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THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

In present scenario Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are changing and touching every sphere of lives and creating an impact on it. One cannot imagine life without ICTs in today's situation of globalization. Not only urban but rural lives and lifestyle is very much getting affected and changed due to the impact of ICTs. ICTs is emerging as potential catalyst for economic and social development, leading to a transformation of rural markets and improving access to information, products and services through rural kiosks and creating new employment opportunities through rural BPOs. Main examples of ICTs in rural market is eChaupal, Kisan service Center, Drishtee and n-Logue. ICTs can help to bridge this gap and hence lead to reduction in the level of poverty. Farmers can get access to knowledge to improve their Production and even get better price for their products. In the present paper the detailed and systematic review has done to find out the major ICTs reforms in rural areas, its implementation and how it play significant role in development of rural areas in India.

KEY WORDS-ICTs, Rural Kiosks, eChaupal and rural market

INTRODUCTION

Farmers in isolated village are using ATM machines to open and manage bank account. Mobile telephony has changed life of rural people; it has made life more comfortable, affordable and convenient and also make versatile platform to marketers and consumers alike. Emergence of new and innovative technologies extended their standard of living to next level. Many Indian companies have initiated to contribute on creating a physical infrastructure to support rural people and new innovative information and communication Technology (ICT) in rural areas. For the preceding few years' state government, central government, NGOs and some founding companies like (ITC, Birla and Reliance) have tried to snap technologies barriers by starting many projects like e-chaupal, Drishtee and n-lounge to showcase the influence and wonder of IT in a rural locale.

This paper is based on secondary information Collected through journals, articles and research paper. This paper also explores projects related to ICTs launched by companies for rural enhancement.

IMPLEMENT NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN RURAL MARKET

In rural area customers are slow in decision making and it is more concentrated on head of the family. They also have passive approach towards new technologies. For any company it is hard task to bring and implement new concept in rural market. But with effective communication plan, it becomes easy to bring and implement these strategies.

Effective advertisement, reports, learning materials, awareness camps, announcement, personal communication and wall painting may help in implementation.

I.T. AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The aim of ICTs with deprived and underprivileged group is not only about to tackle over shortcoming but rather reinforcing and passing the process of social inclusion to the next

level, which is helpful in Making change and remove poverty in rural areas. With the help of I.T. and its various applications, development of the rural area can be accurately.

Here is the information of few which are running in India:

ITC E-CHAUPAL

ITC Limited (www.itcportal.com) is a 94-year-old Indian company with annual revenues of over US\$ 2.6 Billion. It has diverse interests in tobacco, agribusiness, paper, hotels, information technology, lifestyle apparel and packaged foods.

Objective of Project- “Improving quality of life in rural India” is the mission of ITC eChoupal (www.echoupal.com). By leveraging Information Technology, ITC eChoupal helps increase farm incomes by facilitating empowered access to farm input and output markets to the farmers, small and big alike - to enhance resource productivity, improve product quality and reduce transaction costs.

Scope of Project- ITC eChoupal is an integral part of ITC's competitive strategy to create shareholder value in its agribusinesses. The creation of shareholder value is enmeshed with market linkage needs of India's agrarian communities.

Project Coverage Area (States)-Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Services- ITC eChoupal leverages information technology to (1) deliver real-time information and customized knowledge to improve farmers' decision making ability, and thereby better align farm output to market demands and secure better quality, productivity and improved price discovery (2) aggregate demand in the nature of a virtual producers' cooperative and thereby access higher quality farm inputs and knowledge at lower cost and (3) set up a direct marketing channel virtually linked to the mandi system for the purpose of price discovery, yet eliminating wasteful intermediation and multiple handling.

Target Group: Farmers and Villagers

Project start date: June'2000

COMMON SERVICE CENTERS

CSCs are actually emerging as a catalyst for economic and social development, leading to a transformation of rural markets and improving access to products, services and information through rural kiosks, and creating new employment opportunities through rural BPOs. It is based on PPP model i.e. Public- Private Partnership.

Objective of the Projects- the main objective of CSCs is to provide platform that can enables the government, private and social sector organizations to integrate their social and commercial goals for the benefit of rural customers.

DRISHTEE

Vision: Connecting India Village by Village.

Drishtee dot com Ltd, incorporated in October 2000, seeks to mark a paradigmatic shift in the delivery of government services in rural India - by serving villagers directly rather than through distant civil servants. Contractual arrangements with state governments provide the bedrock upon which Drishtee is able to build a network of sustainable franchises. The local entrepreneurs provide additional customized services to the surrounding villages such as ICT training, regional job postings and even matrimonial services, while the entire network is increasingly utilized as an outlet for commercial services such as farm insurance, loan processing and equipment sales.

Objective of Project- To create and implement a sustainable, scalable platform of entrepreneurship for enabling the development of rural economy and society through the use of Information and Communications Technologies.

Scope of Project - To replicate the self-sustainable model in 590 districts in India and improving Health, Education, Employment and Livelihoods, Empowerment, Microfinance, also Improving the socio-economic condition in rural India.

Project Coverage Area -Drishtee has been able to initiate pilots in different districts of Haryana, Punjab, MP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu and Assam.

GRAMDOOT

The Gramdoot project covers the entire District of Jaipur in Rajasthan and provides Broad Band Services to 400+ Gram Panchayats. The entire district is traversed by a 3000 km. long fiber network strung on electric poles and terminated at each of the 400+ Gram Panchayats in a kiosk. The kiosk is equipped with a computer, printer, scanner, web camera, UPS and optical node. All the kiosks are connected initially on a 100Mbps LAN and upgradeable by changing the Ethernet switch. Two fibers of the cable are used for LAN and one for CATV services. Each kiosk is managed by a computer literate local villager

Objective of Project- The objective of the project is to make available to rural India affordable ICT services available in metros.

Scope of Project- he scope of the project is to bridge the digital divide between Rural India and rest of the world by providing e-governance and rural convergence

Project Coverage Area: Entire Jaipur District covering 400+ gram panchayats.

Services contemplated: Services provided are e-governance, e-services and rural convergence. **Target Group:** Rural and semi-urban population.

TARAAHAAT

TARAAhaat Information and Marketing Services Ltd. (TARAAhaat), is India's premier social entrepreneur employing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to deliver a broad spectrum of services and products designed for rural and peri-urban citizens. While many millions of dollars are being spent worldwide in talking about the digital divide, TARAAhaat has created a bridge to cross the digital divide and deliver solutions needed by people right at their doorstep in their local language through a business that is sustainable and scalable.

Set up by Development Alternatives in 2000 after a careful design exercise involving industry leaders, technology experts and village communities, TARAAhaat delivers its services through a network of franchised community and business centers owned by individual entrepreneurs. These village knowledge centers are equipped with computers and Internet connections, enabling them to deliver services that meet local community needs.

Recognizing that long-term programmes for Sustainable Development must be financially viable and geographically scaleable, DA has incorporated TARAAhaat as a commercial entity. SwayamKrishiSangam's mission is to empower the poorest of the poor to become self-reliant. They do this through a community-owned grameen (village) banking program that provides poor women loans for both income-generating activities as well as for emergencies.

Objective and Scope of Project- Automating microfinance, ensuring faster & cheaper access to financial services with 100% accuracy and being fraud proof. This can be done by eliminating the need to maintain manual collection sheets and passbooks, reducing the time

of (center) meetings and thereby increasing the efficiency of field staff in their meetings do this.

Project Coverage Area: Medak district in Andhra Pradesh

Services contemplated: Financial services

Target Group: Customers (Members) and Field Staff. Customers are women below poverty live.

AKSHAYA

Akshaya is the country's first 100% ICT literacy project executed by the Kerala Govt. has already diffused. 100% ICT literacy in the state's most backward and rural district Mallapuram. Executed through a network of privately owned “Akshaya” centers operating in the block level Panchayats; the model apart from upscaling entrepreneurial capabilities also seeks to deploy in the future for the rural citizen; a large number of basic services.

Objective of Project-Ensuring broad-based access to ICT amongst rural population and women. Providing basic functional skills (e-literacy)

Making available content relevant to the local population in the local language.

Scope of Project- The project “Akshaya” is being implemented to address the issues on digital divide in the State in an integrated and holistic way. Providing ICT access to all sections of the society-even located in the remotest part of the state, development of minimum skill sets for all people through functional IT literacy training, creation of relevant local content to benefit of all the interest groups are components of the project. The project is an enabler in generating massive economic growth and creation of direct employment opportunities in Kerala.

Area: Mallapuram District, Kerala

Services contemplated- Delivery of basic ICT literacy apart from wide range of topics including that of education, career development, Agriculture, Health, Bio-technology, Law and Justice are being proposed to be delivered to the rural citizens of Mallapuram through a network of 620 ICT Centers.

