

“Gandhian Political Economy Thought and Sustainable Development”

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This paper about Mahatma Gandhi's political economy thought and sustainable development. Mahatma Gandhi's thought very useful for sustainable development. e.g. Theory of small unit machine of Mahatma Gandhi.. This theory is related to sustainable development theory. This principle is complementary to sustainable development.

First of all, what is sustainable development? It remains to be seen. It is defined as follows in Wikipedia.” Sustainable development is the principle that organizes the fulfillment of human development goals, while at the same time sustaining the natural system's ability to provide natural resources and environmental services that depend on the economy and society. The desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resources are used to complement human life without compromising the integrity and stability of the natural system. Sustainable development can be defined as a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Wikipedia) The concept of sustainable development is derived mostly from the 1987 Brundtland Report, As the concept developed, it has shifted its focus more towards the economic development, social development and environmental protection for future generations. It has been suggested that "the term 'sustainability' should be viewed as humanity's target goal of human-ecosystem equilibrium, while 'sustainable development' refers to the holistic approach and temporal processes that lead us to the end point of sustainability". (Shaker, 2015) In short, sustainable development means achieving economic development without harming the environment.

After looking at the definition of sustainable development, it would be appropriate to look at Gandhiji's thoughts. The misconception that Gandhiji was completely against the use of machinery is happening in his time and even now. Then one should know Gandhiji's mechanical approach. That is to say, Gandhi was not anti-machine. According to him, it is inappropriate to use a machine that causes disrepute and economic exploitation of working life. Without hindering the elimination of unemployment

and poverty in India, without allowing the centralization of power, without undermining the independence of the village, there is no problem in accepting the mechanisms that are acceptable. Which benefits the majority, which increases the income and power of some and increases social, economic and political inequality, which in turn makes life miserable for some and devalues the lives of workers; Gandhiji was opposed to the use (improvement) of any such device. (Parel, 2009) He was of the view that the dignity of the workers could not be distinguished from the dignity of the working life. According to him, some people find it useless to work without labor, while others find physical labor disgraceful. As a result, they become enslaved to machines and paralyzed. Large machinery and industry will make cities grow, some will get jobs, but the majority will be unemployed. There will be direct or indirect exploitation of villages. A few capitalists can save money using the machine. But the majority of the poor working people will be economically exploited. In this way, Gandhiji had given impetus to village industries and basic industries by opposing machinery and big industries. Regarding the machine, Gandhiji made it clear, "I am not against the machine. But I am opposed to the madness of mechanization. The device has its own space. Large scale industries also have their own space. Modern technology will also be used in the field of communication. But the village industry and cottage industry that is going on in the villages should survive.(Guha, 2013) It doesn't matter if you have to use some new technology to a certain extent. Apart from this, there is a huge problem of unemployment in the country It cannot be solved and if we do not solve this problem, our democracy will be in danger.

Village Industries: To eradicate rural unemployment and poverty in India, Gandhiji gave importance to handicrafts and cottage industries. Village industries should be given priority to make the rural economy self-sufficient. Charkha is the only means of eradicating poverty and generating employment and wealth. Farmers, laborers and all such people can add to the national income by spinning in their spare time. He opined that a boycott of foreign goods should be done and domestic goods should be used, so that the wealth going abroad would remain in the country and the rural economy would be more stable and self-sufficient. Defects like conflict, colonialism, imperialism etc. are created. To avoid these defects, Gandhiji had placed more emphasis on village industries like khadi, handloom, charkha. (Brown, 1991)

Gandhiji has elaborated on the idea of Gram Rajya, Ram Rajya to create a stateless society. He was of the opinion that the social structure should be changed by considering the caste system in the society. He was of the view that the overall development of the country would not take place unless the political power reached the village level by adopting the principle of decentralization. According to him, a village state in the true sense of the word will be formed only when the villages become self-sufficient and autonomous, considering the village or village as an important factor. Villages need to be economically, socially and politically self-sufficient. Economic transformation can be brought about by increasing production, starting new, old village industries and value industries. Panchayats will be set up

to look after the governance of villages. Through panchayats, efforts will be made to resolve political, economic and social issues. Gandhiji has explained the idea of village state in the following words. "In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbor. In the ideal state therefore there is no political power because there is no state." In order for the component to be truly self-sufficient, every person in the village must participate in the administration of the village. Everyone should control themselves. One should act responsibly to ensure that the development of others is not hampered. All the problems of the people there should be solved through the Gram Panchayat. Only then will an ideal village state be created there. If every village becomes self-sufficient and happy, there will be no need for central government in the country. If the whole society becomes non-violent and egalitarian, then the punishment of the state will be unnecessary. (Fischer 1950).

After looking at Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts in this way, you can say that Gandhiji was opposed to the big machine. Because it degrades the environment and also increases unemployment tremendously. Large machinery is degrading the environment. From that, the next generation will have to face many catastrophic things. Just like Gandhiji promotes village industries and cottage industries. It will also eliminate unemployment and prevent environmental degradation.

Reference

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