayed and studied in England for a long time and this has helped in shaping his ideas regarding westernization. His visit to South Africa has also influenced him to a great extent. He has pointed out both the positive as well as negative aspects of westernization. He is influenced by the rich literature of the western society. He also borrows the concepts like liberty and democracy from the western society. According to him, the brightest feature of western society is that it is free from some degrading evils like child marriage, caste system, orthodoxy, superstitions, etc. Western culture treats both man and woman as equals. He also likes the scientific temperament of the western society.

But at the same time, he does not embrace western cultures without criticisms. Pointing out the negative aspects of westernization, Gandhi says that the western society is running after wealth which is too dangerous. He also does not like their approach towards the issue of racism. According to Gandhi the western society does not pay any attention to the moral education of the children. Therefore, we can say that though he is influenced by western thought, he does not forget to mention about the negative aspects of westernization.

1.4.2 Gandhis Views On Economic Reconstruction

By now we all know that Gandhi is a social, economic and political reformer. He is the only political and social thinker who is capable to present a complete economic theory. He has his original explanation about important concepts and terminologies of Economics. He explains that economy does not mean the exploitation of the unlimited use of the resources available in the country. Economy meant the total living of a country that has got the right to survive with co-existence. His economic ideas which cover all the problems that affect our social life are influenced by Ruskin, Tolstoy, Ramkrishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda. Again, Gandhiji wants the economic emancipation of Indian people. He is an advocate of Swadeshi and he advises the boycott of foreign goods, foreign companies and foreign capital to maximum possible extent. This boycott is not politically motivated. It is purely for the economic betterment of our country. Swadeshi avoids economic dependence on external market forces. He appeals the people of India to use home-made goods rather than foreign goods. According to Gandhi,

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the hand weaving of dresses and development of handicrafts will be a panacea for India's poverty, economic backwardness and unemployment. He feels that all members of a village community must prioritize local goods and services. The villages must build a strong economic base to satisfy most of its needs. He advises the people of India to purchase the rural products only. Every village community of free India should have its own carpenters, shoemakers, potters, builders, mechanics, farmers, engineers, weavers, teachers, bankers, merchants, traders, musicians, artists, and priests. He advocates the use of khadi. He criticized the import of designed clothes from foreign countries as it will create joblessness among the people of India and eventually it will lead to hunger and unhappiness among the people. Gandhi is not an extremist. Being a practical thinker, he accepts the foreign economic relation for unavoidable useful things which cannot be produced in the country. Gandhi is well aware that the boycott of foreign goods will adversely affect British industry. Therefore he applies his economic philosophy as a part of his strategy against colonial rule. He is not against industrial revolution, but he creates a framework keeping in mind the economic condition of India under alien rule. Gandhi has accepted the doctrine of equal distribution. He opposes the exploitation of poor by the rich. In order to solve the problem of economic inequality he advocates the concept of economic equality. He put forwards his scheme of trusteeship for economic equality. According to him, all persons should be supplied with the necessaries to satisfy their natural needs. He subscribes to the Marxian formula 'to each according to his needs'.

Again, he does not support the confiscation of properties of the rich. He wants them to earn more but after satisfying their needs the balance must be held by them as trusteeship of the people. Gandhi advises the government to fix the amount the rich can keep to themselves and the rest as the trustee of the people. Gandhi says that the brilliant people should use their brilliance to earn more. But they should not keep to themselves anything more than what is necessary. He advocates for the transformation of the capitalist order of the society into an egalitarian society. Gandhi makes it clear that if the rich by themselves do not accept this offer of trusteeship, the government may be forced to pass a law by which their properties can be confiscated.

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SAQ

Examine Gandhi's views on confiscation of property. (60 words)

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Again, Gandhi also criticised large scale industrialization and mechanization. He always gives man more importance than machines. He is an advocate of cottage industries. He believes that poverty of people can be less only if they are given work for their spare time so that they can earn. He advocates a reconciliation of large and small scale industries and nationalization of key industries. He opposes to the introduction of the labour saving machines. His view is that the problem of India is to find employment for those who had no work to do and not to restore unemployment as a result of the introduction of the machinery to do the work previously done by the workers. Gandhi accepts some basic industry on large scale like mines, cement, electricity etc. He also encourages big industrialists and big farmers with the expectation that they will develop the attitude of trusteeship.

Gandhi puts emphasis on the ethical aspect of economic problems. He does not draw a distinction between economics and ethics. Gandhi believes that the economics which hurts the moral well-being of an individual or nation is immoral. He feels that it is wrong to measure the value of an industry by the dividends it pays to shareholders. Rather it should be measured by its effect on the bodies, souls and spirits of the people employed in it. Gandhi emphasises plain living. He believes that it helps in cutting down the wants and ensuring self reliance. Gandhi distinguishes between standard of living and standard of life. He opines that standard of living implies the material and physical standard of food, clothes and housing. A higher standard of life on the other hand, denotes that along with these material advancements, the cultural and spiritual values and qualities should also be adopted. We have learnt that Gandhiji provides us with original ideas regarding economics. He popularizes a unique way of thinking in the field of economics. His idea regarding economic system of the county is the most practicable alternative system against the prevailing economic system. Here we can refer to the village based economy of China and Israel, the small scale industry based economy of Japan which are close to the Gandhian model of economy.

1.4.3 Gandhi on Education

Mahatma Gandhi criticizes the British colonial education system and proposes a radical education system. He believes that education shapes the new generation. It also reflects the fundamental assumptions of the society and its individuals. He also opined that education played an important role in the freedom struggle of India. He is opposed to English education and believes that English education can enslave the minds of the people of India. He is not very happy about the system where all the works are carried out in English medium and the mother tongue is being neglected. He believes that it is not the fault of the British people. It is natural that they want a group of people who can carry out their works in their own language. He blames the fellow Indians for accepting this medium of work. He opines that only after we get freedom from western education, culture and way of life, we can achieve real freedom.

His proposed education system contains curriculum for handicrafts as the centre point of entire education system. This is a radical change introduced by Mahatma Gandhi. His education system emphasizes on skills like literacy and knowledge acquisition and these skills are the monopoly of the people belonging generally to the higher strata of the caste ladder. And traditionally the works related to handicrafts like spinning, weaving, leather work, pottery, metal- work, basket making, book binding etc. are done by people belonging to the lower strata of the hierarchy ladder and mostly the untouchables. By making handicraft the centre point of his education system, Gandhi had challenged the entire social set up. He grants equal status to manual work as well as mental work. Gandhi's education aims at educating the whole person and it is a moral responsibility. He terms his education system as 'Nai Talim' focusing on the fundamental principles of learning by doing. Gandhi emphasizes on free education for all between the age group of 7-14. His scheme of education is compulsory for both boys and girls. He also focuses on making the mother tongue the only medium of instruction as people will find it easier to understand the concepts in their own language rather than in an alien language. His scheme of education is designed to promote collaborative learning, co-operation, tolerance and a sense of responsibility, non-violence etc.

Check Your Progress

1. Why did Gandhi consider untouchability a social evil?
2. Write true or false

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- a. Gandhi favoured large scale industrialization and mechanization.
- b. Gandhi draw a distinction between economics and ethics.
3. What is Swadeshi Movement?
4. Why Gandhi advocated the small and cottage industries?
5. Discuss Gandhi's scheme of education.

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1.5. Gandhi's View on Satyagraha

Gandhi propounded his idea of Satyagraha in his political philosophy. Satyagraha is a natural outcome of the supreme concept of truth. It is initially related to the concept of non-violence. Satyagraha means the exercise of purest soul source against all injustice and exploitation. He opines that evil should be resisted through satyagraha, the moral weapon based on love and soul which is superior to physical source. Satyagraha literally means holding fast to truth. It also means a technique of resisting all that is evil, unjust, impure or untrue by love, self suffering, and self purification and by appealing to the soul of the opponent. Gandhi stood for the practice of satyagraha in domestic and social relationships before its adoption in the political sphere. For Gandhi, satyagraha has certain techniques which may be termed as forms also. Let us now discuss these techniques in brief :-

• **Non Co Operation** - According to him, people can put an end to the injustice by withdrawing cooperation from the government and paralyzing it. Gandhi feels that oppression and exploitation are possible if the people co-operate with it. Even the most despotic government cannot survive without the consent of the governed which is forcibly procured by the despot. But as the subject cease to fear the despotic force, the despot's power is gone. Non cooperation may manifest itself in the forms of hartal, social ostracism, or social boycott and picketing.

- a. Hartal means stopping the business as a mark of protest against the policy of the ruler. Its object is to strike the imagination of the people and government. Gandhiji insisted that such hartal should be voluntary and non- violent. Those are not to be frequent.
- b. Picketing or blocking the path of a person who wants to do a particular thing is another form of non co-operation. In case of picketing also no force is to be used. Only the persuasive methods are to be employed. Picketing should avoid coercion, intimidation, discourtesy, hunger-strike etc.

c. Another form of non-cooperation is social ostracism or social boycott. It is to boycott those who defy the public opinion. This is to be resorted only in exceptional cases and with restraint.

• **Civil Disobedience** - The participants in the civil disobedience movement declare their intention to disobey the cruel and unjust laws and suffer the necessary punishment for doing so. They carry on their struggle till the laws are replaced by just laws. It must be sincere, respectful and restrained. According to Gandhi, it must rest on the well understood principles and exercised only by a selected few. Gandhi regards civil disobedience as a complete effective and bloodless substitute of armed rebellion. Civil disobedience may be of two types namely assertive and defensive. Assertive disobedience implies the disregard of laws relating to revenue and others. Defensive disobedience implies the formation of volunteer force for peaceful purposes like organising meeting, discussion etc.

Stop to Consider:

Gandhi on Nationalism and Internationalism

Gandhiji stood for a world of people and wanted to build harmony between nationalism and internationalism. The doctrine of swadharma and swadeshi is the basis of Gandhian nationalism. He was against the nationalism based on violence and aggressive ideas. He relates his nationalism with internationalism. His nationalism was not restricted to India but to humanity at large. He was of the view that one must be a good nationalist in order to become a true internationalist.

- **Hijrat** - Hijrat implies voluntary exiles from permanent place of residence. It means that if a person feels that he cannot undertake Satyagraha against the injustice of the oppressor, he should leave his own place. This is done by those who feel oppressed and cannot live without loss of self-respect in a particular place or lack of strength to defend himself violently.
- **Fasting**- Fasting implies readiness on the part of the satyagrahi to suffer with a view to appeal to the heart of the wrong doer. Fasting can be resorted to only by a person who possesses spiritual fitness, purity of mind, discipline, humanity and faith. He favours it only as a last resort when all other techniques fail. It is not meant for all occasions except rare occasions.
- **Strike** - Strike is the voluntary purificatory suffering undertaken to convert the opponent. The strikers are required to put forward their

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demands in clear terms. The demands are not to be unjust. In short, the various techniques of satyagraha indicate the individuals abiding the right of opposition to coercive authority. Gandhi has laid down some principles to be observed in the satyagraha. These are behaviour, truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possession and celibacy. A satyagrahi should not harbor anger. Satyagraha also depends upon the stage of the moral development of the satyagrahi. Satyagraha aims to secure progress and social justice. The satyagrahi must have humanity and self-respect. Satyagraha is a struggle for righteousness.

Stop to consider

Distinction Between Satyagraha and Passive Resistance:

The concept of Satyagraha differs from passive resistance. Passive resistance is supposed to be a weapon of the weak and is characterized by hatred. It can also manifest itself in violence. Under passive resistance, violence is abjured on account of weakness and passive resistance registered to embrace its opponents into submission. Sometimes passive resistance can lead to the use of violent methods. Satyagraha is based on spiritual force and stands for vindication of truth. It is a courage of dying without killing. In the Satyagraha, there is no place for cowardice. Satyagraha emphasizes the eternal strength. It is a moral weapon based on the superiority of spiritual force over physical force. In Satyagraha there is no room for effective and determined opposition to injustice and tyranny.

1.6. Gandhi on Ahimsa

The core of Gandhi's political thought is non-violence or ahimsa. According to Gandhi non-violence or ahimsa, the heart of all religion is the truth itself. It means avoiding injury to anything. According to him, the function of the state should be based on the principles of ahimsa. Non-violence is a powerful instrument.

Gandhi supports non-violence for the following reasons

- Non-violence is held to be superior to violence, as it is an expression of love leading to acceptance of punishment upon oneself rather than imposing it upon the opponents.
- Non-violence appeals to conscience.
- It is a spiritual force relating to soul and not a physical force.

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- Adherence to non-violence is sometimes held to be a commandment of religious faith.