Target Group- All families of the District are proposed to be covered in the Literacy campaign

BENEFITS OF ICT SERVICES IN RURAL INDIA

Apart from providing services ICTs help in many ways and add value addition, also assist value chain element in many folds;

- It helps marketers to cover wide area, which ultimately bring economies of scale.
- It helps retailers and wholesalers to interact with other intermediaries in very prompt and faster way, which decrease holding cost of stock and wastage of products in distribution.
- It also helps customers in gathering information of available choice of product and services, so that they can go for better results.

CONCLUSION

ICTs not only increase services and product quality but also it maintains proper inflow and availability of products and services. It also results in the overall betterment of society one hand and other hand it provides various opportunity to marketers. I.T. also enhances role of each participants and help all value chain participants. It also facilitates transparent,

responsible, efficient and effective interaction between all stakeholders. This not only maintains the better administration and health business environment, but it also save money and time in transactions costs of operations inside the organizations.

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GST: An Emerging Area of Economic Development

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Abstract

Indian tax authorities are active enough to bring the changes in the indirect tax structure to make the uniform tax structure at par with the whole nation. The concept of uniformity in global accounting and tax structure brings significant changes to the world business scenario. Many revisions are made in the existing Indian business statutes like new Companies Amendment Bill 2011, Cost Accounting Record Rules 2011, Cost Audit Report Rules 2011, Extensible Business Reporting Languages (XBRL), Tax Accounting Standard (TAC), etc. Similar changes are also made in indirect tax structure. The paper focuses on the changes that were brought in the existing indirect tax structure as regards as to changes in the tax practice. An attempt is made to explore the GST structure in this paper as a dynamic part. It is observed that, once the GST applied there would be single tax system which would record a significant development in comprehensive economic growth.

Key words: GST, tax structure, uniformity.

Introduction

The Government of India having passed the long awaited GST – enabling Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill, 2014, the Model GST Law that has been in public domain since June 2016. Now India is well set on the course of the biggest tax reform since independence. The GST is the single biggest reform initiative after the 1991 opening up of the economy and is all out in support of this mega tax reform, which will create a single, unified Indian market to make the economy stronger, besides boosting tax collections and reducing price of commodities and cascading effect of taxes and also litigations. GST attempts to make the tax simple, fair and tax payer friendly should be apparent in the final Act and Rules so that the law would be implemented smoothly and voluntary compliance encouraged. Our union Government rightly linked the GST to the vision of “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat”, and termed it a great step towards transformation and transparency, which will not only benefit consumer but will also facilitate ease of doing business and help curb black money and corruption. The taxation of goods and services in India has been characterized as a cascading and distortionary tax on production resulting in mis-allocation of resources and lower productivity and economic growth. GST will be a changing prospective for Indian Economy by developing common Indian market and reducing the cascading effect of tax on the cost of goods and services. It will impact the tax structure, tax incidence, tax computation, payment, compliance, credit utilization and reporting leading to a complete overhaul of present tax system. GST will have far reaching impact on almost all the aspects of the economic as well as the tax structure of the country. Therefore, the GST regime of course has opened up a prospective new avenue for the potential of being a game changer for the Indian tax structure.

Background

In the budget speech for the financial year 2006-07, a proposal was made to introduce a national level Goods and Services Tax (GST). Since the proposal involved restructuring of not only indirect taxes levied by the Centre but also the States, the responsibility of preparing a Design and Road Map for the implementation of GST was assigned to the Empowered Committee (EC) of State Finance Ministers. The EC submitted a report in April 2008, titled “A Model and Road Map for Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India” containing broad recommendations about the structure and design of GST. On the basis of report, the Department of Revenue made some suggestions to be incorporated in the design and structure of proposed GST bill. On the suggestions and recommendations a dual GST module for the country has been proposed by the EC. This dual GST model has been accepted by centre. In this dual GST model have two components viz. the Central GST (CGST) to be levied and collected by Centre and the State GST (SGST)

to be levied and collected by the respective States. Central Excise Duty, additional excise duty, service tax and additional duty & customs, state VAT, entertainment tax, taxes on lotteries, betting and gambling, entry tax (not levied by local bodies) would subsumed within GST. Other taxes which will be subsumed with GST are Octroi, entry tax and luxury tax thus making it a single indirect tax in India.

Changes of Indirect Tax Structure

Jurisdiction for supply of Goods & Services	Existing Structure	New Structure (GST)
Within the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAT/ Composite Tax • Entertainment Tax • Luxury Tax • Entry Tax • State Cess/ Surcharge • Taxes on lottery, betting & gambling. 	1. CGST (Central GST) 2. SGST (State GST)
Interstate / Import	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excise Duty • Service Tax • Central Sales Tax • Countervailing Customs Duty • Central Cess & Surcharge 	3. IGST (Integrated GST)

Salient Features of GST

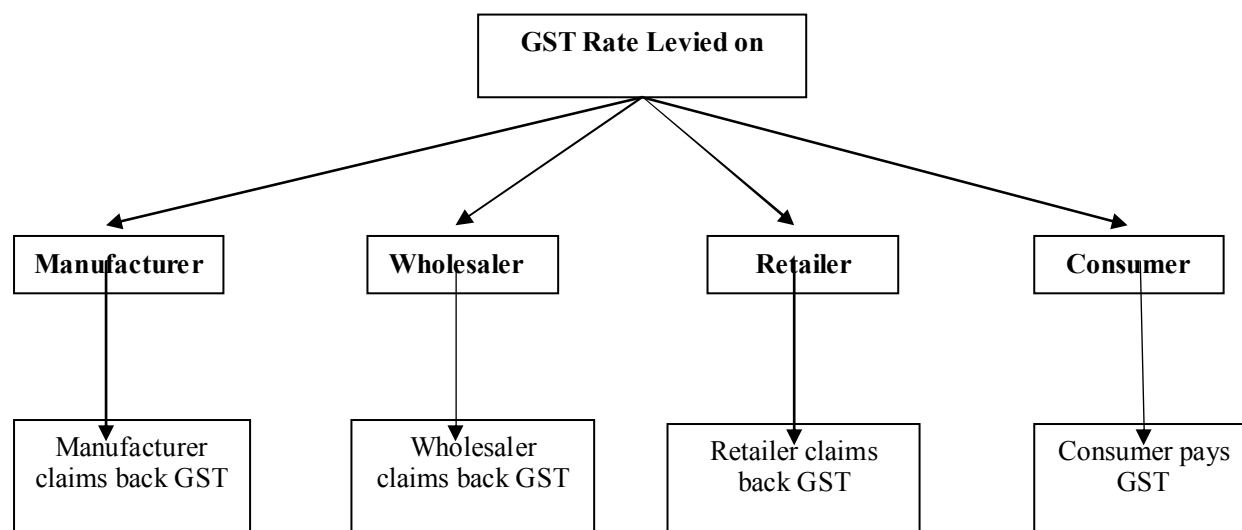
The salient features about this GST Law are as follows:

1. GST would replace the following taxes currently levied and collected by the centre:
 - a. Central Excise Duty
 - b. Duties of Excise (Medicinal and Toilet Preparations)
 - c. Additional Duties of Excise (Goods on special importance)
 - d. Additional Duties of Excise (Textiles and Textile Products)
 - e. Additional Duties of Customs (Commonly known as CVD)
 - f. Service Tax
 - g. Ceases and surcharges in so far as they relate supply of goods or services
2. State taxes that would be subsumed within the GST are :
 - a. State VAT
 - b. Central Sales Tax (CST)
 - c. Purchase tax
 - d. Luxury Tax
 - e. Entry Tax (All forms)
 - f. Entertainment Tax (not levied by the local bodies)
 - g. Taxes on a Advertisements
 - h. Taxes on lotteries, betting and gambling
 - i. State levies and surcharges in so far as they relate to supply goods and services
3. GST would be applicable on supply of goods and services as against the present concept of tax on the manufacture or on sale of goods and services.
4. GST would be destination based tax as against the present concept of origin based tax.
5. It would be dual GST with the Central GST (CGST) and States GST (SGST).
6. An Integrated GST (IGST) would be levied on inter-state supply (including stock transfers) of goods and services. This would be collected by the Centre so that the credit chain is not disrupted.
7. Import of goods or services would be treated as inter-state supplies and would be subject to IGST in addition to the applicable customs duties.

8. A non-VAT able additional they not exceeding 1% on inter-state supply of goods would be levied by the centre and retained by the originating state.
9. CGST, SGST & IGST would be levied at rates to be mutually agreed upon by the centre and states.
10. GST would be apply to all goods and services except alcohol for human consumption.
11. GST on petroleum products would be from a date to be recommended by the Goods and Services Tax Council.
12. Tobacco and tobacco products would be subject to GST. In addition, the centre could continue to level Central Excise Duty.
13. A common threshold exemption would apply to both CGST and SGST. Taxpayers with a turnover below it would be exempt from GST.
14. Credit of CGST paid on inputs may be used only for paying CGST on the output and the credit of SGST paid on inputs may be used only for paying SGST.
15. The laws, regulations and procedures for levy and collection of CGST and SGST would be harmonized to the extent possible.