Gandhi refers to three levels of non-violence. The highest form is the enlightened non-violence of resourcefulness or the non-violence of the brave. People adopt this kind of non-violence not by painful necessity but by inner conviction based on moral considerations. This type of non-violence is not only confined to political sphere but pervades every sphere of life. It is the non-violence without any mental reservation. It is that kind of non-violence which can move mountains and transform life. The second kind of non-violence is adopted as a measure of expediency and sound policy in some spheres of life. This kind of non-violence is the non-violence of the weak or the passive, i.e. non-violence of the helpless. People use this kind of non-violence because of weakness rather than moral conviction. However, it is not as effective as the non-violence of the brave. It is not based on any conviction but on expediency and consequently permits the use of violence where necessary. The third kind of non-violence is the passive violence of the coward and the effeminate. A coward runs away from danger instead of facing it. It is unnatural and dishonourable. This non-violence of the coward is actually the violence in suspension or inactive violence. If a choice has to be made between violence and cowardice, Gandhi's preference will be violence. To him, vengeance is superior to passive and helpless submission. According to Gandhi, non-violence presupposes the ability, though not the willingness to strike. Non-violence is the quality of the brave and strong and is not possible without fearlessness. There is nothing like failure in non-violence as there is nothing like success in violence. It is essential to understand the implications of non-violence as Gandhi understood them. It is the creed to which he rendered life-long service.

Stop to Consider:

Gandhiji on Sarvodaya

Mahatma Gandhi translates John Ruskin's tract on political economy 'Unto The Last' and named it as 'Sarvodaya'. It is published in the year 1908. The word sarvodaya is a combination of two words 'sarva' and 'uday'. It denotes upliftment of all. It also denotes 'good of all', 'service to all', 'welfare of all' etc. Gandhi's sarvodaya presupposes the socio-economic development of all. The base of this philosophy is commonness i.e. what is done for all. Gandhi's sarvodaya follows the policy of self-sacrifice. He opines that every

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individual should be ready as well as willing to sacrifice the happiness of his own for the sake of others. Gandhi's sarvodaya again puts emphasis on the development of the villages. He argues that the villages should be given priority while giving aids as these villages form the keystone of Indian democracy. Sarvodaya believes in the principle of equality. Gandhi opines that in sarvodaya raj there should not be any rich or poor, high or low, privileged or unprivileged persons.

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The Implications of non- violence are:-

- The people who do not believe in God of love cannot be benefited by non- violence.
- Non-violence can be used for the safeguard of one's self respect and sense of honour. But it cannot always be used in the context of the possession of land or money.
- Truth and ahimsa are two sides of a smooth unstamped metallic disc and are so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them. Gandhi puts more emphasis on truth than on ahimsa because he believes that truth exists beyond and unconditioned by space and time, but ahimsa exists on the part of all finite beings. Ahimsa divorced from truth will be demoralizing. Gandhiji is prepared to sacrifice ahimsa for the sake of truth and not vice versa.

Check Your Progress

1. Define non- cooperation as a tool of satyagraha.
2. Mention the two types of civil disobedience.
3. What is meant by hijrat?
4. Distinguish between satyagraha and passive resistance.
5. Explain the three levels of non- violence referred by Gandhi.

1.7 Summing Up:

In this unit, we have learnt the sociological foundations of Gandhi's political thought. He wants to make the women capable of sharing the same platform with men. Mahatma Gandhi's urge to make the people of India wear khadi garments is not only a call to create self-reliance but also a call to prove the unity of India. He wants to eradicate the social evils like untouchability, the institution of devdasi, prostitution etc. We have also learnt that Gandhi is a crusader who criticized the modern civilization and proposed alternative arrangements. For him the means

are as important as the aims. The means must be nonviolent, ethical, and truthful in all spheres. He advocates trusteeship, decentralization of economic activities, labour intensive technology, and rural India is his first priority. He advocates the development of the rural economy with the development of agriculture and village industries. Here, you have also learnt Gandhi's concept of satyagraha which implies holding fast to truth. You have also been familiarized with different techniques of satyagraha. We have also learnt the concept of ahimsa put forwarded by Gandhiji.

SAQ

Do you think non-violence can be used as an instrument of conflict resolution in present day politics? (60 words)

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1.8 References and Suggested Readings

1. Agarwal, R.C. Constitutional Development and National Movement of India: Freedom Movement, Acts and Indian Constitution. New Delhi: S. Chand and Company Ltd., 2002 Gupta,
2. Rao, C.N. Shankar. Sociology: Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Social Thought. New Delhi: S. Chand and Company Ltd., 2006

Links :

<https://infed.org/mobi/mahatma-gandhi-on-education>.

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Unit 2 :
Gandhi: Swaraj, Religion and Politics

Unit Structure :

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Gandhi's view on Swaraj
- 2.4 Gandhi's view on Religion and Politics
 - 2.4.1. Gandhi's view on Religion
 - 2.4.2 Relation Between Religion and Politics
- 2.5 Summing up
- 2.6 References and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi was a visionary, a leader, a philosopher as well as a socio-economic reformer. In the previous unit of this block we have learnt some of the important ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. We all know that Gandhiji is known as the 'Father of the Nation' whom we fondly call, Bapuji. Because of his leadership it was possible for Indians to fight against the British and came out victorious. The world recognizes him as the leader of one of the widespread democratic upsurge of twentieth century against colonial power. As a social reformer he worked for the upliftment of the downtrodden classes of the society particularly for the untouchables whom he called Harijan meaning 'Children of God'. His economic ideas reflect on his concept of self-reliance. Moreover, he had also talked about trusteeship.

From the previous unit we have learnt about different methods adopted by Mahatma Gandhi for attaining freedom from the British Rule. One of the important methods used by Gandhi in the freedom movement has been the method of non-violence. Satyagraha is one such technique of non-violence resistance. The major goal of his movement was overthrowing the colonial power. But at the same time Gandhi was keen on establishing Poorna Swaraj or complete freedom in India which has much broader connotations than freedom from colonial Power. In this unit we shall attempt to discuss Gandhi's view on Swaraj and also his ideas of Religion and Politics.

2.2 Objectives:

The Anti-British movement in India has been unique in many ways. As we all know Gandhi adopted an unique way of struggling against Colonial power by following non-violent methods and techniques. After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss Gandhi's views on Swaraj
- Analyse Gandhi's ideas on Religion and Politics.

2.3 Gandhi's View on Swaraj :

Now in this section let us try to understand the concept of Swaraj as conceived by Mahatma Gandhi. In common sense, Swaraj means self-rule. The concept of swaraj and swadeshi were new form of self-assertion among the educated middle class in the later part of nineteenth century. You all must have heard the famous statement of Bal Gangadhar Tilak that, "Swaraj is my birthright' However, Gandhi used the term in a wider sense. For him swaraj includes – political, social, economic and moral aspects of individual's lives. Here we must remember that the major goal of freedom movement of India was freeing India from British domination. However, that was not the sole purpose of the movement. He wanted to achieve complete freedom Therefore, Gandhi's swaraj not only means self-rule but Poorna Swaraj. According to him, Swaraj connotes an integrated revolution that encompasses all spheres of life. In the words of M. K. Gandhi, "at the individual level swaraj is vitally connected with the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing swadeshi or self-reliance." (M.K. Gandhi, 1928).

In Political terms swaraj means self-government, which does not necessarily means the good government because Gandhi believed that self-government may not always be the good government. Again, swaraj also denotes the struggle /effort to be independent of any kind of government control be it foreign or national. Thus, swaraj stands for sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. Gandhi before leading one of the mass movements of history, viz, non co-operation movement in 1920 mentioned in Hind Swaraj, "After years of endeavour to put into practice the views expressed in the following pages, I feel that the way shown therein is the only true way to swaraj". Gandhi's Swaraj is influenced by Vedas. By swaraj or self-rule Gandhi wanted to teach himself and the Indians, that only those who could rule themselves in the sense of self-restraint could rule themselves in the sense of controlling their political universe. (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1967)

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While discussing the concept of Swaraj put forwarded by Gandhi, we must remember that it has economic connotations too. In the economic sense, poorna swaraj stands for complete economic freedom of all sections particularly the labour class. Thus for Gandhi, swaraj is much broader than freedom from all restraints, “it is self-rule, self-restraint and could be equated with moksha or salvation”. (ibid). Therefore, it is said that the independence India achieved in the midnight of 15th August was not something Gandhi had visualized as swaraj (Mukherjee, 2009). By Swaraj Gandhi meant all around awakening which encompasses social, educational, moral, economic and political lives of the human beings.

Gandhi has also discussed extensively how to realise Swaraj. He urged people to have work tirelessly for attaining Swaraj as it would not come from outside. According to him, Swaraj is the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and intelligent appreciation of the environment. (M.K. Gandhi, 1928). Thus, Gandhi’s swaraj has two main connotations : Self – Rule and Self- Control.

Gandhi’s Swaraj as self- control has three different connotations—

- i). Freedom is primarily an individual and not a collective entity.
- ii). It includes freedom of Press, Speech, Religion and association etc.
- iii). Freedom is enjoyed both inwardly and outwardly.

Thus, we can see Gandhi talked about individualism but at the same time he believed that such freedoms are subject to interference. Again he considered fear, weakness, cowardice as negative forces of human spirit. He is of the opinion that self-rule, self-restraint, self-discipline and voluntary self-sacrifice forms the basis of swaraj.

While discussing Swaraj as self- rule Gandhi has advocated for participatory democracy. To quote Gandhi,

“By Swaraj I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the largest number of adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the State and who have taken the trouble of having registered their names as voters.....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 other words, Swaraj is to be obtained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.” (Young India, 29-1-'25)

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Further, Gandhi urged that swaraj means vast organising ability, penetration into the villages solely for the services of the villagers; in other words; it means national education i.e, education of the masses. He said, ‘Real swaraj will come, not by the acquisition of authority but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, swaraj is to be attained by education the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

According to Gandhi, the precondition for establishing Swaraj is political independence. In India, to establish Swaraj Gandhi worked through an organisation called Indian National Congress. However, at times there were differences of opinion between Gandhi and other leaders like Nehru. Gandhi formulated a development model to be adopted by India known as Hind Swaraj. However, Nehru dismissed it by saying unreal which can never be attained. Gandhi’s idea of Swaraj is different from the literal meaning of the term because he visualised an India where democracy and equality prevail. Gandhi was repeatedly saying that India’s problem lies not only with foreign domination. Hence, freedom from British Rule would not solve all the evils existing in the country. To remove the evils existing in the society, Gandhi wanted internal cleansing through self-motivation. Therefore, he believed Swaraj must be built from below which may eliminate all kinds of domination, oppression, discrimination through the use of non-violence. For attaining the goals of Swaraj, there is need of economic regeneration of rural India. He emphasised on the revival of Khadi industries and other village industries for that. To establish swaraj in this sense Gandhi founded voluntary organisations like The All India Spinners Association (AISA), All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA), the Harijan Sewak Sangh etc.

Moreover, here we must remember that Gandhi had also emphasised on Gram swaraj. He was of the opinion that India lived in villages. Therefore, village occupied the centre of his social, political and economic philosophy. According to him, Indian independence must begin at the bottom. Every village would be a Republic or Panchayat with full powers. As such, every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its own affairs.

Gandhi also linked his concept of Swaraj with Satyagraha. For him Swaraj means both self-rule and self-government. Further, he believes that swaraj should be the ideal for an individual as well for the nation. To be a follower of Satyagraha, one must be capable of self-rule. The followers of Satyagraha who lead a disciplined and ethical life are capable of establishing swaraj. Gandhi was of the opinion that Satyagraha is an act of the brave and the fearless. Thus, according to Gandhi swaraj at the individual level where each individual is capable of becoming his own ruler would automatically lead to

the establishment of swaraj at the nation.

As mentioned earlier, for Gandhi swaraj does not only have political connotations. It does not mean replacement of British rulers by the Indian rulers with the same with the same western institutions of governance. He had clearly stated that when wrote that such a process “would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englishtan. This is not the swaraj I want.” Thus, he was against western civilization. In his words, “ swaraj for me means of freedom for the meanest of my countrymen. I am not interested in freeing India merely from English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have no desire to exchange ‘king log’ for ‘king stork’ ..”He tried to establish a link between Swaraj, swadeshi and self-reliance.

Gandhi equated swaraj with Ramrajya where each individual enjoys freedom without interfering or harming others. In the words of Gandhi, ‘swaraj can be maintained, only where there are majority of loyal and patriotic people to whom the good of the nation is paramount above all other considerations whatever including their personal profit. Swaraj means government by the many. Where the many are immoral or selfish, their government can spell anarchy and nothing else.’ (Young India, 28-7-'21)

Again, in swaraj there will be continuous participation of all the members of the society. Since he equated swaraj with Ramrajya, he believed that swaraj will be established once the relationship between the subjects and the rulers will be like father and son and when both of them would inclined towards self-sacrifice and guided by self-control and self-restraint. Moreover, in andhi’s swaraj there is no discrimination on the basis of race or religions. Basis of swaraj will be the principles of secularism and egalitarianism. There is political and economic independence. In Young India Gandhi expressed his view that ‘ the swaraj of my ..our..dream recognises no race or religious destinations. Nor is it to be the monopoly of the lettered persons nor yet of moneyed men. Swaraj is to be for all, including the farmer, but emphatically including the maimed, the starving toiling millions.’
Young India, 26-3-'31

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SAQ:
How Gandhi’s idea of Swaraj can solve many problems of contemporary Indian Society? (80 words).