Applicability and mechanism of GST

Applicability and mechanism of GST is been stated with the following flow chart:



Documents to be prepared compulsorily

Following documents to be prepared for GST:

1. Tax Invoice

May not issue Tax Invoice if Value of goods or services less than 200/-, provided customer does not insist. A combined Tax Invoice at the end of Day.

2. Bill of Supply instead of Tax Invoice for zero tax/ exempted supplies. 31 (3) (c)

3. Receipt Voucher When advance is received against supply, prepare this document and pay tax on advance minus Tax.

4. Payment Vouchers In case of reverse charge prepare this document along with Tax Invoice and pay tax.

5. Debit Note- For Purchase return.

6. Credit Note- For Sales return.

Books to be Maintained for Required Information

Accounts/ Records	Required Information	For Whom
Register of Goods Produced	Account should contain detailed of goods manufactured in a factory or in place of production.	Every assessee carrying out manufacturing activity.

Purchase register	All the purchases made within a tax period for manufacturing of goods or providing of services.	All assessee
Sales register	Account of all the sales made within a tax period must be maintained	All assessee
Stock register	This register should contain correct stock of inventory at any point of time	All assessee
Input Tax Credit (ICT) Availed	This register should maintain the detailed of Input Tax Credit availed for a given tax period.	All assessee
Output Tax Liability (OTL)	This register should maintain the detailed of GST liability outstanding to be adjusted against input credit or paid out directly.	All assessee
Output Tax Paid (OTP)	This register should maintain the detailed of GST paid for a particular tax period.	All assessee
Other Records Specified	Government can further specify by way of notification, additional records and accounts.	Specific businesses as notified by the Government

Conclusion

The taxation of goods and services in India has been characterized as a cascading and distortionary tax on production resulting in mis-allocation of resources and lower productivity and economic growth. GST will be a changing prospective for Indian Economy by developing common Indian market and reducing the cascading effect of tax on the cost of goods and services. It will impact the tax structure, tax incidence, tax computation, payment, compliance, credit utilization and reporting leading to a complete overhaul of present tax system. GST will have far reaching impact on almost all the aspects of the economic as well as the tax structure of the country. It is observed that, once the GST applied there would be single tax system which would record a significant development in comprehensive economic growth.

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INDIA’S LOOK NORTH POLICY

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Abstract:

In the present global scenario, the Central Asian Countries have assumed an important place in India’s foreign policy formulations, as India considers them part of its extended neighborhood. This paper seeks to examine the steps taken by New Delhi to engage the Central Asian Republics (CARs), with an objective to build long term relations based on mutual benefit and productive multilateralism. Specifically, the paper addresses the following questions: a) Why India should play a pro-active role in the region? Or the importance of CARs for India. b) Why the CARs are also keen to develop closer bilateral relationship with India? c) The various initiatives taken by India to strengthen relationship with the CARs, and d) The future strategies to be adopted by India to consolidate its ties with the region.

Keywords: Central Asian Republics, Track II initiative, Connect Central Asia Policy.

Introduction:

The disintegration of the former Soviet Union in 1991 led to the Creation of Sovereign States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan, which are collectively described as ‘Central Asian Republics’ (CARs).

India and these Central Asian Republics have very long historical, cultural, economic and trade relations. Trade, which acted as the backbone of this relationship, flourished between India and the region through the ancient Silk route. The Silk route was not a single route but a complex network of routes connecting Asia with Europe. It carried not only trade, but has also helped ideas, philosophy and culture to flow freely from one region to another. For example, Buddhism was propagated, during Emperor Ashoka’s regime from Kashmir to Central Asia and ultimately to China through this route.

The two regions have not only been connected by the trading routes but also the history of the Indian sub-continent has been shaped by the constant invasions from the north-westerly direction. (Kaplan, 2010) Hence, the two regions had enjoyed close political, economic and cultural relations since the ancient period of Harappan civilization. (Kaur,2011)

LOOK NORTH POLICY:

The efforts of India to develop closer relations with CARs, through various programs after 1991, and more recently the adoption of ‘**Connect Central Asia Policy**’ (CCAP) by New Delhi, constitutes India’s Look North Policy. The CCAP highlights India’s vision and desire for developing closer relationship with CARs, through engagement at multiple levels in different spheres.

The sudden disintegration of the former Soviet Union and emergence of the CARs, left the Indian policy makers in a state of shock and surprise. However, this event led to the adoption of more realistic and pragmatic approach in the India’s foreign policy formulation. In the changing Geo-political and Geo-strategic environment, India realized the strategic importance of the CARs. During his visit to Turkmenistan, Prime Minister P.V. Narashimha Rao in 1995 announced that-for India, Central Asia is a region of high priority, where our objective is to stay engaged far into the future. We are independent partners with no selfish motives. We favor honest and open friendship and seek to promote stability and co-operation with harming any third country. (Muni, 2003) India has taken several initiatives to develop closer relationship with the CARs, which are as follows-

International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC):

Russia, Iran and India signed the agreement for INSTC in 2002. All three are the founding members of the project. Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Belarus are other important members with varying degree of involvement in the project. Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, while his visit to Turkmenistan, formally invited it to join the project. The project seeks to increase connectivity between Russia, Central Asia, Iran and India. It is a ship, rail and land route connecting India, Iran, Central Asia, Europe and Russia. It will increase the volume of trade between the member countries.

The INSTC, bypasses India's dependence on Pakistan to connect with Central Asia. India has signed agreement with Iran to develop the '**Chahbahar port**', which would connect India to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Iran will build a highway from Chahbahar upto Afghanistan border and India has build the connecting '**Delaram-Zaranj Roadway**', thus Afghanistan, a land locked country, would get access to the Arabian sea through this route. This will prove beneficial for the trade and economic relationship between India and Central Asian region.

Economic & Trade Relations:

In the Economic & trade sector, India & Central Asia does not enjoy satisfactory relationship, though there has been a steady growth in total trade between the two regions during the last fifteen years.

Total Trade between India & CARs (US \$ Million)

Country	2001-02	2015-16
Kazakhstan	53.09	504.84
Kyrgyzstan	11.53	26.90
Tajikistan	02.56	32.24
Turkmenistan	06.30	115.50
Uzbekistan	23.80	139.89
Total	97.28	819.37

Table: 3

Source: Export-Import Data Bank, Department of Commerce, Government of India, 2016.

The India- Kazakhstan Inter Government Commission (IGC) was established in 1993 for developing bilateral trade, economic, industrial, scientific, technological & cultural co-operation. India-Kazakhstan joint working group on trade & Economic co-operation held its fourth meeting in Astana in Nov. 2015. Indian investment in Kazakhstan is US \$ 282.4 Million (as on 30 Sept 2015) in areas like oil & gas, banking, engineering, restaurants, pharmaceutical trading etc. India export to Kazakhstan includes- Pharmaceuticals, tea, telephone equipments etc. while imports to India include oil, uranium, asbestos & titanium.

The India-Uzbekistan trade relations are governed by the agreement on trade & Economic co-operation signed in 1993. The agreement provide for mutual MFN treatment, promotion of economic, industrial, scientific & technical co-operation. In terms of exports to Uzbekistan is concerned, India is the 10th largest trading partner of Uzbekistan. Indian export to Uzbekistan includes- Pharmaceuticals, mechanical equipments, vehicles, optical instruments etc. imports to India includes fruit & vegetable products, fertilizers, juice products, lubricants etc.

The India-Turkmenistan bilateral trade stood at US \$ 115.50 million in 2015-16. India fulfills nearly half of the pharmaceuticals needs of Turkmenistan. The major items of export to Turkmenistan includes pharmaceuticals, electronic & electrical items, machinery etc. while imports to India includes raw hides, inorganic chemicals etc. The India-Tajikistan, bilateral trade is much below its potential due to lack of direct connectivity between the two regions. India has given grants to set up fruit processing plant & modern Engineering workshop in Tajikistan. In addition to this, India has given humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan to fight diseases like polio & Natural calamities like flood or mudslides from time to time. Indian export to Tajikistan includes- Pharmaceuticals, Tea, Coffee, Chemicals, Textile & Clothing & machinery while imports to India includes cotton, dry fruits, aluminum, vegetable etc.

Indian-Kyrgyzstan trade relation stood at US\$26.90 million in 2015-16. Indian export to Kyrgyzstan includes- Pharmaceuticals, apparel & clothing, leather goods, tea etc while imports to India include- Raw hides, metal ores & metal scrap. In 2015, a Pharmaceutical delegation of 50 Companies from India visited Bishkek to promote export of pharmaceutical products to Kyrgyzstan.

Co-operation in Energy sector:

As already pointed out, that the Central Asian region is rich in Oil & Natural gas reserves, therefore, it could meet the growing hydrocarbon demand of Indian economy.

Tajikistan has vast hydro-electricity generation potentials. Thus, this sector offers great opportunity for investment to Indian government & private companies. New Delhi will undertake the rehabilitation & modernization of the ‘Varzob I’ hydropower station.

TAPI- Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan & India signed initial documents in 2010, laying the foundation of the TAPI project. It will transport Natural gas from Turkmenistan to India & thus, will help in diversifying India’s sources of natural gas. The transit fee payable by India to Pakistan & Afghanistan has been agreed upon. Till Oct 2016, Turkmenistan has constructed about 15 Kms of TAPI pipeline on its side.

Stapayev Oil Block- Indian ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) & Kazakh State Company KazMunaiGaz has signed an agreement whereby OVL bought 25% stake in the Satpayev Oil Block in the Caspian Sea, marking India’s entry into the rich hydrocarbon sector of Kazakhstan. The two countries have also signed agreement for supply of natural uranium to India during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit in July 2015.

Pul-e-khumir Transmission Line- India built this transmission line to carry electricity from Uzbekistan to Kabul, Afghanistan. This project proved significant in India’s diplomatic efforts to develop & nurture a strategic relationship with Afghanistan. It stands as a symbol of mutual co-operation to solve the energy crises in the region.

After becoming the full member of SCO, India may also be benefitted from the Central Asia- South Asia Region Electricity Market. **(CASAREM)**

India's Connect Central Asia Policy:

The ‘**Connect Central Asia Policy**’ was unveiled by the Minister of State for External Affairs E.Ahmed, in a keynote address at the first meeting of the **India-Central Asia Dialogue, a track II initiative**, organized on 12-13, June 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. (Das, 2012) The aim of the policy is to fasten India's effort to develop close relations with CARs. The highlights of the policy are as follows:

- Building strong political relations with CARs based on mutual trust & benefit, through interaction between leaders of the region.
- Constructive engagement with the countries of the region through multilateral forums like SCO, for dealing with common issues like International terrorism, Drug trafficking, stability in Afghanistan etc.
- India to become long term energy partner with the CARs for mutual benefit & development of both regions.
- To encourage co-operation in the Defence & Medical sector, through emphasis on joint military exercises & training, encouraging medical tourism etc.
- To establish e-networks, for tele-medicine & tele-education, connecting India with all the five Central Asian Countries.
- To increase connectivity with the CARs through land, sea & air routes. Encourage Indian companies to make investments in building road & rail routes in the region.
- To develop banking & service infrastructure in the Central Asian nation.
- To encourage cultural linkage & assist in imparting world class education in areas like IT, diplomacy, management etc. through teacher & student exchange programme & continuous dialogue between academicians, scientists & artists.
- Improving air connectivity to promote tourism & people to people contacts.

The CCAP shows that India is keen to play a pro-active role in the Central Asia & that India accords great importance to the region in its foreign policy formulations. If implemented with vigor, then the CCAP would yield strategic, economic as well as security benefits for India.

India- Central Asia Dialogue:

The India-Central Asia Dialogue is a **track II initiative**, which provides platform for scholarly discussions among academicians, scientists, scholars, business representatives etc & act as valuable supplement to governmental level bilateral & multilateral engagements. The first such Dialogue was held in Kyrgyzstan in 2012. The second & third Dialogues were organized in Kazakhstan (2013) & in Tajikistan (2014) respectively. In these dialogues an ambitious & comprehensive plan was laid down with regard to India- Central Asia engagement. The fourth dialogue was held in Delhi in 2016 in a ‘**track 1.5**’ format because along with scholars & experts, the diplomats & government representatives also participated, to bring in their perspectives & experiences into the discussion.

India, through these current & past initiatives has tried to develop closer relationship with the CAR's. But despite of these efforts, India has not been able to emerge as a major strategic, economic or security partner of the CARs.

Major Challenges before India in Central Asia:

It is believed that, through greater economic & commercial engagement, India can become a significant player in the Central Asian region but there are several challenges, which limits India from developing closer economic or strategic relations with the region. Major impediments for India in developing closer relations with CARs are:

- Lack of direct land/ sea route connectivity. Direct land/ sea route connection plays an important role in enhancing trade & commercial relations. However, India lacks a direct land/ sea route connection to Central Asia & this has emerged as the most

fundamental challenge before Indian diplomatic establishment. The table below shows that lack of direct route has hindered India's business interest in the region.

Trade relations of Central Asia with US, Russia, China & India

(US \$ Billions)

Years	US	Russia	China	India
2010	23.44	21.43	24.98	0.49
2011	30.35	28.34	39.60	0.68
2012	34.00	31.98	45.94	0.74
2013	34.20	31.41	50.27	1.24

Table - 4

Source: UN Comtrade 2015

- The private sector is not ready to make huge investment in new & unfamiliar markets of Central Asia particularly when there is no or very less infrastructural facilities present in the region. The security reasons are also keeping private investors away from the region.
- India's strained relations with its neighbors particularly Pakistan & China. These two nations are against India's growing relationship with CARs & therefore, always try to keep India confine to South Asia.
- Geo-political & economic competition & interest clash between the regional & global powers in the region.
- Inadequacy of financial institutions like banks & rampant corruption in the region hinders new policy approaches.

Future strategies for closer Engagement with Central Asian Region:

The CCAP of India is a comprehensive policy approach & it includes all the dimensions which are essential for building a strong India-Central Asia relationship, however, the major challenge is the proper & consistent implementation of suggested projects & proposals under the policy.

The key elements of India's future strategy, for developing closer relations with the region, could include the following:

- Connectivity with the region will determine the future relations, so India could explore possibilities of shortest land & sea route to Central Asia. The agreement with Iran on the development of **‘Chahbahar port’** needs to be timely implemented & efforts to be made to fast-track the co-operation among concerned partners over INSTC. For this funding from developed nations or global funding agencies could be sought. Regional funds for infrastructural development could also be established.
- India, now, a full member of the SCO, could focus on greater co-operation in the hydrocarbon sector under the SCO mechanism. Also, India could explore the possibilities of co-operation between CARs & SAARC or BIMSTEC, thereby developing strong ties between Central & South Asia.
- India, in order to play an important role in the region, could enter into a constructive engagement with US & Russia. India could also explore possibilities of pragmatic co-operation with China based on mutual benefit.
- Security is a major concern of Central Asian Countries. India could take steps for building comprehensive strategic & security partnership with the CARs. Annual

security meeting & military exercises could be initiated by India to develop closer defence & security relations with all the CARs.

- India needs to give high priority to the capacity building of the people of Central Asian region. This will enhance India's image in the region. Moreover, importance could also be given to cultivating strong cultural relations with the CARs.
- India could encourage the private enterprises to invest in sectors like Pharmaceuticals, Hydro-electricity, Agriculture & food processing, construction etc. which has huge investment potentials. In this regard, Indian government could give incentives to the business houses to increase their investment in the Central Asian market & at the same time could help these countries to make local business environment more attractive.

Conclusion:

The 'Connect Central Asia Policy' & other initiatives taken by India, shows India's desire to play an important role in the Central Asian region. These initiatives are comprehensive enough to secure closer political, economic & cultural relationship with the region. The biggest challenge for India is to properly & efficiently implement these proposals in relation to the New Great Game going on in the Central Asia.

India's efforts to develop closer relations with these Central Asian countries are unique in the sense that, unlike Central Asia's relation with other regional & global powers, they are based on the principles of mutual benefit, equality & respect for each other's sovereignty. India through bilateral engagements with all the CARs & through regional organizations like SCO should strategically & pragmatically work to secure her own energy, economic & security interests & at the same time should also help the CARs to transform themselves into modern, secular democratic nation-states.

India should work for a stable & developed Central Asia because it is essential for a stable south Asia & peaceful world. As it has been rightly observed that "As the United States & China become great power rivals, the direction in which India tilts could determine the course of geo-politics in Eurasia in the 21st Century. India, in other words, looms as the ultimate pivot state." (Kaplan, 2010)

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Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister of India-An Outstanding Leader

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Abstract

Being the beloved leader of the Indian people and the faithful and outstanding successor of the cause of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi has made great contribution to the cause for safeguarding independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, developing the national economy, raising the people's livelihood and making India an important factor of peace in Asia and the rest of the world. Many people, however, regarded her as a woman with a man-sized job. There have been reigning queens in history- from the Queen of Sheba and Cleopatra to Queen Elizabeth II-but a woman who rose to a position of political power in a democratic set-up, and through a democratic process, is still a rarity in this man-made world.