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Stop to Consider:**Gandhi's Philosophy on Economic Reconstruction :**

By now we all know that Gandhi is a social, economic and political reformer. He is the only political and social thinker who is capable to present a complete economic theory. He has his original explanation about important concepts and terminologies of Economics. He explains that economy does not mean the exploitation of the unlimited use of the resources available in the country. Economy meant the total living of a country that has got the right to survive with co-existence. His economic ideas which cover all the problems that effect our social life are influenced by Ruskin, Tolstoy, RamkrishnaParamhansa and Swami Vivekananda. Again, Gandhiji wants the economic emancipation of Indian people. He is an advocate of Swadeshi and he advises the boycott of foreign goods, foreign companies and foreign capital to maximum possible extent. This boycott is not politically motivated. It is purely for the economic betterment of our country. Swadeshi avoids economic dependence on external market forces. He appeals the people of India to use home-made goods rather than foreign goods. According to Gandhi, the hand weaving of dresses and development of handicrafts will be a panacea for India's poverty, economic backwardness and unemployment. He feels that all members of a village community must prioritize local goods and services. The villages must build a strong economic base to satisfy most of its needs. He advices the people of India to purchase the rural products only. Every village community of free India should have its own carpenters, shoemakers, potters, builders, mechanics, farmers, engineers, weavers, teachers, bankers, merchants, traders, musicians, artists, and priests. Gandhi is not an extremist. Being a practical thinker, he accepts the foreign economic relation for unavoidable useful things which cannot be produced in the country. Gandhi is well aware that the boycott of foreign goods will adversely affect British industry. Therefore, he applies his economic philosophy as a part of his strategy against colonial rule. He is not against industrial revolution, but he creates a framework keeping in mind the economic condition of India under alien rule.

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2.4 Gandhi's view on Religion and Politics

Gandhi wanted spiritualization of politics. He does not want to separate religion from politics rather he wanted a synthesis of two. He feels that there is no politics without religion because politics devoid of religion is a death

trap as it kills the soul. His religion is a dynamic force. Before discussing Gandhi's idea on Religion and Politics, Let us first discuss his views on Religion.

2.4.1 Gandhi's View on Religion:

Gandhi defined Religion as that which brings us face to face with our maker. Religion helps in accepting and realizing the God. For him, religion is a personal matter. At the same time, he was of the opinion that Religion is the panacea to many problems which are results of prejudices, passion and aggression. Gandhi advocated faith in religion and God to prevent mankind to slip into the life of misery and treachery. Further, he thought that philosophy, religion and spirituality should go hand in hand. Religion was an integral part of Gandhi's life. In his words, "man without religion is man without roots."

Here we must remember that, Gandhi's religion is not about going to temple or Mosque or Gurudwara. Gandhi did not advocate any particular religion nor uttered the name of any God. His religion is based on morality and humanity. Hence the incorporation of religion in politics means a progressive movement towards justice and truth because a man of religion will never tolerate any kind of exploitation or oppression. According to him, there must be unity between the inner and outer life of a man. Although he wants to strengthen religious basis of politics, yet, he will not tolerate any privilege to any particular group or discrimination against any group on the basis of religion.

Gandhi primarily based all his social and political doctrines on the religious and spiritual views of human life. He, however, does not preach any particular religion. His religion was the service of the community as he strongly believed that there is no religion apart from human activity. Further, he believed that God lives even in the smallest atom and there to love God is to love His creation. Religion is thus a passion for love. Here, we must remember that, though Gandhi did not name any religion, he was nurtured in the tradition of Hinduism. Following the belief of Hinduism Gandhi said that, "Truth is God and there is no other God than Truth." He further states that the Truth can be realized through love and Ahimsa. Hence, here we can say that according to Gandhi, religion meant self-realisation, knowledge of self, where God rules every breath. Moreover, religion guides us to follow the path of non-violence which according to him is eternal, equal to religion and equal to God.

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2.4.2 Relation between Religion and Politics

For Gandhi, Religion is welfare oriented and therefore mixing religion with politics would bring welfare of all. For him, without religion the idea of polity cannot be imagined. In the words of Gandhi, “I don’t accept a politics without religion; polity is a servant of religion, a polity without religion leads to doom as it kills the soul”. Thus Gandhi challenged many thinkers by incorporating morality and spiritualism in politics. He believed it can serve all the people of the society and thus its noble ritual. Again, He was of the view that religion affects the social and moral lives of the individuals. Hence, we can say that the chief aim of Gandhiji’s Polity was to establish political morality where truth, non-violence and love can reduce the problems in the society.

While discussing the concept of religion and morality, Gandhi was very much influenced by the principle of Buddha and Jesus which spoke about winning over “cruelty with love, false by truth”. Religion through morality ultimately establishes a moral polity. Further, he believed that “polity without religion is a phenomenon of great worries”. Only a polity with religion can do service to its people. A polity without religion becomes a medium for a few people to satisfy their selfish interests. Such representatives by ignoring the interest of the common people fulfil their own interests. In such a situation polity becomes dirty as the public welfare is neglected there.

To establish a stable polity therefore, Gandhi emphasised on having an ethical basis of politics. Here, religion has a bigger role to play. But we must remember that, by religion, he does not refer to the so-called religions the common people understand. Gandhi’s religion, thus also talked about rights and responsibilities. Hence, he urges people not to be selfish and to serve all to serve God. Selfishness may result in violence which creates disturbance and instability in the polity. The aim of a polity should be to follow humanity and morality and for that religion must be brought into politics. Then only spiritualisation may take place and self-government can be attained in the truest sense of the term. Thus his concept of religion ultimately paves the way for establishing Swaraj in India.

Check Your Progress:

1. Discuss critically Gandhi’s idea of Swaraj.
2. Define the concept of PoornaSwaraj advocated by Gandhi.
3. Gandhi’s concept of Swarajhas political significance only. (Write True or False).
4. Write a note on Gandhi’s view on Religion and Politics.

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2.5 Summing up:

After reading this unit we are now in a position to analyse Gandhi's view of Swaraj. We have learnt that he had conceptualised Swaraj from a different perspective from other leaders of India. Swaraj, for Gandhi is an all-inclusive concept which takes into account economic, social, moral and political dimensions. During freedom movement Gandhi was putting all efforts to break all the shackles that suppressed the larger section of Indian society. In fact, His swaraj has gone much beyond political interpretation. It has socio-economic implications as well. From this unit we have learnt that though Swaraj aims at establishing self-rule for all the classes of the society, its main emphasis was on to uplift the poorer and downtrodden sections of the society. As pointed out earlier Gandhi's concept of swaraj is a comprehensive one and encapsulates the individual human person and life in a holistic framework. It visualises the progressive liberation of all from all oppressive structures and therefore can be equated with salvation. Reading of this unit has also helped you to comprehend Gandhi's idea of religion and Politics. You have learnt that, Gandhi has put forward a revolutionary idea by establishing a close relationship between Religion and Politics. For him, spiritualisation of politics can bring welfare to the masses. It would help to establish a just society where rights of every individual would be ensured.

2.6 References and Suggested Readings :

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2. Chatterjee, P., Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1986.. K. Gandhi, Young India, June 28, 1928, p. 772.
3. Rajni Kothari, "Masses Classes and the state " in New Social Movements in the South Empowering the people, ed. Ponna Wignaraja, Visataar Publications, New Delhi, 1993.
4. Rudolph, L. and Rudolph, S., The Modernity of Tradition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967.

Links:

<https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/swaraj.htm>

https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/religion_polity.htm

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Unit 3:**Nehru : Socialism, Secularism**

Unit Structure :

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Objectives

3.3 Nehru as an Architect of Modern India

3.3.1 Nehru and the Non-Aligned Movement

3.3.2 Panchasheel

3.3.3 Mixed Economy

3.3.4 Nationalization of Industries

3.3.5 Nehru on Nationalism

3.3.6 Nehru on Internationalism

3.4 Nehru's Ideas on Socialism

3.5 Nehru on Secularism

3.6 Summing Up

3.7 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction:

Among the modern Indian political thinkers the name of Jawaharlal Nehru deserves special mention. Jawaharlal Nehru is regarded as the architect of modern India. He is a leading figure in Indian Independence Movement and is elected as the first Prime Minister of independent India. He is one of the founders of Non-Alignment Movement. He is also referred to as Pandit Nehru and among the children he is known as Chacha Nehru. Nehru, the creator of modern India is a renowned political thinker as well as a statesman. Jawaharlal Nehru is a revolutionary, internationalist, a democrat, a socialist, a pacifist and an individualist. He is a free thinker and emerges as a man of action who does not indulge in political speculation. He has certain basic conviction and ideology. Nehru believes in anti- fascist ideology and fights against totalitarianism. He believes in human values and the dignity of the individual including civil liberty. The influence of Gandhi can be traced in Nehru. This unit will make an attempt to deal with the ideas of Nehru. We shall discuss Nehru as the architect of modern India. His ideas on non-alignment, secularism, nationalization of industries, mixed economy, nationalism, internationalism etc. help him contributing towards building a modern India. He never tries to build up political theories but his political ideas can be found in his writings like Glimpses of World History, Discovery

of India, and An Autobiography. We shall also discuss his ideas on socialism and secularism.

3.2 Objectives:

The objective of this unit is to explain the main features of Nehru's views. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Examine Nehru as the architect of modern India
- Explain his ideas on socialism
- Analyze his ideas on secularism

Stop To Consider:

Life Sketch of Jawaharlal Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru is born in Allahabad on 14th November 1889 to a wealthy Indian barrister and politician Motilal Nehru. He is educated in Britain at the Independent Boy's School, Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge. During his time in Britain, he is known as Joe Nehru. Nehru becomes a leader of the left wing of the Indian National Congress and the Congress President under the mentorship of Mahatma Gandhi. He is a key player in the long struggle for Indian independence. He is eventually recognized as Gandhi's political heir. He is elected as the first Prime Minister of India in 1947. He remains in power till 1964. As one of the founders of the Non-Alignment Movement, he is an important figure in the international politics of the post-war era. He is also referred to as 'Pandit Nehru'. He died on 27th May 1964.

3.3 Nehru as an Architect of Modern India:

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the greatest figures of our generation, an outstanding statesman whose service to the cause of human freedom is unforgettable. Nehru can rightly be called the architect of modern India. He is of the firm opinion that without economic and social freedom, political freedom has little or no meaning. Constitution is relevant to him only as an instrument of social change. Nehru is very clear in his vision that modern India shall radiate scientific temper, which includes freedom from every form of fundamentalism and respect for universal values of human dignity. He carefully handles India's domestic situation in the years immediately after the independence. One of the major contributions of Nehru towards modern India is the making of Indian foreign policy. In fact, Nehru determines India's international profile to a great degree in the post-independence years. Nehru is regarded as the architect of modern India for shaping the nation-building

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process in India.

Let us now discuss some of the ideas put forwarded by Nehru which made him the architect of modern India.

3.3.1 Nehru and the Non-Aligned Movement

Nehru’s concept of non- aligned movement has earned him the reputation of the architect of modern India. Along with Tito, Nasser and Sukarno he has founded the non-aligned movement. During his time, the world is divided into two power blocs. The newly independent and non-colonized nations are pressurized from both the blocs to join them. But Nehru along with Tito, Nasser and Sukarno stay out of the power bloc politics. Nehru is in favour of an issue-based alliance. He does not favour alliances based on political and economic dogmas. The main principle of non-aligned movement is the preservation of India’s freedom of action internationally through refusal to align India with any bloc or alliance particularly those led by the United States or the Soviet Union. Nehru believes that the newly independent states in Asia and Africa have the rights not to join either the Soviet or the capitalist power blocs. Nehru does not consider the nonaligned policy to be neutral but he believes that it allows the nations to accept aid and maintain good relations with nations from both power blocs.

SAQ

Do you think the non – aligned movement has contributed to the world peace? Explain.