Key words

Indira Gandhi, Iron Lady of India, Indira Nehru, Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi

Early life and Rise to prominence

Indira Gandhi affectionately called as Priyadarshini (dear to sight)¹ was born on 19th November, 1917, in an autocratic family with fabulous wealth. Though unique in her character she was also influenced a great deal by the environment, Mahatma Gandhi, Kamala Nehru, her mother and above all by her father, J.L. Nehru. Nehru who was greatly responsible for shaping her ideology and enkindle in her interest in Indian Culture and history and love for mankind through humanism, socialism and secularism, democracy and condemnation of Fascism.

Being the first woman Prime Minister of India, and an influential leader, in a prevalently male-dominated society, Indira Gandhi is a symbol of feminism in India. As per economic surveys, when Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister, 65% of the country's population was below the poverty line, and when her regime ended in 1984, this figure was 45%. During her rule, food production increased by 250%. Literacy was also increased in India by 30%. The goodwill of the rural population earned by Gandhi still has its effects on the success of the Congress Party in rural India, as well as the popular support of the Nehru-Gandhi Family. She is reverently remembered in many parts of rural India as Indira-Amma ("Amma" means "mother" in many Indian languages).

In her letters to her father from Europe,² one can discern the socialistic options she took, the strident attacks she made on the British establishment for its contribution to European fascism, and openly declaring in one her letters to Nehru that fascism “*seems to be spreading like flames*” in an another letter to her father she went even further justifying the Soviet decision to sign the Soviet-German Pact. She wonders if the responsibility for this act did not rest “heavily on those eight years of British Foreign Policy.” “Munich, England and France,” she asserted, “proved definitely on which side they stood. Russia's policy of collective security having failed, she retired into her pre-Litvinov isolation, and her chief preoccupation was bound to be how to keep her out of the impending European war.”³ While this was a standard argument among European intellectuals, it took an excessive form among the

Indians in Europe because it highlighted British responsibility—an imperialist nation for which they had developed a contempt due to British colonialism in India.

None of the other Indian mainstream politicians had the privilege of such an experience. And consider the countless informal tête-à-tête she must have had with her father on world affairs and about global leaders. As they were very close to each other, Nehru’s level of openness with her must have been more exalted than with anyone else. While in London, Indira Gandhi had an exposure to a set of radicals through Krishna Menon— like Feroze Gandhi (her future husband), P.N. Haksar (her future Secretary) a student at the London School of Economics, the journalist Nikhil Chakravarty studying at Oxford, and Mohan Kumarmanglam, a product of Cambridge who later became her Cabinet Minister. All of them were proponents of Marxist thought, rampant among Indian intellectuals residing in Europe of the thirties. And, they, all of them, remained Marxist even after the independence of the country. In India too, when she was still in the corridors of power, with her father as the central political figure, she surrounded herself by the so-called “*Kitchen Cabinet*” largely composed of left-wing intellectuals. While all of them were leftists, some of them were committed Marxists, including Romesh Thapar, I.K. Gujral, Nandini Sathpathy, Pitambar Pant, Dinesh Singh, C. Subramaniam, etc. But, their role was different from the London crowd.

First period as prime minister

Indira Gandhi held a cabinet portfolio as minister of information and broadcasting in Shastri’s government. She was the only child of Nehru, who was also her mentor in the nationalist movement. The Syndicate⁴ selected her as prime minister when Shastri died in 1966⁵ even though her eligibility was challenged by Morarji Desai, a veteran nationalist and long-time aspirant to that office. The Congress “*bosses*” were apparently looking for a leading figure acceptable to the masses, who could command general support during the next general election but who would also acquiesce to their guidance. Hardly had Indira Gandhi begun in office than she encountered a series of problems that defied easy solutions: Mizo tribal uprisings in the northeast; famine, labour unrest, and misery among the poor in the wake of rupee devaluation; and agitation in Punjab for linguistic and religious separatism.⁶

Indira Gandhi came to power because she appeared to have a set of paradoxical political qualifications, most significantly, of indistinctness and ambiguity. Nothing was less inevitable in modern Indian politics than Indira Gandhi’s rise to power. The challenges she faced were many. She tackled the Punjab problem by accepting the demand for a Punjabi suba. She also accepted the Naga rebels’ demand for autonomy. The economic situation demanded attention. Economic recession prevailed and drought worsened the situation further. The drought and famine situation was handled effectively but one of the measures taken to resolve the economic plight proved to be counter-effective. This was the devaluation of the rupee by 35.5 per cent. It failed to increase exports and attract foreign capital. The Green Revolution, a strategy of introducing high-yield seeds and fertilizers in order to jump-start a sharp rise in food production, was taken forward in her time. Between 1967-68 and 1970-71, food grain production rose by 35 per cent. India was no longer seen as standing with a begging bowl before the Western countries and successive drought were handled without foreign aid.⁷

Two features of the political system were a source of great trouble for Indira Gandhi. One was the decline of Parliament as an institution. Members of Parliament took to undisciplined behaviour and she was often the target of attack. The party was another trouble spot, beset

with groupism and factionalism. Her own position in the party was not secure. Though she was the Prime Minister, the important portfolios were held by leaders not chosen by her.

Indira Gandhi had hardly taken the reins of office when the country went in for General Elections. Apart from the factionalism within the Congress, this was the period of extreme "anti-Congressism" where opposition parties of completely divergent views and ideologies joined hands to form anti-Congress fronts. Lohiaites, socialists, communal Jan Sangh, communists, the right wing Swatantra Party, Akalis etc., all made opportunistic alliances against the Congress. As a result, the Congress Party suffered an unexpected defeat at the polls in Bihar, UP, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Orissa, Madras and Kerala, besides securing a reduced majority in the Lok Sabha. The vote share of the party went down to 41 per cent while the number of seats now stood at 284 seats in a house of 520. The worst aspect was that the decline in the states had now reached the Centre. If one analyses the election results in terms of social groups, it was evident that the rich and middle peasants had deserted the Congress.

The poor electoral performance of the party again brought up the issue of leadership. The Syndicate was critical of the *"dismal performance"* of the Government under Indira Gandhi's leadership. Her style of functioning as the Prime Minister of India seemed to have offended Kamaraj and his colleagues. One of the factors that strengthened the position of Indira Gandhi was the near rout of the Syndicate leaders in the general elections. The only prominent Syndicate leader elected was Sanjiva Reddy. She had been the star and the only all-India campaigner and vote-catcher for the Congress. Her unchallenged leadership of the Congress parliamentary party (CPP) was now established giving her a free hand in forming a Cabinet and deciding the portfolios.

As on the past two occasions, Morarji Desai was an aspirant for the Prime Ministership. But a contest was averted and he was offered the position of Deputy Prime Minister which he accepted. However, this was merely a formal position without any real authority. This time, a pressure group in the CPP, backed by the Congress President Kamaraj, a few Chief Ministers and some members of the Congress Working Committee saw to it that Indira Gandhi was made the Prime Minister.

Mid-term polls took place in four states in February, 1969 and the position of Congress deteriorated further. The rate of economic growth had slowed down considerably. Corruption was rampant, unrest in the countryside and discontent in urban areas was widespread. The election results shocked Congressmen and the differences within the party now came to a head. The leftist *"Young Turks"* did not keep quiet. One of them, Chandra Shekhar, launched a frontal attack on Morarji Desai for not setting up a commission of inquiry into the affairs of the Birla's. The CWC took serious note of this and warned party men against indulging in personal attacks. It asked Indira Gandhi as the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party to curb this tendency on the part of the members of Parliament. Undeterred, the Young Turks⁸ carried on their pressure tactics by criticizing the party bosses for failure to implement the 10-point programme for socio-economic development. This was followed by the severe indictment of the party leadership by the Congress Forum for Socialist Action (FSA). C. Subramaniam, President of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, warned in a report that the party would not make much headway in the 1972 elections unless it adopted a radical programme of socialist action. He wanted the party's goal to be declared as democratic

socialism. He referred to the feeling among the people that Congress was incapable of attacking the vested interests. Different proposals were mooted to prevent a debacle in the 1972 elections.⁹ Some favoured an understanding with "like-minded" parties in the Parliament, to form a stable coalition. Indira Gandhi preferred a radical socialist action programme as a solution.

Against this backdrop, the Congress held its session in Faridabad in 1969, which turned out to be a significant event. On the eve of the session, Indira Gandhi expressed the view that the Congress should not move to the extreme left or extreme right but stick to the middle course with democratic socialism as its objective. The coalition idea was not favoured either by her or the Party President, S. Nijalingappa.