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3.3.2 Panchasheel:

Nehru’s concept of panchasheel is a contribution towards building modern India. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence or Panchsheel are a series of agreements between the People’s Republic of China and India. It is first put forth by India at the start of negotiations that takes place in Delhi from December 1953 to April 1954 between the Delegation of the PRC Government and the Delegation of the Indian Government on the relations between the two countries with respect to disputed territory. Later, the Five Principles are formally written into the preface to the “Agreement Between the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of India on Trade and Co-

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Operation” concluded between the two sides. Since June 1954, the Five Principles have been adopted in many other international documents. As norms of relations between nations, they have become widely recognized and accepted throughout the region. The main objective of panchasheel is to ensure that newly independent nations will not have the same aggressive relationship they once share with the colonizers. The five principles or the panchasheel are

- Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty
- Mutual non-aggression against anyone
- Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs
- Equality and mutual benefit
- Peaceful co-existence

You should learn here that Nehru had chosen this policy to reduce the world tension. This policy has its relevance amidst the nuclear weapon and military approach. Through panchasheel Nehru wanted to offer a solution to all the problems facing by the nations. He believed that as a member of the human fraternity, it is our duty to provide for a course of action which might lessen the troubles of the states by eliminating the sources of conflicts. It is worth mentioning here that Panchasheela is neither a mental approach nor a military approach. It is a peaceful approach and this approach is followed by political and economic policies. Nehru opines that it is not possible to establish democracy or socialism without advocating this policy of panchasheel or peaceful co- existence. In short, he constantly wanted to seek peaceful solutions for all the international problems.

3.3.3 Mixed Economy

Another notable contribution of Nehru towards building modern India is his concept of mixed economy. Though Nehru is a socialist he favours a type of socialism different from most of the socialist thinkers. Nehru reconciles his socialism with the concept of mixed economy. This implies combination of state or public enterprise in certain fields with private enterprise in other fields. In his socialism Nehru rejects the state owned concept of mixed economy. Nehru argues that India with her limited resources and underdeveloped economy cannot adopt the system of complete state controlled economy and also free enterprise method. Therefore, he favours the idea of mixed economy as the best method because this will lead to equitable distribution of wealth in the country and proper utilization of the wealth. Nehru favours state control of industries, which are concerned with

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defense production as well as the basic heavy industries. He is conscious of the fact that India, a state with a shattered economy and limited technical and financial resources is not in a position to take over the existing industrial concerns. He feels it desirable to permit the private enterprise to continue in the fields where it is operative and to utilize the resources of the state for the development of the state. However, Nehru is in favour of limiting the scope of private sector, though he fully realizes the important role the private sector can play in the development of the country's economy. He favours its continuance with governmental control and to work in co- operation with the public sector. The private sector must be guided by a social purpose and must subordinate its self- interest to common welfare. Thus the mixed economy gives the consideration in extension of public sector on social ends. The idea of mixed economy emphasized by Nehru is of a flexible nature and can adapt itself according to the changing conditions. Thus Nehru has to reconcile himself with the concept of mixed economy because of the economic conditions of the country, particularly India's underdeveloped economy. His main concern is the concept for India's economic development. Though various thinkers criticize the concept, Nehru has to compromise with the concept of mixed economy in the socialist pattern of society as it is not applicable in the Indian situation.

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SAQ

Describe the role of government in a mixed economy.

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3.3.4 Nationalization of Industries:

You have already learnt that Nehru advocated the system of mixed economy. In a mixed economy there is collaboration between capitalist and socialist vision. To ensure state control over key industries, Nehru advocates nationalization of industries. This concept also helps him in building modern India. To him, the most important objective is to increase production and nationalization is only a means to achieve that end. You must remember here that he does not wish to go for nationalization without considering its consequences. He does not regard socialism as synonymous with nationalism. He does not accept the idea that a general scheme of nationalization will bring greater equalization. He is in favour of the rapid industrialization of India so that she can be relieved of pressure on land, combat poverty and

raise her standards of living, her defence and variety of other purposes. Nehru advocated a socialist model for the economy of India i.e. no taxation for Indian farmers, minimum wage and benefits for blue-collar workers, and the nationalization of heavy industries such as steel, aviation, shipping, electricity and mining. An extensive network of public work and industrialization campaign result in the construction of major dams, irrigation canals, roads, and thermal and hydroelectric power stations. Nehru was an ardent believer in the process of industrialization. He opined that without the growth in industries, it is almost impossible to keep the pace of development. He also believed that economic development implies industrial development and not agricultural development. Nehru considered agriculture as a primitive and culturally inferior activity.

3.3.5 Nehru on Nationalism:

Nehru is a great nationalist though he does not provide any theory of nationalism. He believes in fundamental unity of India despite numerous diversities. He treats nationalism as a positive as well as negative force. The radical arrogant behaviour of the British ruler towards the Indians shapes his ideas on nationalism. He blames the British government for poverty and exploitation in India. Again, nationalism is a living force in the history of modern India. As the British keeps in their hands all the initiatives and controls the mechanism and they take all the decisions, he thinks that nationalism in India is very important for the people of India. Nehru opines that the feeling of nationalism will make the people realize that they belong to a nation called India and it will help in bringing national unity among the people of India. It is worth mentioning here that Nehru is cautious against any narrow mindedness in the name of nationalism. By now we have learnt that Nehru is not a narrow nationalist. Nehru is convinced that differences in language cannot stop the growth of nationalism in India. He does not believe in things like Hindu nationalism or Muslim nationalism. According to him, there is only Indian nationalism.

He cited the example of soviet union, where there were 182 nationalities. All the nationalities are allowed to maintain their cultural autonomy. Moreover, they were also allowed to impart education on their vernacular language. He believed that without a strong nationalism there cannot be any internationalism. The nationalism of Nehru was a composite living force. Hence it can make the strongest appeal to the spirit of man. The nationalism of Nehru denotes patriotism and independence of country.

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Stop To Consider :**Major Works of Nehru:**

The Discovery of India : This book is written by Jawaharlal Nehru during his imprisonment in 1942-1946 at Ahmednagar in the Ahmednagar Fort. He is imprisoned for taking part in the Quit India Movement along with other Indian leaders. He uses the time of his imprisonment to write down his thoughts on Indian history, philosophy and culture from the viewpoint of a liberal Indian fighting for the independence of his country. In this book Nehru argues that India is a historic nation with a right to sovereignty. He also examines the impact of various people starting from the arrival of the Aryans to the British government on Indian culture. In this book he also analyses the incorporation of various people and culture into Indian society. This book also analyses the philosophy of Indian life.

Glimpses of World History : Jawaharlal Nehru has written this book in the year 1934. It is the collection of 196 letters on world history written from various prisons in British India from 1930 to 1933. He has written these letters to his young daughter Indira to introduce her to world history. The first letter is the birthday gift to Indira from him. It is the only gift he can afford in jail. This book contains the history of humankind from 6000 BC to the time of writing of the book. It covers the rise and fall of great empires and civilizations from Greece and Rome to China and West Asia; great figures such as Ashoka and Genghis Khan, Gandhi and Lenin; topics like wars and revolutions, democracies and dictatorships. He does not like the way history is taught in school as it is confined to the history of a single country. He wants his young daughter to know what people do and why they do. He is well aware that it is possible only through knowing the history of the whole world. The New York Times describes it as one of the most remarkable books ever written.

An Autobiography or Towards Freedom (1936) : This book is an autobiographical book. He has written this book while staying in prison. He begins the book describing how his ancestors have to flee Kashmir and goes on to tell about his own life. His entire life history, from the time before his father is born seems to have led him naturally to where he is. As a child he seems quiet, observing, and thoughtful. As a grownup, he is still thoughtful. One sees his admiration for humble people and his aversion to any form of violence early in the book.

This section is designed to help you comprehend Nehru's works as well as aims to provide an insight into his socio-economic and political ideas.

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3.3.6 Nehru on Internationalism:

Nehru is also an internationalist. Though he is a great nationalist, he does not advocate an aggressive attitude towards internationalism. He is of the view that true nationalism does not conflict with internationalism. His nationalism is mixed with a strong internationalist outlook. He believes that the different nations of the world shall maintain a relation of peaceful co-existence and co-operation. But most importantly, Nehru does not want internationalism at the cost of nationalism.

He was in favour of world peace. While supporting internationalism, though he felt the presence of hostile and powerful forces, groups, nations with different vested interests still he wanted to focus on cooperation and peace. Nehru did not accept the contemporary theories of internationalism and propounded his own theory of internationalism. The main idea of nehruvian internationalism is the fusion of nationalism and internationalism. He supported the concept of one world. Another feature of nehruvian internationalism is the cooperation among the nations. Nehru purely believed that disturbances in one nation surely affect the other nations. Therefore, for the peaceful survival of the nations, the cooperation among the nations is important. At the same time he also emphasized that co-operation should be held on equality and mutual welfare only. His internationalism denounced the use of war as an instrument of foreign policy. Nehru opined that the very spirit of internationalism gets destructed by the negative and destructive elements contained in war.

Check Your Progress

1. Who were the founders of non-aligned movement?
2. Mention the five principles or panchasheel.
3. Nehru believed that general scheme of nationalization will bring greater equalization. (Write true or false).
4. Nehru opined that economic development implies industrial development and not agricultural development. (Write true or false).
5. Glimpses of World History was written in the year _____. (fill in the blank).
6. What was the main idea of the book The Discovery of India written by Jawaharlal Nehru?
7. Write a note on Nehru's idea on internationalism.

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3.4. Nehru's Ideas on Socialism

Nehru is born in an aristocratic family and possesses purely bourgeois outlook till 1920. Only in the summer of 1920, he is involved in a peasant movement in Oudh which provides a new turn to his thinking. During this peasant movement in Oudh Nehru stays with the peasants for three days. This period brings him in close contact with the peasants and provides him an opportunity to look at their miserable plight from close quarters. The impacts of this change in Nehru's ideologies greatly contributes to the development of his faith in socialism in the later stages. It ultimately leads Nehru to become a socialist. In 1929, after a visit to Russia, Nehru is greatly influenced by the socialist thought of Russia. He is firmly convinced that without social freedom and socialist pattern of society neither the state nor the country or the individual can develop much. Nehru is opposed to capitalism as it leads to exploitation of one man by another, one group by another, and one country by another. According to Nehru the only alternative is socialism. Socialism appeals to him as a philosophy of life. It is the only key to the solution of the world's problems in India. According to him, establishment of a classless society shall be our main aim. The development in USSR had promoted the socialist thinking in india. This thought has attracted specially the workers and youths of India. Nehru was converted to socialism by 1936. In 1951, though he did not clearly said that he would establish a socialist state, yet he showed his preference for one. In the year 1954, Nehru declared that India shall be a socialist pattern of society. Nehru's socialism mainly emphasized on removing inequality among the people. There are three main objectives of socialist pattern of society. These are as follows :- social ownership or control of the principal means of production, progressive speeding up of production and equal distribution of national wealth. To achieve these objectives of socialism Nehru proposed mixed economy. Ideologically, Nehru's socialism is given concrete form at the Avadi session of the congress in January 1955. The state will have to initiate large scale power and transport projects, it will have overall control of resources, maintain strategic controls, prevent the development of cartels and the like. Nehru is deeply moved by what he has seen in China. He is impressed by the energy and discipline of Chinese workers under the direction of an efficient centralized government, which gives China terrifying strength. He admires the effective use of China's huge labour force in large scale construction projects such as dams and hopes to emulate this in India. Nehru feels that the socialism is the only solution to India's problems as well as world problems. For him, socialism is

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more important than economic doctrine. He considers socialism necessary not only for India but for the entire world.

Nehru tries to evolve a socialist philosophy. In order to achieve a classless society, he emphasizes the need for total transformation of social life through democratic methods. He wants to bring socialism through gradual and non-violent methods. He also gives importance to economic planning but rejects the concept of state owned economy. You have already learnt that he advocates the concept of mixed economy in his socialism. He assures a place for the private sector in his socialism. His socialist society is not totalitarian in nature. He does not subordinate the individual to the state. He also gives place to rival industries and Khadi Udyog in his scheme of economic reconstruction. The socialism of Nehru is particularized by three distinguishing characteristics. He is a democratic socialist and his socialism is based on respect for individual worth and dignity. He also provides freedom of enterprise, conscience and mind and the possession of private property on a restricted scale. Nehru does not find any inherent contradictions between socialism and individualism. He gives more importance on production than on distribution. The removal of poverty and the establishment of equal opportunities are the main essence of socialism. Nehru wants to organise socialism in a way that it suits the condition of each country. He continuously tries to bring changes keeping in view the fabric of Indian society.

Nehru opines that socialist society and cooperative society are similar in kind. All of us know that in a cooperative society each individual gives his best as well as find full scope for his own development. Nehru said that we are accustomed to an acquisitive society. But the profit motive of this society should be ended as soon as possible. But this is not a very easy task. The vested interest in the acquisitive society will always act as a barrier. These interests are active during the freedom struggle also. This gives a false impression of democracy without active participation by the masses. But the changing model envisaged by Nehru will definitely benefit the masses. But it should be noted here that there is a large gap between his theory and practice. Yet we must not forget that he is the one who carries the socialist vision to millions and makes socialism a part of their consciousness.

Nehru opines that in Indian condition socialist transformation is a process and not an event. Socialism in India, according to him, is not a clearly predefined, pre-laid-out scheme. Socialism is a process which is expected to go on being defined, stage by stage, as the process advanced. Socialist

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transformation is viewed in terms of a series of reforms. Nehru describes these reforms as ‘surgical operations’. Therefore, socialist transformation, according to him, consists of a series of ‘surgical operations’ performed through the due process of law by a democratic legislature. Moreover, one aspect of Nehru’s approach to socialism deserves to be stressed. As an impact of Gandhi’s influence, he emphasises the importance of means with that of ends in building a socialist India. He believes that wrong means will not lead to right results. He condemns violence as a mean and emphasises using non-violent means. He is of the view that existing class struggle can be resolved through non- violent means and rule of law.

Stop To Consider

Nehru on Caste

Jawaharlal Nehru is a highly educated man. His western education acts as a catalyst to make him oppose the evils of all pervasive caste system. He undertakes corrective measures by changing existing Indian legal laws. He enacts legal procedures to make caste discrimination illegible and punishable by law. He also aspires for the equality of the Indian populace. He actively promotes and brings the system of reservation in the Indian job sector. A certain percentage of government jobs are reserved for persons born into Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This is done to ensure the participation of the less privileged Indian population to the mainstream.

Nehru is keen on retaining the Indian character of socialism. His approach to socialism is pragmatic and he opposes to define socialism in precise and rigid terms. The socialism of Nehru is not only based on his social ideal of human relations based on individual liberty but also on his concept of social justice. He believes that the problems of India’s mass poverty and economic stagnation can be solved only through the adoption of economic planning on socialist basis. He puts emphasis on planning, economic growth and socialist pattern. He is in favour of equality of opportunity for all individuals, minimization of inequalities of income and wealth and prevention of the concentration of economic power.

SAQ

Discuss the impact of socialism in India.

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3.5 Nehru on Secularism

Secularism is a distinct contribution of Nehru to Indian political thought. He is the chief architect of Indian secularism. Nehru defines secularism in dual sense. Firstly, by secularism he means keeping the state, politics and education separate from religion. He has no attraction for religion as the basis of social and political state. Religion, according to him is a private matter for the individual. India is a country of many religions. He feels that it must not be controlled by any particular religion. Secondly, he defines secularism in terms of showing equal respect for all faiths and providing equal opportunities for their followers. According to him, secularism means grant of equal status to all religion. He feels that through secularism all religion will be equal in order. He opposes the grant of any special privileges to any religion. He regards secularism as an essential condition for democracy. He lays his foundation of strong secular state. The secularism of Nehru implies the neutrality of the state in religious matters. According to him, secularism is a mental attitude on the part of various committees which can bring harmony and fraternity towards one another. His concept of secularism also implies the existence of a uniform civil code for the people of India. His commitment to secularism is unsurpassed and all-pervasive. He helps secularism acquire deep roots among the Indian people. He is of the view that secularism means giving full protection to the minorities and removing their fears. But at the same time he is opposed to minority communalism. He also argues most convincingly that secularism has to be the sole basis for national unity in a multi-religious society.

You should remember here that secularism is a reaction against the conflict between religion and politics in the medieval west. The secularism of Nehru was liberal. Again, nehru's secularism is not absolute in character. Nehru's secularism is dynamic and enlightened in character. In nehru's secularism, religion plays an important part in social welfare. In a secular state, all the religions are protected by the state, and it does not favour any religion. In a secular state, there is no state religion. Nehru treated religion as purely a personal matter. Religion was dissociated from the state. He also was in favour of giving full freedom to all the religions. He also opined that there should not be any discrimination on the ground of religion. The states are to follow a neutral policy regarding the matters of socialism.

Space for Learners

SAQ

Discuss the threats to Indian secularism.

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Check Your Progress

1. Nehru is opposed to capitalism as it leads to exploitation of one man by another, one group by another and one country by another. (write true or false)
2. Nehru was converted to socialism by the year _____. (fill in the blank)
3. In which year Nehru declared that India shall be a socialist pattern of society?
4. Nehru wanted to bring socialism through rapid and violent methods. (write true or false)
5. Mention the main features of Nehru’s socialism.
6. Write a note on Nehru’s views on caste.
7. Nehru opined that the problems of India’s mass poverty and economic stagnation can be solved only through the adoption of economic planning on socialist basis. (write true or false).
8. Discuss Nehru’s idea of secularism.

3.6 Summing Up

After analyzing the unit, you have learnt that Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the greatest political leaders of India as well as the socio economic reformer. He is rightly said to be the architect of modern India. He has proposed some ideas which earn him the reputation as the architect of modern India. These ideas include his views on non-alignment, panchasheel, nationalism, internationalism etc. He is said to be the founder of non-aligned movement. He opines that this non-align policy helps India in getting aids from the power blocs. He also put forward his ideas on mixed economy. He suggests the nationalization of big industries. We have also learnt that though he is born into an aristocratic family, he puts forward some socialist ideas. He wants to retain the Indian character of socialism. Nehru’s socialism is marked by two essences i.e. the removal of poverty and establishment of equal opportunity.

He believes in democratic means to bring about socialism in the country. He also adopts a secular outlook. He does not support religion as the basis of state. In the next unit we shall discuss the ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru on democracy.

3.7 References and Suggested Readings:

1. Agarwal, R.C. Constitutional Development and National Movement of India: Freedom Movement, Acts and Indian Constitution; S. Chand and Company Ltd. New Delhi, 2002.

Links :

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jawaharlal_Nehru http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Principles_of_Peaceful_Coexistence <http://www.amazon.com/Glimpses-World-History-Jawaharlal-Nehru/dp/0143031058> * * *
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Unit 4:**Nehru: Parliamentary Democracy**

Unit Structure :

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Objectives

4.3 Nehru's view on Democracy

4.4 Nehru's Ideas on State

4.5 Summing up

4.6 References and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction:

Nehru is considered as one of the modern thinkers and his thinking combines the ideas of East and West. His ideas were also influenced by Mahatma Gandhi. He was a statesman who seek welfare of the mankind. He was a strong believer of democracy.

Nehru has made a constant effort, since he had come to power, to seek peaceful solutions for international disputes. He was predisposed by nature, training and reflections to these courses, but regarded them also as being imposed upon him by the legacy of Gandhi. Nehru's idea of democracy was liberal but classical. In the previous unit we have already discussed some of the important ideas of Nehru. In this unit we shall discuss at length Nehru's idea on Democracy.

4.2 Objectives:

Nehru was a dynamic leader. He wanted India to keep her doors open to new ideas and new knowledge. Nehru's outlook was broad and he did not hold the idea that the end justifies the means. He believed in inclusiveness and therefore advocated democratic principles and ideas in a highly diverse country like India. After reading this unit you will be able to :

- Understand Nehru's views on democracy
- Examine Nehru's idea of state

4.3 Nehru's view on Democracy:

In the previous unit we have learnt about Nehru's idea of socialism. Here

we must mention that his idea of democracy has a close connection with his idea of socialism. For him, political democracy has to be fused with economic democracy. In his words, “political democracy by itself is not enough except that it may be used to obtain a gradually increasing measure of economic democracy, equality and the spread of good things of life to others and removal of gross inequalities.” He opposes the idea of the elite democratic school thinkers including Giovanni Sartori, Joseph Schumpeter who propose that in a democratic system the leaders have the singular aim to obtain the authority by securing votes by competitive means. According to Nehru, the aim of achieving power is to provide service for the people. Thus, he supports Gandhian views of ethical use of power.

Nehru is a democrat in the true sense of the term. As we all know democracy believes in the right of all and it counts the voice of all. Nehru was a firm believer of equality of all in all spheres of life and therefore to him, democracy is the best form of government. Many thinkers believe that Nehru is the main person behind India’s adoption of Constitutional democracy. He believed in Mill’s idea that democracy in practice does not mean the suppressing of the voice of the minority by a majority by its voice strength. Nehru believed that democracy would succeed in India and he was ready to resist the imposition of any other concept or practice here.

He considered democracy to be the best form of government as it required participation of all. Indian society which is diverse and heterogeneous only democracy can address to its problems. Moreover, it would reduce discrimination on the basis of race, caste, religion, gender, etc. Nehru advocated these ideas since the time of freedom movement. In the Objective Resolution of the Constituent Assembly, Nehru presented many ideas which were later incorporated in the Preamble as well as in different parts of the Indian Constitution. Some of those ideas expressed by Nehru were, the ideals of justice, social, economic and political, equality of status, of opportunity and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association etc. which provided the ground for the democratic practice in India.

Stop to Consider

Nehru as An Individualist :

Like a modern thinker the whole philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru revolves around the individual. He attaches great importance to the all round development of the individuals in the society. Nehru argues that without the satisfaction of essential economic needs individual

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development is not possible. He believes that the welfare of the individual can be properly realised only in a democracy. Democracy is a means to an end, the end being the good life of the individual. He considers the individual more important than the society. He insists that individual shall try to promote the larger interest of the community as a whole while developing himself. But he never believes in the sacrifice of the spirit of individual freedom at the altar of the state. He believes in various freedoms of man inside the state. His faith in individual freedom and civil liberty is fundamental.

He is ready to accept political democracy in the hope that it will lead to social democracy. He is clear in his mind that political democracy is only the way to the goal and not the final objective. We have already learnt that Nehru is a great individualist. He has great faith in individual and this has naturally led to his faith in democracy. He criticizes the authoritarian system as it hampers individual liberty and does not provide adequate opportunity to the individual for his development. He shows preference for the democracy which promotes human dignity. Nehru's concept of democracy is different from the western concept of democracy. His democracy does not imply a system in which certain freedoms are made available to the people.

To him, democracy is a way of life and a basis for social structure. According to Nehru, democracy is a mental approach applied to our political and economic problems. Nehru offers different interpretations of democracy at different times. Firstly, he defines democracy in terms of freedom. According to him, freedom is vital to the realization of human values. Nehru is of the view that if an individual is denied freedom it will automatically goes against democracy. Therefore, he favours grant of freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action to all. He also argues that individual freedom shall be balanced with social freedom. Again Nehru defines democracy in terms of certain governmental institutions and procedures. He lays emphasis on the principle of popular sovereignty, elections, adult franchise etc.

He realizes the importance of political parties and considers majority rule as an integral part of democracy. He also wants a constitutional guarantee for the protection of cultural and religious rights of the minorities. He feels that the government must use its power for the betterment of the people. Leadership constitutes a very important role in democracy. Nehru is of the view that without civil liberties there cannot be social progress. Nehru's democracy implies the existence of social and economic equality amongst

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the members of the society. He is of the opinion that true democracy can flourish only in an equal society. He argues that a system where the social and economic equalities are absent cannot be regarded as democracy. According to him, political democracy is the only means to attain the goal of an economic and social structure which can ensure freedom, equality and social justice to all.

Again Nehru visualizes democracy as a way of self-discipline and a scheme of values and moral standards. He defines democracy in terms of social self-discipline and tolerance. According to Nehru, democracy means a dynamic society giving full opportunities to the individuals for their development. Above all, to Nehru, democracy implies solution of all problems through peaceful methods like discussions, negotiations, conciliations and persuasion. Thus we can say that Nehru's democracy aims at the multifarious development of the individuals. However, he is well aware of the fact that democracy cannot work successfully and achieve its aims and ideals without the goodwill and the cooperation of the people. He accepts the truth that democracy cannot go against people.

According to him, democracy is the best form of government because it preserves the highest human values. To him, democracy in practice does not mean the stifling of the voice of minority by a majority through its sheer voting strength. According to him, democracy means tolerance not merely of those who agree with us, but of those who do not agree with us. He believes that the method of democracy is discussion, argument, persuasion and ultimate decision and acceptance of that decision may go against our grain. He does not object to demonstrations, but he has no liking for violence, resulting from them. In fact, parliamentary democracy demands many virtues. It demands, of course, ability and devotion to work. But it also demands co-operation, of self discipline, of restraint.

Nehru argues that in a democracy the party should be a mass party. It shall be constantly in touch with the people. Moreover, it shall reflect the aspirations of the masses and also struggle to end social and economic justice. Though there are some changes in the party system in India, but still it has not come up to the expectation of Nehru. But we can hope that the mass consciousness that is developing in India will help in achieving this goal. Nehru has fought three general elections on the basis of universal adult franchise and secret ballot and made elections the norm, not an exception. Nehru uses his popularity and personal power to reinforce the democratic

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process. He has promoted internal democracy and open debate within the Congress Party. He also helps to create an institutional structure which is democratic and in which power is diffused. He regular tour sharing his ideas with the people, trying to educate them in the ways of rational and democratic thinking. When he was asked what his legacy to India will be, he replies, “hopefully it is four hundred million people capable of governing themselves.” (Jawaharlal Nehru- A Biography by S Gopal, volume 3, London, 1984, p. 170).