The differences within the party were also founded on ideological grounds. After the electoral defeat, the Congress leaned left-ward. For instance, the 10-point programme in May 1967 adopted by CWC which comprised control over banks, insurance, land reforms, abolition of princely privileges, ceilings on urban property and curbs on business monopolies. The right-wing Syndicate did not appreciate this and wanted better ties with the USA and suppression of Leftist groups. At Faridabad the intra-party wrangles had set the stage for a split. Morarji Desai was the target of a severe attack from the leftists and the "*Young Turks*". BhagwatJha Azad, who was a member of Indira Gandhi's Cabinet, accused some of his ministerial colleagues of sabotaging the implementation of the 10-point programme. Indira Gandhi came to Morarji Desai's defence at the open session but her differences with Nijalingappa over issues like linguistic reorganization of the country, mixed economy, and the role of public sector surfaced. The action taken by Nijalingappa against some of the Young Turks for attacking Desai exacerbated the situation. Nijalingappa sought to make amends in his concluding remarks by reiterating his faith in democratic socialism.

In the weeks following the Faridabad session, the warring groups prepared themselves for the next round of confrontation. The unexpected death of Dr. ZakirHussain, President of India, and the choice of his successor became the new bone of contention between the warring groups. Indira Gandhi preferred a President of her choice with whom she would have a rapport. Her opponents in the Party wanted to have a President of their choice. Their choice was Sanjiva Reddy, who was then the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The decision was to be taken at the Central Parliamentary Board meeting at Bangalore on the eve of the AICC session. She assumed control of the Finance ministry and declared the nationalization of 14 major banks by a presidential ordinance within days of the Bangalore meeting. This was welcomed enthusiastically by the people. This was her way of showing to the Syndicate that she was the one in control. Following this, Morarji Desai resigned from the Cabinet.

However, V.V. Giri, who was the acting President, announced his candidature for the President ship as an independent. The Syndicate was surprised by this move of a veteran Congress leader to oppose the official party nominee. Meanwhile, Giri appealed for a "conscience vote". This was probably the first time that such an appeal had been made. Over the years, elections had been conducted on party basis leaving no scope for the voter to exercise his franchise according to his conscience. It was considered that a conscience vote would break party discipline with dangerous consequences for the stability of the Government, if the party happened to be in power. Giri's plea created a new situation. At the end of it all, Giri got elected with the support of one-third of the party MPs and MLAs,

turning the course of the history of the Congress Party.

Nijalingappa served show-cause notices on Central Ministers for violating party discipline and voting for Giri. Indira Gandhi questioned his authority to take action against party MPs over the head of the CPP. There were over 100 MPs who favoured disciplinary action against those who voted for Giri. They wanted to precipitate a showdown if the CWC failed to act. Indira Gandhi countered this with a threat to recommend dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

In the next few weeks, the events took the direction of a compromise. The CWC came out with a resolution on the need to avert a split in the party. The move for disciplinary action was given up. The supporters of Indira Gandhi in CWC relented in their attack on the Syndicate and Nijalingappa. In the process, the Syndicate lost its strength to a considerable extent. Nijalingappa, however, warned against the *"personality cult"* developing in the country, referring indirectly to the signature campaign started by Indira Gandhi to convene a meeting of AICC to replace Nijalingappa by a leader of her own choice.

The CWC soon met under Nijalingappa and expelled Indira Gandhi from the party and directed the CPP to elect a new leader. One group rejected this directive leading to a formal split creating two Working Committees and two CPPs. The group owing allegiance to Nijalingappa, now called Congress (O) did not have enough strength to stake its claim to run the Government. The group owing allegiance to Indira Gandhi, called Congress (R) had to rely on independents and certain opposition groups like the communists, DMK, etc., for support. Two hundred twenty of the party's Lok Sabha MPs supported Indira and only 68 went with the Syndicate. In the AICC, 446 out of 705 members joined the Congress (R). The formal split at the national level had its repercussions elsewhere in the country and the party split into two in all the states.

GaribiHatao

Elections to the Lok Sabha were held in 1971, a year ahead of the schedule. This was the first time that Indira Gandhi was contesting elections on her own. She gave the pro-poor slogan of 'GaribiHatao' highlighting the need for removal of poverty and hunger. Her opponents turned the campaign into an effort for removing her from power. When asked by the press about the major issues in the campaign, she said, "I am the issue." Her rivals called for 'Indira Hatao' to which she responded with '*GaribiHatao*'.

In this mid-term poll, the Congress (R) secured an overwhelming majority winning 352 out of 518 seats in the Lok Sabha. One of the first acts of the government now was to amend the Constitution to delete property rights from the list of fundamental rights and to abolish privy purses. In the elections to five state assemblies too, the Congress (R) performed well. As a result, the Election Commission recognized it as the real Congress, allowed it to call itself Indian National Congress without any suffix and restored the frozen Congress symbol of two bullock's to it. But, Indira Gandhi's supporters preferred the *"Calf and Cow"* symbol it had adopted after the 1969 split and dropped the suffix R". The morale in the Congress Party was boosted by the way Indira Gandhi carried on the administration and projected the image of the country.

Formation of Bangladesh

Around that time, a liberation movement had begun in East Pakistan under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On 25 March 1971, Pakistani armed forces cracked down upon

the civilian people of East Pakistan and perpetrated genocide on an unprecedented scale. About 10 million refugees migrated from East Pakistan and took shelter in India, leading her to point out that, "an internal problem of Pakistan has become an internal problem of India also." Human rights were violated and world opinion went against Pakistan. Indira Gandhi stood by the suffering people. On 3 December 1971, Pakistan attacked India. India reacted by recognizing the provisional government of Bangladesh and joined with *MuktiVahini of Bangladesh* to resist Pakistan. War with Pakistan broke out on both the eastern and north-western fronts. On 16 December, Pakistani army in East Bengal surrendered and East Pakistan was liberated. A new nation known as Bangladesh emerged. With the surrender of Pakistan in the eastern front, Indira Gandhi declared unilateral cease-fire and a battered Pakistan had no option but to accept it.

Indira Gandhi was at the height of her power in the wake of the 1971 war. She was hailed as ‘*Durga*’, an incarnation of Shakti. The war was seen as her personal success. After all, she had mobilized world opinion on Bangladesh, travelling to all the major capitals of the world except the US which was avowedly hostile. The political fallout of the war was evident in the electoral success of the party in the Assembly Elections of March 1972. It won everywhere, including West Bengal. Soon after this, in 1974, India successfully performed an underground nuclear detonation and became a member of the nuclear club. Despite this, she continued to favour disarmament. At a UN conference on human environment held in 1972 at Stockholm, she also stressed the importance of environmental conservation.

During the Bangladesh crisis Indira Gandhi showed her qualities of decisiveness. The treaty with the Soviet Union was sudden and remarkably effective in counter-balancing American support for Pakistan. The ineffectual brinkmanship of the Nixon government at the height of the war, though calculated to confuse and undermine her government, actually turned to her distinct advantage. After the victory in the Bangladesh war, she reached the climax of her leadership and power. However, there is a remarkable fact about this period of glory: it was intense but curiously brief, which goes on to illustrate the sense in which Marxists use the notion of a long-term or a general crisis. Such periodic advantages cannot be converted into stability of the system as a whole. But for the time, her position seemed literally invincible, because it was based on the invincible combination of radicalism and patriotism: for those who would not support her for the promised removal of poverty could do so for the liberation of Bangladesh; and those who would not support the strength of India would for the eradication of poverty. She had characteristically reduced the opposition to a state of being without any possible slogan: promise of reform outflanked the left just as much as patriotism outflanked the right.

Factors leading to the Emergency

Within two years of her greatest political ascendancy, Indira Gandhi's government was in deep trouble, facing an unprecedented political crisis. Some of the factors which led to this crisis would be unregistered in long-term statistics. *First*, of course, there was the inherent danger of radicalised distributive expectations. If electoral promises raise people's expectations, this could lead to a real performance paradox; for even a performance which was roughly equal to earlier periods would appear poorer because of the government's own move to set higher performance criteria. *Secondly*, economic trends went against the government: some of the circumstances which fuelled the crisis would be difficult to register

in long-term statistics; indeed, use of long-term statistics make unnecessary and inexplicable mysteries out of the short-term finalities of political life. Two mass agitations in Bihar and Gujarat were launched turning the socioeconomic discontent into a political movement. From 1971 -to 1974 as one of the most serious inflationary rises in the Indian economy. Between these years wholesale prices of rice, wheat and pulses went up sharply, and although these may have tapered off later, this would have happened after its political consequences began and developed an autonomous logic of its own. Food shortages in Gujarat set off political trouble in December 1973, starting a chain of events which led to the most serious rupture in Indian political experience since independence. In January 1974 in Gujarat, popular anger over high food prices created conditions of anarchy. This was expressed as a student movement and supported by opposition parties. Strikes, arson, looting and rioting became rampant. President's rule was imposed in the state followed by the dissolution of the Assembly and fresh elections to it were announced for June 1975. Soon after this, in Bihar, a students' movement against the government was launched in March 1974. It was led by Jayaprakash Narayan who gave a call for 'total revolution'. He came out of political retirement and demanded the resignation of the Congress government in Bihar, and asked people to pay no taxes and establish parallel people's governments across the state. It was supported by students, traders, middle classes and a section of the intelligentsia. This was an extra-constitutional and undemocratic movement aimed at unseating the government at any cost. The students clashed with the police on several occasions, leading to 27 deaths in one week. The movement gradually spread to other parts of the country as well. Indira Gandhi refused to succumb to this pressure and did not dissolve the assembly. The movement lost its strength by the end of 1974. The student support dwindled; the poor had never really been mobilized. Indira Gandhi challenged Jayaprakash Narayan to a real electoral battle rather than this unconstitutional approach which he had adopted.