Nehru is of the view that democracy will enable the people to mobilise themselves and to exert pressure from below to achieve social justice and equality. It will also help in reducing economic inequality. If the political party does not implement the popular mandate it will get swept away. He has placed emphasis on elections, besides community development projects, Panchayati raj, cooperatives and decentralisation of all kinds of power. Nehru feels that to ensure the unity of a diverse society like India’s, democracy is essential. He opines that no amount of force or coercion can hold India together. In ‘India today’ he opines in 1960, ‘any reversal of democratic methods might lead to disruption and violence.’

Nehru’s idea of democracy and humanism were shaped by both Indian and Western thinking. In his words, “For I do believe that ultimately it is the individual that counts.but the idea appeals to me without belief, the old Hindu idea that if there is any divine essence in the world every individual possessed a bit of it and he can develop it. Therefore, no individual is trivial. Every individual has an importance and he should be given full opportunities to develop material opportunities naturally, food, clothing, education, housing, health etc.” At the same time, he was very much influenced by western liberalism which expressed itself in his firm devotion to political democracy and individual freedom.

Nehru, as a staunch supporter of democracy, favoured parliamentary system, free elections, a free press, freedom of speech, of religion and assembly, political parties and constitutional safeguards for individual rights. For Nehru true essence of democracy is participation of all and decentralisation of power. He believes that democracy is very much rooted in Indian society as it practiced Panchayat system where in political matters everyone has a vote and in economic matters everyone has equal opportunities. Moreover, there was no distinction between man and woman. As the nation builder he advocated democracy to be practised in real sense in india , where the

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diversities and hierarchies can be minimised and equality could be established.

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SAQ

Do you think decentralization of power is the true essence of democracy?
Explain. (100 words)

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Check Your Progress

1. Nehru believed that individual development is possible only when economic needs are satisfied. (Write true or false)
2. Nehru was in favour of authoritarian system. (Write true or false)
3. According to Nehru, democracy is a ____ approach applied to our political and economic problems.
 - a. Mental
 - b. Physical
 - c. Moral
 - d. None of the above
4. Which among the following is a correct interpretation of democracy according to Nehru?
 - a. Freedom
 - b. Governmental institutions
 - c. Leadership
 - d. All of the above
5. Nehru was influenced by western liberalism. (Write true or false)
6. Which among the following is a method of democracy according to Nehru?
 - a. Discussion
 - b. Argument
 - c. Persuasion
 - d. All of the above
7. Who opined that any reversal of democratic methods might lead to disruption and violence?
8. Nehru was a supporter of Gandhian views of ethical use of power.

(Write true or false)

9. Which among the following statement is not correct?
- a. Nehru considered democracy as the best form of government.
 - b. Nehru believes in the sacrifice of the spirit of individual freedom at the alter of the state.
 - c. Nehru accepted political democracy in the hope that it will lead to social democracy.
 - d. Nehru opined that democracy is a way of life and a basis for social structure.
10. Nehru's democracy aimed at the multifarious development of the individuals. (Write true or false)

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4.4 Nehru's Ideas on State:

According to Nehru, the state is not an end in itself but only a means to an end, and that end is to serve man. Political liberty is intended to give economic and social freedom to individuals. Nehru condemns the Machiavellian concept of state governing the people and keeping them down. According to him, the duty of the state is to protect the individual from foreign attack and internal disorder. It is to provide the citizens with opportunity of progress, education, health for the development of man. Consequently, for Nehru some kind of coercion is inevitable. It is not possible to reject violence altogether. However, violence must be used with reason. Nehru has faith in good government and preferred local self-government. He believes in welfare state and self-government at village level.

SAQ

Do you think coercion is an inevitable part of a democracy? Illustrate.

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Nehru imagined a welfare state with the consent and confidence of the people in a democratic socialist political economy of planning and decentralization. He wanted his states to deliver both productive and protective functions. And to achieve this he tried building a strong centralized bureaucracy with the Weberian unity of command. Nehru was in favour of a set of fixed and firm principles for smooth running of the state. He wanted his state to be a classless society. He also was in favour of equal economic justice and

opportunity for all. He also believed that for a higher material and cultural level of mankind the state should be organized on planned basis.

Stop To Consider:

Nehru on Education:

Jawaharlal Nehru is well aware of the need of proper intellectual development of the Indian populace. He understands the importance of proper and healthy intellectual development to run the Indian states. He tries to imply the winning combination of western scientific prowess and Indian civilization wisdom. Nehru is well aware that Indian republic can re-establish its existence in the world scenario only through the intellectual power of its citizens. He emphasises on the teaching of science and its application in practical field. The teaching of vocational science attracts him. The Indian Institute of Technology or IITS are established during his Prime Ministership. The Indian Institutes of Technology are now regarded as the premier scientific institutes of higher technological learning throughout the world. All India Institute of Medical Sciences and the Indian Institutes of Management are also established during his time. Nehru also initiates the construction and functioning of a number of schools to educate the rural populace. Primary education is provided free of cost. The trump card of Nehru is the scheme of providing free meals to the students of government schools. He understands the importance of food to attract students. Majority of rural population survives on one meal a day. The food acts as a magnet for the impoverished hungry child. The family of the prospective student is also happy with the subsequent tangible cost savings. Jawaharlal Nehru also establishes vocational schools for adults. Adult education centers are created both in rural and urban areas. Higher technical schools are also established.

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4.5 Summing Up:

Nehru conceptualized democracy in the Western liberal framework where the elections were to be held after a regular interval. This unit has discussed Nehru's view of democracy at length. After reading this unit you have learnt that Nehru is a democrat in the true sense of the term. He offers different interpretations of democracy at different times. He defines democracy in terms of freedom, leadership and also in terms of certain governmental institutions and procedures. You have also learnt that he emphasises the need of co-operation of people for the successful working of

democracy. Thus, we see Nehru put utmost emphasis on the opinion of every individual constituting the society. Again, Nehru had special likings for the children and he considered them the future of the society. As they grow up they would be the citizens of the country whose opinion and participation in the political process can change the course of a nation. For establishing a healthy democracy also, the children of today might have a strong role to play in the future. From this point of view, one can come to the conclusion that Nehru was in favour of a participatory form of democracy.

Stop To Consider:

Nehru on Women:

Jawaharlal Nehru is said to be one of the greatest advocates of the rights of women in India. He plays a significant role in improving the socio-economic condition of the women. He makes every effort to raise their status socially, economically, politically and educationally to make them at par with men. He believes that a country is judged by the condition of women. Nehru forces the women of India to come out of their seclusion. He turns the 'dolls' into valiant soldiers to fight the battle for freedom. In the Karachi Congress, Nehru introduces the concept of 'equal obligations' along with 'equal rights'. He tries to remove the 'sex disabilities'. He introduces the local programmes of self-defence and self-sufficiency to help the women to take part in the national movement. With the dawn of independence, the upliftment of women becomes the special responsibility of the government. Jawaharlal Nehru enacts laws to guarantee practical universal suffrage to the women population of the country. These laws aim to secure the social freedoms of Indian women. Under the Prime-Ministership of Nehru, female legal rights are increased. The greatest achievements of Nehru are the female education and passing of Hindu Code Bill.

Check your progress

1. Which among the following is wrongly stated?
 - a. According to Nehru, state is an end in itself.
 - b. Nehru condemns the Machiavellian concept of state governing the people and keeping them down.
 - c. Nehru opined that the duty of the state is to protect the individual from foreign attack and internal disorder.
 - d. None of the above

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2. Nehru believed in welfare state and self government at village level. (Write true or false)
3. Which among the following is wrongly stated?
 - a. Nehru wanted his states to deliever both productive and protective functions.
 - b. Nehru was in favour of a strong centralized beuaracracy.
 - c. Nehru wanted class division in his society.
 - d. Nehru opined that for a higher material and cultural level of mankind the state should be organized on planned basis.
4. Write a note on Nehru's views on education.
5. The teaching of vocational science attracts Nehru. (Write true or false)
6. In the Karachi Congress, Nehru introduced the concept of equal obligations along with equal _____. (Fill in the blanks)
7. What is Hindu Code Bill?

Space for Learners

4.6 References and Suggested Readings:

1. Agarwal, R.C. Constitutional Development and National Movement of India: Freedom Movement, Acts and Indian Constitution; S. Chand and Company Ltd. New Delhi, 2002.
2. Srivastava, V. K, Nehru's Views about Democracy, Mainstream, Vol LIV No 47, Delhi , November 12, 2016

Links :

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jawaharlal_Nehru http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Principles_of_Peaceful_Coexistence <http://www.amazon.com/Glimpses-World-History-Jawaharlal-Nehru/dp/0143031058>
<http://www.isca.in/IJSS/Archive/v6/i8/5.ISCA-IRJSS-2017-077.pdf>
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305618490_Nehru_and_the_Welfare_State_Examining_the_idea_of_Welfare_State_in_the_Nehruvian_context
<https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/22519/1/Unit-11.pdf>

Unit 5 :**B.R.Ambedkar: Caste and Untouchability, Constitutional Democracy, Social Justice**

Unit Structure :

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Ambedkar as a Critic of Hindu Society
- 5.4 Ambedkar's Views on Caste System
- 5.5 Ambedkar's Views on Untouchability
- 5.6 Ambedkar's Movement against Caste System and Untouchability (Hindu Social Order)
- 5.7 Comparison between Gandhi and Ambedkar
- 5.8 Ambedkar's Views on Education
- 5.9 Ambedkar's View on Language Policy
- 5.10 Ambedkar's View on Democracy
- 5.11 Summing Up
- 5.12 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction:

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar also known as Babasaheb held a prominent position among the twentieth century leaders of India. Ambedkar took upon himself the task of fighting for religious, social and economic equality in the Indian society. He was widely read in history, culture and religion. He realized that distortion of religion and misinterpretation of history and culture does more harm to Indian social life than foreign invasions and dominations. In this unit we shall discuss Ambedkar as a critic of the Hindu society. We shall also deal with his criticism of the Varna system, Caste system, and Untouchability. Our attempt here is to offer you a comparative study of the views of Gandhi and Ambedkar. Our discussion shall also include Ambedkar's efforts for removal of Untouchability and the restrictions of caste system. Moreover, this unit also attempts to deal with Ambedkar's views on education, language policy and democracy.

5.2 Objectives:

Ambedkar is known as a jurist, a political leader, philosopher, anthropologist,

historian, Buddhist activist and a revolutionary thinker. As a reformer and critic of Indian Hindu society, Ambedkar has made efforts to establish social justice and worked for the liberation of the untouchables. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Analyse Ambedkar as a critic of the Hindu society and the Caste system
- Discuss Ambedkar's criticism of Untouchability
- Explain Ambedkar's views on Education and Language policy
- Attempt a comparative study of Gandhi and Ambedkar
- Analyse Ambedkar's efforts for removal of Untouchability and restrictions of caste system
- Elaborate Ambedkar's views on Democracy and Parliamentary Democracy

5.3 Ambedkar as a Critic of Hindu Society:

In this section we shall discuss Ambedkar as a critic of the Hindu society which suffers from number of inherent contradictions and is steeped in various social evils during the time of Ambedkar. It is known to us that the Hindu culture is based on the high ideals of non- violence, tolerance, love and humanitarian services but there are several problems within the Hindu society. B.R. Ambedkar studies the Hindu social system objectively and dispassionately. The ideals of freedom, equality and justice cannot be realized in practical social life. According to Ambedkar, the gap between theoretical ideals and practical life existing in Hindu society is the main cause of its weakness and consequent subjugation for centuries. The Hindus never resemble a society which is an organized system of individuals with a purpose. Ambedkar criticizes the Hindu society on the following grounds:

- **Caste system:** A society is composed of social, economic and intellectual classes. An individual in a society is always a member of a class. The most unfortunate characteristic of the Hindu society is that classes develop into a caste. Ambedkar has realized that social stratification of occupations by caste system is basically a pernicious development. In Hindu society, social rules subordinate natural powers and inclinations of individuals.
- **Denial of equality:** Ambedkar is of firm belief that the Hindu social order does not recognize the principle of equality. It is given to believe that men differ from birth. Thus, Hindu social order is based on graded inequality and the principle of fixity of occupation, regardless of a person's ability and quality. Hindu social order denies individual freedom. By

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denying the right of education, resentment and use of arms, the social and economic status of lower castes is fixed. He further states that class consciousness and class conflict has been the basis in Hindu society. Rigid rules of marriage, eating and social customs prohibit Hindus to grow as a harmonious community. The religion of Hindus prohibits them to lead a free social life based on social interchange. The Hindu social life is based on Varna (class) system that recognizes four varnas and later the class of untouchables is added to them. Though Hinduism is a liberal religion, yet it gives sanction to complete segregation of a class known as untouchables. Therefore, Ambedkar is of the view that it amounts to the fact that untouchables are not human beings and not fit for social association.

- **Against Chaturvarnas:** According to Ambedkar, with the growth of caste system, Hinduism ceases to be a missionary religion. The varna system becomes more and more rigid and hierarchical. Ambedkar opines, “there cannot be more degrading system of social organisation than chaturvarna. It is a system which deadens, paralyses and cripples people from helpful activity”. Thus, Ambedkar opines that Hinduism is based on the principle of graded inequality.
- **Atrocities against untouchables:** Ambedkar has said, “Hindu law declared that the untouchable was not a person, Hinduism refused to regard him as a human being fit for comradeship”. The people belonging to untouchable category cannot be touched by touchables, an untouchable patient cannot be treated by the doctors of higher caste. There are various other restrictions on untouchables. To elaborate, they are not allowed to enter into temples and fetch water from common well. The society imposes various restrictions even on their eating and wearing of clean clothes. To summarize Ambedkar’s views on Hindu society, we can say that the Hindu society is based on inequality which has denied social justice to a large section of population. Consequently, such principles deprive a large number of population belonging to the untouchable category and lower caste from the measure of equal privileges.

Stop To Consider:

Life Sketch of Ambedkar:

B.R Ambedkar also known as Babasaheb was born on 14th April, 1891 in a Mahar community, an untouchable caste of Maharashtra. He was the last child of his parents Ramji and Bhimabai. His father and grandfather served in the army. But the stigma attached to the members of Mahar community continued to influence their position in the caste-ridden

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society of Maharashtra. The Mahars were treated as untouchables by the Hindus. Being a member of the Mahar community, B.R Ambedkar had a bitter taste of discriminatory treatment early in life. During his early school career he got to know that being born in a particular community could make all the difference in one's status in society. He and his brother had to carry bags from their home to sit in the class. They were denied facilities of drinking water, games and mixing up with other children. Even teachers would not check their notebooks for fear of pollution. Thus, the seeds of discontentment about Hindu social system were sowed in the life of Ambedkar. Ambedkar started his education first at Satara. He passed his B.A from the prestigious Elphinstone College, Bombay with distinction. The assistance and encouragement from the Maharaja of Baroda in the form of scholarship played a great role in Ambedkar's life. Again with the scholarship of Maharaja of Baroda he passed M.A and finished his PhD from Columbia University, U.S.A. In 1917, Ambedkar joined the Baroda State Service but did not get respectable treatment because he belonged to the untouchable community. He left Baroda for Bombay where he first started business and then joined as a professor of Political Economy in Sydenham College, Bombay. He earned good reputation as a teacher, however very often he felt insulted as he was ill treated by his colleagues from high caste in the college. Thus he resigned from his job and resumed his studies in Law and Economics in London. He died on 6 December 1956. The Major works of Ambedkar are as follows: Problem of Rupees Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, Castes in India ,Small Holdings and their Remedies.

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SAQ

Elaborate Ambedkar's views on Chaturvarnas and Untouchability. (80 words)

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5.4 Ambedkar's Views on Caste System :

As a member of a lower caste or untouchable family, Ambedkar has personally experienced discriminatory treatment from upper caste. Thus, the seeds of discontentment about the Hindu social order and the caste system are sown very early in the life of Ambedkar. He observes that the

caste system stands as a major obstacle against an egalitarian society. Ambedkar studies the Hindu Social System objectively and opines that Hindus never appear as a society; they are always a system of castes. He states that “Hindu society as such does not exist. It is a collection of castes, each caste is conscious of its existence. It is not even a federation.” Thus, according to him, the Hindu social system suffers from inherent contradictions due to the caste system. Caste system provides for social stratification. We all know that the division of people into classes is very common in all societies of the world. Ambedkar also believes that society is always composed of classes. An individual in a society is always a member of a class. This is a universal fact and early Hindu Society is no exception to this rule. In the Hindu society, the chaturvana (four caste system) system becomes the base of caste system. According to Ambedkar, this system has ruined the Hindus in general and the Untouchables in particular. The origin of this system is traced back to the PurushaSukta of the Rigveda, the arch text of Hindus. Ambedkar treats the chaturvarna system as a social idea that is invested by Manu with a degree of divinity and in fallibility. The caste system as depicted in the Hindu religious texts, does not only divide the social order into four unequal, hierarchically organized and ritually graded occupational groups, but also makes these divisions permanent and immutable. Ambedkar also believes that in the beginning there is only one caste but later on classes become caste through initiation and excommunication. Ambedkar realizes that social stratification of occupations brought by caste system is a pernicious development of Hindu society. Ambedkar has bitterly criticized the caste system of the Hindus. Let us now discuss the grounds on which the caste system is criticized by Ambedkar:

- The caste system is based on four varnas that have resulted in inequality and disunity among the Hindus.
- Caste system has given rise to Untouchability and the untouchables have to face various humiliations and oppressions from the high caste Hindus.
- Caste system has made the Hindu society weak compared to other religions or societies.
- Caste system, rigid rules of marriage, eating and social customs have prohibited the Hindus to develop into a homogeneous community.
- As a result of Caste system, Hindu religion has ceased to be a missionary religion.
- Caste system is used as a weapon by the orthodox Hindus to persecute the reformers of the society.

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- Caste system paralyses and cripples the people from cooperative and helpful activities.
- Caste system has created divisions among the Hindu society as it is based on the principle of graded inequality.
- Due to the caste system, it is impossible to establish a just social order in the Hindu community.
- The caste system is the main cause of the weakness and subjugation of the Hindu society for centuries. Hence, it is evident from the above discussion that Ambedkar believes that Hindu social society is not based on the principle of equality and fraternity. It is based on graded inequality as it is based on the principle of fixity of occupation regardless of a person's ability to perform other occupation. Ambedkar suggests that the internal contradictions within the Hindu society can be solved only by annihilating the caste system of the Hindus. Throughout his life Ambedkar wages a relentless struggle against the caste system and untouchability of the Hindu society to build a new social order based on freedom, equality and justice in social, religious and political life of the people.

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SAQ

Do you think Ambedkar's criticism of caste system can be justified?
Give reasons in support of your argument (20+80 words)

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Check Your Progress

1. Fill in the blanks

- a) According to Ambedkar caste is.....
- b) Chaturvarna system divides the Hindu social order into..... unequal, hierarchically organized groups.

2. State the reasons behind Ambedkar's view of Hindu society as based on graded inequality. 3. Why is it impossible to establish a just social order among the Hindu community?

5.5 Ambedkar's Views on Untouchability:

The above section has made us familiar with Ambedkar's criticism on the caste system. The caste system of Hindu social order is closely linked with

the system of untouchability which is regarded as one of the worst social evils of the Hindu society. In this section we shall discuss Ambedkar's view on Untouchability. It is already clear to us that the Hindu social order is based on fourvarnas or classes – Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. In the Hindu society, each class develops into a caste and every individual is entitled to the rights and privileges attached to the class he belongs. Ambedkar analyzes that after sometime, a fourth class develops in Hinduism i.e., the Untouchables. Hinduism sanctions the complete segregation of the Untouchable class. They are shunned by Hindus as they are considered to be impure and polluted. The Untouchables are not treated as human beings and are not regarded fit for social association. A permanent division is created between the so-called Touchables and Untouchables. The higher castes in Hindu society enjoy all the rights and privileges and in the name of code of conduct they have the freedom to ill-treat a section of the society i.e. Untouchables. The untouchables are given a condition of life in which their thinking habits and general conduct cannot be improved. The upper castes forfeit their civic life and the untouchables are forced to live a suppressed life. They are declared unfit for social association and denied all social rights. The society imposes restrictions on the eating and wearing of clean clothes on the untouchables. They are not allowed to use the village wells, go to the schools and enter the temples. Outcaste patients are not treated by the doctors from the higher caste. Religious segregation of a particular class has forced millions of untouchables to convert to Islam and Christianity to free themselves from the shackles of humiliation and oppression.

Stop To Consider:

Ambedkar and The Partition of India :Between 1941 and 1945, Ambedkar published a number of books and pamphlets, including Thoughts on Pakistan, in which he criticizes the Muslim League's demand for a separate Muslim state of Pakistan but considered its concession if Muslims demanded so as expedient. In the book entitled Thoughts on Pakistan, Ambedkar writes a sub-chapter titled 'If Muslims truly and deeply desire Pakistan, their choice ought to be accepted'. He writes that if the Muslims are bent on Pakistan, then it must be conceded to them. He asks whether Muslims in the army can be trusted to defend India. To answer the question-In the event of Muslims invasion of India or in the case of a Muslim rebellion, with whom will the Indian Muslims in the army side? he concludes that, in the interests of the safety of India, Pakistan should be acceded to in keeping with the demand of the Muslims. According to Ambedkar, the Hindu assumption that though

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Hindus and Muslims are two nations, they can live together under one state, is nothing but an empty sermon, a mad project, to which no sane man will ever agree.

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5.6 Ambedkar's Movement against Casteism and Untouchability (Hindu Social Order) :

After discussing Ambedkar's criticism of the Hindu society, the caste system and Untouchability, now we will discuss Ambedkar's efforts for removal of casteism and Untouchability in this section. He is of the view that there is Untouchability because there is caste system. Thus he launches a powerful movement for the restoration of civic rights to the untouchables and giving them equal rights at par with other castes. The movement for the rights of the untouchables and for the eradication of caste system is started in two phases----

- Firstly- In the form of petition and protest.
- Secondly- In the form of direct action to use wells, schools, buses and railways etc.

Ambedkar's movement against Casteism and Untouchability can be described as humanitarian struggle. Ambedkar believes that caste system and untouchability are parts of social system based on some principles. Without destroying the caste system, untouchability cannot be reviewed. Thus Ambedkar stresses the necessity of eradicating the ideas of highness and lowness on the basis of caste. He asks his followers to fight against the isolation of civil life without fear. The leaders of Satyasodhak movement of Maharashtra have given Ambedkar full support in his struggle for the rights of the depressed classes. Through Satyagraha, he has led his followers to assert their rights over common drinking water and right to worship in temples. The demands for safeguarding the interest of the untouchables inform Ambedkar's career. In 1919, when Montague Reforms are being formulated, Ambedkar demands separate electorates and reservation of seats for depressed classes in proportion to their population. In the first conference of Untouchables, in March 1927, at Bombay, Ambedkar has called upon the Untouchables to fight for their rights, give up dirty habits and rise to manhood. During that time, the Satyashodhak Movement is taking place in Maharashtra and the leaders offers full support to Ambedkar in his struggle for the rights of the depressed class.

Ambedkar becomes the first President of The All India Depressed Classes Association on August 1930, where he demands the safeguard of depressed and down-trodden untouchables in the constitution and pleads for their representation in official committees. As a member of the State Committee appointed by the Bombay Government in 1930 to find out educational, social and economic condition of the depressed classes, Ambedkar recommends scholarship for students of depressed classes, their recruitment in police and army as well as their greater involvement in social and cultural activities. Political activities are prominent part of Ambedkar's movement against Casteism and Untouchability. He is not impressed by Gandhiji's word Harijan as a replacement for untouchables. His views with suspicion the formation of the HarijanSevak Sangha by Gandhiji for removal of untouchability as it is entirely managed by caste Hindus and the Sangha works as an organ of the Congress party. Ambedkar maintains that its aim is to secure support of the depressed classes. Thus Ambedkar forms the SamataSainik Dal for the upliftment of the Untouchables and asked the Untouchables to adopt Buddhism to free themselves from the shackles of discrimination followed in Hinduism. Ambedkar feels that concerted action to secure political and economic rights for people ignored for centuries is necessary to give them a better future. He attacks the British Government for not initiating constitutional measures to improve the lot of Untouchables. In political front Ambedkar demands a separate electorate and reservation of seats for the depressed classes in proportion to their population. He has succeeded in securing separate electorate for the depressed classes through the Communal Award in 1932. However, Gandhiji's protest and fast unto death made Ambedkar sign the Poona Pact in 1932 on behalf of the depressed classes and accept a joint electorate with the Hindus ensuring seats for the depressed classes. The pact is later embodied in the Government of India Act 1935. In 1942, Dr Ambedkar was included in the Executive Council of the Viceroy and as a labour member he works hard to give workers their due rights and to provide social security to the labour class. In securing reservation of seats for members of the depressed classes, Ambedkar makes use of his position in raising the standard of life of the labourers. He worked hard for establishing better relations between labour and management and thus ensuring industrial peace through suitable law. He asserts that the problems of the Untouchables cannot be solved unless radical changes are introduced in the social system and unless the caste system is annihilated. Ambedkar pleads for making the public services more responsive to the needs of the Untouchables and insists on recruitment of more members of the Untouchable community in the higher posts. Through his writings and speeches, he makes the people conscious of the political, economic and

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social problems of the Untouchables and focuses the need of paying special attention to the amelioration of the condition of the Untouchables. Influenced by the ideas of Ambedkar, the new constitution of independent India, not only assures equality, reservation of seats and special privileges for the depressed classes but also takes definite steps to abolish untouchability and make its practice in any form an offence punishable under law.