However, the electoral battle was side-lined by the verdict of the Allahabad High Court¹⁰ against Indira Gandhi in the election petition filed by Raj Narain, who had opposed her in her constituency in the Lok Sabha polls and lost. Justice Sinha had dismissed the more serious charges and had convicted Indira Gandhi on the technical and trivial, even frivolous offences against the election law. The verdict charged her with violating the election-law to win her seat and invalidated her election, disallowing her from contesting elections for six years. Indira Gandhi rejected this verdict and appealed to the Supreme Court which allowed her to continue in office. Soon, the results of the Gujarat assembly elections showed that Congress had secured 75 seats as against 87 of the opposing Janata Party in a house of 182.

These two events strengthened the Janata Party and soon they demanded that Indira Gandhi should resign. On 25 June 1975, in Delhi, they announced that a campaign of mass agitation and civil disobedience to force her to resign would be launched on 29 June. Jayaprakash Narayan asked the people to obstruct the functioning of the government and asked the army, police¹¹ and bureaucracy to disobey this 'corrupt' government. In response, Indira Gandhi declared a state of internal emergency in the country on 26 June 1975.

Although the Emergency represented a deeply significant phase of our political history, and showed in different ways both the vulnerability and the strength of Indian democracy, it has been rarely seriously analysed.¹² Some amount of purely empirical and journalistic material is of course available, besides the enumeration of events catalogued by the Shah

Commission. Two radically different explanations are offered for the imposition of the emergency, both of which are exaggerated forms of what are basically sensible ideas. Sometimes it is argued that the emergency lay in the logic of a structural crisis in India's political economy. A second view holds that the crisis leading to the emergency was purely contingent; its reasons lay in her personal unwillingness to give up power—which is true in quite a different sense—that it was after all her difficulties which created the occasion for emergency rule.¹³

Zareer Masani in his biography of Indira Gandhi which he wrote before the events of June 1975 draws attention towards two important features of Mrs Gandhi's personality – “her determination to rise to a challenge and her shrewd instinct for survival.”¹⁴ Indira Gandhi, daughter of the great Jawaharlal Nehru is known for taking impulsive decisions which were decisive and resolute. Aaron S. Klieman mentions that some observers have seen “in her a predisposition toward crisis situations as well as a preference for autocratic rule freed of criticism and dissent.”¹⁵ Balraj Puri in his article about Emergency has tried to summarize the traits of insecurity in Mrs Gandhi's personality which let her seek security in an authoritarian regime. He tries to answer whether these were fascist traits. He quotes, “Indira Gandhi was referred as fascist by her own husband, Mr. Feroze Gandhi, when she was the president of the Congress Party in 1959.”¹⁶

General Elections and the Janata Phase

On 18 January 1977, Indira Gandhi ordered elections to the Lok Sabha, releasing political prisoners and removing curbs on freedom of expression. The decision to call off the Emergency and hold the elections showed the strength of Indian democracy. The Grand Alliance fought these elections under the banner of Janata Party and secured an impressive victory, except in the southern states. It won 330 seats out of 542 in Lok Sabha. The Congress was defeated and it readily resigned from office. The world was impressed with this return to the democratic path in India.

Congress could only win 154 seats in the Lok Sabha;¹⁷ Indira Gandhi herself was defeated in Rae Bareilly by Raj Narain. Sanjay Gandhi was defeated in Amethi. Congress did not get any Lok Sabha seat in UP, Bihar, Haryana and Punjab; Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan returned only one member each to the Lok Sabha on the Congress ticket. The performance in West Bengal, Orissa and Gujarat was equally dismal. Only the South stood by the Congress solidly and Maharashtra gave a marginal majority to the Congress. Y.B. Chavan, was chosen as the leader of the Congress Party in the Parliament.

The 81-year old Morarji Desai took over as the Prime Minister in March 1977. One of the first acts of his government was the dismissal of Congress ministries in 9 states. In the ensuing elections, in June 1977, the Janata Party won in 7 states. Sanjiva Reddy was elected as President in July 1977 with the support of the Janata Party and its allies. The Janata government spent the first two weeks in euphoria and in dismantling the structures of the Emergency. Indira Gandhi was found guilty of committing a breach of privilege of the Parliament and sent to Tihar Jail from the Lok Sabha. All such actions only helped to generate sympathy in her favour among the public.

Indira Gandhi was soon engaged in regaining the lost confidence of the people. An incident in July 1977 in Bihar (Belchi) where Harijans were massacred provided an opportunity for her to visit the place and express her sympathies in the cause of the

downtrodden. This helped in her campaign when she contested the bye-election to the Lok Sabha from the Chikmagalur constituency in Karnataka held in November 1978. She was returned to the Lok Sabha and took her place as the leader of the Opposition.

In the meanwhile, ministers deposing before the Shah Commission squarely placed the blame for the Emergency on Indira Gandhi's shoulders. The Janata Party and a section of the Congress leaders started a campaign against her on all fronts. She was arrested on 3 October 1977 on the charge of abusing the office of the Prime Minister by obtaining illegal benefits from industrialists by seeking some jeeps for her party candidates in the election of 1977. The whole nation was stunned at the triviality of the allegations. However, the next day the judge acquitted her by pointing out that there was no case.

Indira Gandhi's Return to Power

By the end of 1979, elections were ordered to the Lok Sabha, two years ahead of schedule and Indira Gandhi's Congress was returned with a thumping majority of 353 out of 529 seats giving it a two-thirds majority. She became the Prime Minister once again in 1980. One of the first acts of the Congress government was to dissolve the governments in nine states where the Janata Party ruled. In the subsequent elections, the Congress swept the polls in all these states except in Tamil Nadu. Now, 15 out of 22 states were under Congress rule. The Seventh Parliamentary Elections proved to be a resounding personal triumph for Indira Gandhi. While granting that she was blessed with a bountiful measure of financial and symbolic resources the energy and professionalism she displayed as a campaigner clearly made a critical difference in the overall outcome for Congress (I). The nearly two-thirds majority amassed in parliamentary seats provided scope for constitutional changes should the ruling party be inclined to initiate them.

It remains to be seen what these might be, however. As important as the '*Indira factor*' may have been in determining the outcome of the elections, it seems to have been no more important than the split in the Janata Party. This converted the two-party confrontation in 1977 into a three or more party confrontation in 1980. Janata and Charan Singh's Janata (Secular) or Lok Dal opposed each other as well as the Congress (I) in 164 of the 209 Hindi Belt constituencies surveyed in this study. Their combined aggregate vote in most of these constituencies exceeded that of Mrs. Gandhi's party obviously suggesting that a unified Janata might have succeeded in retarding the Indira tide.

Soon after she assumed office, Sanjay Gandhi was killed in an air crash. After getting over this personal loss, Indira Gandhi devoted herself vigorously to the problems waiting to be resolved. An important event of that period was the Summit Meeting of Non-Aligned Movement hosted by India in March 1983. Her contribution in shaping the NAM was regarded quite significant. Indira Gandhi symbolised the Third World's regeneration. Under her leadership, Indian foreign policy matured from the conscious assertion of the rights and aspirations of newly free nations to a keen awareness on their part of their own responsibility in the global context. By refusing to sign the NPT she gained political credit for upholding India's independence and for taking a principled stand against a discriminatory treaty. Similarly, she took an active role in the meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meet (CHOGM) and many other international forums. Indira Gandhi's growing popularity attracted many youngsters to the Congress. She displayed rare statesmanship in tackling international disputes.

In this period, growing communal, linguistic and caste conflicts were issues of major concern. Moreover, terrorism raised its head in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam. Besides these, the problem of the people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka was becoming complex. In Assam, the problem centred on illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. In Sri Lanka, she supported the aspirations of the people of Indian origin, without affecting the national integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka.