SAQ

Elaborate the humanitarian struggle and political activities of Ambedkar aimed to safeguard the depressed classes. (80 words)

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5.7 Comparison between Gandhi and Ambedkar:

After discussing Ambedkar’s ideas, we can easily make out that Ambedkar differs from Gandhi in various matters. Gandhi and Ambedkar are the two prominent personalities of India who devote their life for the upliftment of the depressed classes and eradication of Untouchability. They are the symbol of revolt against caste-conscious oppression within the Hindu society. Gandhi and Ambedkar live for service and not for glory and in this section we will attempt a comparative study of Gandhi and Ambedkar. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar share the similar interest of uplifting the untouchables from the shackles of oppression and domination. Gandhi and Ambedkar want to eradicate untouchability and thereby uniting all castes into one oceanic unity. Both the personalities are able to command respectful obedience from millions of people. They are able to reach tremendous height in Indian politics and Indian society. They want to remove the economic disparity that exists in the society as both firmly believe that unless the economic disparity is removed, there can be neither social justice nor the downtrodden will rise in life.

After the Poona Pact, Gandhi and Ambedkar have intensified their efforts to eradicate untouchability. Gandhi has softened people’s heart and Ambedkar awakened self-respect and interest in politics among the untouchables. Gandhiji’s work, in fact complements Ambedkar’s work and vice-versa. Thus both Gandhi and Ambedkar can be rightly regarded as saviours for untouchables as they share similar interests. Though we have found that both Gandhi and Ambedkar share similar interests in

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terms of improving the fate of the untouchables, their approaches for the removal of untouchability are dramatically different. They have chosen different paths, strategies and ideologies.

Now let us discuss the grounds of their difference-----

A. Views on Untouchability : Gandhi feels that he is the natural guardian of untouchables while Ambedkar opines that he is the natural leader of the untouchables. Gandhi firmly believes that Untouchability can be removed by change of hearts in the Hindus initiated by moral pressure but Ambedkar believes that Untouchability can be removed by giving them safeguards and political and legal rights.

B. Views On Caste System : Mahatma Gandhi's views on caste system are quite different from those of Ambedkar. Interpreting Hinduism Gandhiji said that, "Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin we do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful to both spiritual and national growth.....". Ambedkar totally disagrees with Gandhiji's view. According to Ambedkar in Hindu society, class (varnas) develops into castes and the caste system develops various sub-castes. But according to Gandhi, caste system has nothing to do with religious and Varna system. It is harmful for both spiritual & national growths. But according to Ambedkar caste system has completely ruined the Hindu society. Gandhi represents the masses of India, Ambedkar represents the depressed classes of India. Gandhi wants to reform, end injustice without abolishing caste system. But, Ambedkar demands rebellion for the annihilation of the caste system itself. Gandhi wants to eradicate shudrahood & untouchability and not the caste system as a whole. Efforts of Gandhi and Ambedkar for upliftment of Untouchables. In 1932, under the patronage of Gandhi, The All India Anti- Untouchability League was formed, which is later named as "HarijanSevak Sangha". But Ambedkar is not impressed by this movement as it excluded the leaders of the depressed classes as the members of the governing body and did not concentrate on the economic, social and educational development of the depressed classes. Ambedkar thus forms SamataSainik Dal (Social Equality Army) for the upliftment of the depressed classes. SamataSainik Dal emphasizes the development

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of the depressed classes by granting scholarship for the students of depressed classes and reservation system for their upliftment in every stage of their life.

C. Views on Separate Electorate : Ambedkar also differs from Gandhi on the question of separate electorate and reservation of seats for the depressed classes. He opines that there is no link between the Hindus and the depressed classes. Each has distinct and separate identity. He thus achieves separate electorate for the untouchables through the Communal Award in 1932. But Gandhi believes that untouchability is a stigma of the Hindu society as whole and it must be eradicated. Separate Electorate will make it a permanent feature giving rise to serious problem of human relationship. His decision to fast till death leads to the signing of Poona Pact between Gandhi and Ambedkar. But Ambedkar feels that Poona Pact is against the interest of the depressed classes.

D. Views on Varna System : Ambedkar is full of criticism for the Hindu society as a whole and wants to eradicate the varna system and he does not favour Gandhi calling the untouchables as Harijans. But Gandhiji is not against the varna system. He opines that varna system has nothing to do with caste. In fact he wants to revert the original varna system. He said that the law of varna teaches us that each one of us can earn our bread by following our ancestral calling. He only wants to abolish untouchability but not at the cost of offending the castes Hindus.

On the otherhand Ambedkar believes that varna system has given rise to caste system and the reorganization of Hindus on the basis of varna system can prove harmful as it will have degrading effect on the mass by denying them opportunity to acquire knowledge. Religious sanction behind the caste and the varna system must be destroyed. Thus we have seen that both Ambedkar and Gandhi criticize each other but at the same time each is conscious of others necessary place in any final solution of the problems of the untouchables. Though their paths are different their ultimate aim is quite similar. Because of the efforts of Ambedkar and Gandhi, the constitution of independent India not only abolishes Untouchability but also makes its practice in form punishable by law.

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SAQ

Analyse how Ambedkar differs from Gandhi. (80 words)

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Check Your Progress:

1. Fill in the Blanks:

- a) The fourth class that develops in the Hindu society is
 - b) The first president of All India Depressed Classes Association is.....
 - c) The Poona Pact was signed in..... between.....
2. Write a brief note on Ambedkar’s movement against Untouchability.
3. What is Ambedkar’s view on separate electorate?

5.8 Ambedkar Views on Education:

Like any social reformer Dr. Ambedkar believes that for the reconstruction of society on the principles of equality and justice education is the necessary precondition. Now Let us study Ambedkar’s ideas on Education. He studies the development of education in Indian society and finds that right to education is restricted to higher castes during the rule of Peshwas in Maharashtra and even during the earlier period of British Raj. Ambedkar takes upon himself to fight for the education of masses without discrimination of caste and sex. Ambedkar’s attempt for spreading education can be highlighted as follows

- As a nominative member of Bombay Legislative Council in February, 1927 Ambedkar takes active part and pleads for greater attention toward education.
- Ambedkar has founded the people’s Education Society, and starts colleges at Bombay and Aurangabad.
- He pleads with the government that providing equal education opportunities to all without discrimination is the responsibility of the government.
- He pleads that boys and girls should get different education suited to their temperament.
- Taking active part in the discussion on Bombay University Act and

Primary Education Amendment bill, he contributes his views in the reform of education.

- Ambedkar stresses on the need to cut the cost of education in all possible ways and greater possible extent so that it can reach everyone. Therefore, Ambedkar is of the view that education is something to be brought within the reach of everyone and should be made cheap in all possible ways.

Stop To Consider:

Ambedkar and the Drafting Committee : Ambedkar as an Architect of India's Constitution With India's independence on August 15, 1947, the new Congress-led government invited Ambedkar to serve as the nation's first law minister. On August 29 of 1947, Ambedkar was appointed Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee, charged by the Assembly to write free India's new Constitution. Ambedkar won great praise from his colleagues and contemporary observers for his drafting work. In this task Ambedkar's study of sangha practice among early Buddhists and his extensive reading in Buddhist scriptures were to come to his aid. Sangha practice incorporated voting by ballot, rules of debate and precedence and the use of agendas, committees and proposals to conduct business. Sangha practice itself was modelled on the oligarchic system of governance followed by tribal republics of ancient India such as the Shakyas and the Lichchavis. Thus, although Ambedkar used Western models to give his Constitution shape, its spirit was Indian and, indeed, tribal. The draft prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and also won the Assembly's support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, a system akin to affirmative action. India's lawmakers hoped to eradicate the socio-economic inequalities and lack of opportunities for India's depressed classes through this measure, which had been originally envisioned as temporary on a need basis. The Constitution was adopted on November 26, 1949 by the Constituent Assembly.

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5.9 Ambedkar View on Language Policy:

We all know that India is a multilingual country. Ambedkar clearly

understands that India being a multilingual country has the possibility of problem for the unity of the country on account of regional pressures and pulls. When the idea of linguistic states is taken he favours it for two reasons. Firstly, he thinks that it will facilitate functioning of democracy in the country. Secondly, linguistic states will help in the removal of racial and cultural tension. Ambedkar said, "In seeking to create linguistic states, India is treading the right road. It is the road which all states have followed. In case of other linguistic states they have been so from the very beginning. In India, she has to put herself in the reverse gear to reach the goal. But the road she proposes to travel is a well tried road." According to Ambedkar, in the enthusiasm to accept the idea of linguistic states, India commit the grave blunder of giving official status to regional language. For this reason, he warned that with regional languages the states could aspire for independent nationality and thus pose a threat to the national unity. To avoid this possibility in future Ambedkar suggested that it should be laid down in the constitution that regional languages shall never be accepted as official languages of the states. Hindi must be declared as the official language of the nation. So long as Hindi does not become fit for this status English should continue as the only official language.

Again, Ambedkar believed that those who lived in India should be Indians first and Indians last. This is the only way to keep India a united country. The idea of linguistic states with regional languages as their official language was contrary to this basic principle. He is of the view that one language can unite while two languages can divide the people of India. He emphatically said that any Indian who refused to accept this idea has no right to call himself an Indian. He might be hundred percent Tamil or Gujarati but could not be an Indian in real sense. Ambedkar said that Indian politics, already under the great influence of castes, is suffering from lack of unity of interest. The evil consequences of this are sure to be sharpened with linguistic states which we have created. The country is bound to move to disintegration if suitable amendment in our Constitution is not made and a national consensus on one official language is not accepted and enforced.

SAQ

Discuss Ambedkar's ideas on Education and Language policy. (80 words)

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5.10 Ambedkar view on Democracy:

Ambedkar, on the basis of his extensive study and knowledge of the evolution of human society and social institutions, is convinced that democracy is the only form of government which ensures liberty and equality in the society and he has discussed elaborately on democracy. Democracy is the form of government in which people rule themselves through their elected representatives. It ensures equality, liberty, fraternity and justice to all section of the people without discrimination and give due importance to public opinion. Democracy is universally accepted as the best form of government and it not just a form of Government but has become a way of life. Hence, according to Ambedkar we should have a government where the men in power, not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life will give their undivided allegiance to the best interest of the country. Notion of Democratic Society Ambedkar said, “Democracy is more than a government. It is a form of the organization of society. There are two essential conditions which characterize a democratically constituted society:

- Absence of stratification of society into classes
- A social habit on the part of individuals and groups which are ready for continuous readjustment or recognition of reciprocity of interests.”

He opines that a real democratic government is not possible without form and structure of democratic society. If the social milieu is undemocratic, the government is bound to be undemocratic. According to Ambedkar even a democratic government will not be able to do anything if Indian society remain divided into classes and sub classes as each individual in such society will place class interest above everything and there will be no justice and fair play in the functioning of the government. Apart from being a government of the people and by the people, democracy must also be a government for the people. It requires a democratic attitude of mind and proper socialization. Thus, Ambedkar is of the view that democracy is more than a social system. It is an attitude of mind, a philosophy of life. Need of Fraternity Impressed by French Revolution, Ambedkar opines that in democracy equality and liberty ensured by the constitution cannot be considered sufficient. Without fraternity equality destroys liberty and liberty destroys equality. Fraternity implies true religious spirit which is the basic of any democratic system.

Conditions for a Democratic System: Ambedkar clearly outlines the conditions for a democratic system. These conditions are as follows----

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5.11 Summing Up :

After reading this unit, we come to the conclusion that B.R Ambedkar has made valuable contribution to the social and political thinking. He strongly denounces the outrageous attitude of the Brahmanical Hinduism towards the Untouchables and works for the liberation of the untouchables from the oppressions of the High caste Hindus. Ambedkar is successful in focusing the attention of the Hindus on the tension generating social problems and the need for resolving the same in the interest of the Hindu society as well as the political system. Because of the efforts of Ambedkar Indian Constitution makes special provisions for the upliftment of the backward classes. Reading of this unit will help you to make a comparison between Gandhi and Ambedkar. This unit will also enrich your knowledge on education, language policy and democracy. Through his writings and speeches he makes the people conscious of the political, economic and social problems of the untouchables and impressed the need of paying special attention to the amelioration of the condition of the untouchables. As the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution for free India, he made provisions for the members of the Schedule caste community to develop itself with constitutional guarantee of equality of opportunities. The influence of his idea is evident from the fact that the new constitution not only assured equality to all citizens but took definite steps to abolish untouchability and made its practice in any form an offence punishable under law. Dr D.R Jatav has rightly described Ambedkar as a social humanist. Ambedkar was a great optimist . He had faith in man's capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, true and false.

5.12 References and Suggested Readings

1. Roy, Ramashary. Gandhi and Ambedkar. New Delhi: Shipra Publications Pvt. Ltd, 2006
2. Ambedkar, B.R. Writings and Speeches. Bombay Education Dept. MaharastraGovt, 1982
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