In Punjab, the Akali Dal presented a series of demands, including formation of a separate Khalistan. The Government was prepared to concede anything but secession. The terrorists, backed by Pakistan, were disrupting law and order, gunning down innocent people and damaging public property. In dealing with legitimate demands, she had earlier accepted the demand for a Punjabi-speaking state in March 1966 and made Chandigarh a Union Territory which would be the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. This took away the political grounding of the Akali Dal and now, they started taking up more and more communal demands and terrorism struck root in Punjab.¹⁸ The terrorists were targeting Hindus and creating a reign of terror in the state. In 1984, Indira Gandhi ordered the Indian Army to liberate the Golden Temple in Amritsar from the hold of terrorists. This was portrayed as an attack on the Sikh community and their religion and calls for revenge were raised by terrorists against her. On 31 October 1984, she was shot dead by two of her own security men. She thus paid the ultimate price in the service of the nation, trying to retain its integrity and secular character.

Depictions of Indira Gandhi vary greatly from an authoritarian tyrant to a great democratic leader. Throughout her life she was compared to deities, people, and even animals, according to Vipul Tripathi including the goddess Durga, a lioness and even Napoleon.¹⁹ She has also been compared to other powerful women, including Britain's Margaret Thatcher, some calling her India's Iron Lady. At the beginning of her career she was labelled a “*dumb doll*” due to her shyness and lack of public speaking skills. This quickly changed however, and she became a highly regarded orator. At times she was referred to as the only man in her cabinet, and was even addressed humorously as “*sir*” by many in her government. Some of her enthusiastic followers even coined the phrase “*India is Indira and Indira is India.*” World leaders also had their opinions about Indira. Richard Nixon described her as an “old witch” in leaked documents, while George H. W. Bush later recalled her as a “*dedicated and inspirational leader.*”²⁰ Fidel Castro would remember her as a “*sensitive and profound woman,*” while King Juan Carlos I of Spain saw her as a contributor to “*peace, liberty and progress.*”²¹

Indira was a lion-hearted lady who successfully steered the country through some of its worst economic and political crises. She won the hearts of the poor and they responded to her assassination as if they had lost their protector. Kitchen fires were not lit for days in the huts of the poor in remote villages as the news spread that she was no more.

Bangladesh honour Indira Gandhi with Highest Award²²

The highest Bangladesh award — the Bangladesh Swadhinata Sammanona (Bangladesh Freedom Honour) — conferred on the late Indira Gandhi for her outstanding contributions to Bangladesh's Liberation War, was received by her daughter-in-law Sonia Gandhi here on 25th July, 2011. Bangladesh President Zillur Rahman presented the award, the highest honour for any foreign national after 40 years of Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan. Smt. Sonia

Gandhi recalled the fond memories of her mother-in law during the tumultuous days of 1971, when the great Indian leader took a firm, principled stand to side with the oppressed people of then East Pakistan. She concluded her speech saying: “*Joy Bangla, Joy Bangladesh-India Friendship.*”

Conclusion

Indira Gandhi is admired globally as the most charismatic political leader of India. Elected four times as the Prime minister of India. She was the first woman elected to lead a democracy and the world’s longest serving woman Prime Minister from 1966 to 1984 when she was assassinated. During her days as the Prime Minister, displaying extraordinary political skills and tenacity. Gandhi showed an ability to win elections and policies and promoted agricultural productivity. Also, she was the only Indian Prime Minister to have declared a state of emergency in order to ‘rule by decree’ and the only Indian Prime Minister to have been ambition whilst building a formidable international reputation. Thus, she was listed as one of the “*Most Powerful Women of the Century*”.

End Notes

1. Parul Henry Mussen, John Janeway Conger, and Jerone Kagan, *Child Development and Personality*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper * Ro, 1969); pp. 483 ff.
2. *Nehru Letters*, p. 178
3. *Nehru Glimpses*, p. 983.
4. The ‘Syndicate’ was an informal Congress Party caucus which consisted of some central and powerful state leaders. It took shape at the Tirupathi conclave in October 1963 under the shadow of Nehru’s declining years. It included Kamaraj, N. Sanjiva Reddy, S. Nijalingappa- all Chief Ministers from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka respectively: Atulya Ghosh- Ben-gal’s party boss and S. K. Patil- Union Minister and Bombay City party manager. Later, several other prominent Congress leaders from Hindi regions such as C. B. Gupta – U.P. chief Minister, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, Mrs. Tarkeshwari Sinha and K. B. Sahay from the same state (Bihar). Then at the time of the party-split Ashoka Mehta- although of socialist credentials and Morarji Desai with his economic conservatism also joined this group. These Syndicate leaders were generally named as conservative in temperament, traditionalist, status-quoist and rightists, less cosmopolitan. They took party organisation as the basis of government’s any policy and decision and exerted an effective moderating influence on the party till the split and did not jeopardise their positions by radical social change.
5. The successions of Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964 (after Nehru’s death) and of Indira Gandhi in 1966 (following the death of Shastri) were maneuvered by Kamaraj Nadar, then the top power-broker in the Congress party. In the second succession round, Morarji Desai (the present prime minister) refused to abide by Kamaraj’s wishes (As he had in 1964, when he hoped to succeed Nehru); he challenged Gandhi for the post and lost. Kamaraj also engineered Gandhi’s renomination in 1967, this time avoiding an open contest with Desai by placing him in the second spot as deputy prime minister.
6. Press communiqué on the president’s proclamation, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, New Delhi, June 25, 1975.
7. Stanley Allen Renshon, *Psychological Needs and Political Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1974), p. 1; Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, *The Voter Decides* (quoted in Renshon, p. 31).
8. Mrs. Gandhi As Young Turk”, *Thought*, vol. 21, no. 29, 19 July, 1969, p.3.
9. Suresh K. Tameri, *The Wonder Elections of 1971 – Indira Vs the Rest* (Delhi, Vivek Publishing House, 1971), pp. v-vii.
10. The petition was filed in 1971 by Raj Narain, then a members of the Socialist party. He subsequently joined the conservative Bharatiya Lok Dal, which mostly represented landlord and business interests. The BLD merged with several other parties in early 1977 to form the Janata Party; and following the Janata party’s resounding electoral victory in March 1977, Raj Narain was appointed minister of health and family welfare.

11. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Towards Revolution* (New Delhi: Arnold Heimann, 1975), p. 130; *Peoples Action* 9 (January 1975), p. 17.
12. E.G., Ram Joshi, “Dominance with a Difference, Strains and Challenge”, *Economic & Political Weekly* 8 (Annual Number, 1973), and Rajni Kothari, *Democratic Policy and Social Change in India* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1976).
13. Bechtaltdt, Heinrich, “Indira’s India: A Year under Emergency Rule”, *Aussen Politics*, vol. 27, 1976, pp. 289-99.
14. Vijay Prashad, ‘Emergency Assesments’, *Social Scientist*, Vol.24, Nos. 9-10, (September-October 1996), p. 52
15. Klieman(1981), p. 245
16. BalrajPuri, ‘A Fuller View of the Emergency’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.30, No.28 (Jul.15, 1995), p.1736
17. S. DevdasPillai ed., *The Incredible Elections, 1977* (Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1977), pp. xxiv-xxxiv.
18. Bob Sector, “*Sikh Unrest Threatens Unity of Diverse India*,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1984.
19. VipulTripathi, “*What is Indira Gandhi’s Legacy?*” *Rueters*, October 30, 2009, U.S. Edition.
20. G. Parthasarathi and H. Y. Sharada Prasad, *Indira Gandhi: Statesmen, Scholars, Scientists, and Friends Remember*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1985) 94
21. *Ibid.*, 99, 104
22. “*Bangladesh honours Indira Gandhi with highest award*” HaroonHabib *The Hindu*, Dhaka, July 25, 2011
<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/bangladesh-honours-indira-gandhi-with-highest-award/article2293016.ece>

महात्मा गांधीचे सर्वोदयी तत्त्वज्ञान

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प्रास्ताविक – महात्मा गांधी हे फक्त नाव नाही तर एक तत्व प्रणाली आहे. जागतिकीकरण, खाजगीकरण, उदारीकरणाच्या काळात देखील प्रत्येक समस्येचे उत्तर महात्मा गांधीच्या तत्वप्रणालीत मिळते. आज दारिद्र्य, निरक्षरता, अंधश्रद्धा, अस्पृश्यता, जातीयता, व्यसनाधिनता, बेरोजगारी, अस्वच्छता या समस्यांचे मुळ उत्तर हे महात्मा गांधीच्या तत्वप्रणालीत दिसून येते. भारतीय राज्यघटनेतील कलमांवर महात्मा गांधीच्या विचारांचा प्रभाव दिसून येतो. पंचायतराज व्यवस्थेत होत असलेले बदल, पंचायतराजचे सक्षमीकरण, ग्रामसभा, ग्रामस्वराज्य, पंचायतराजला मिळालेले अधिकार, देशातील स्वच्छता अभियान, तंटामुक्ती अभियान, स्वदेशी, स्वावलंबन, प्रशासन, आर्थिक नियोजन, निसर्गनिर्मित न्यायदान या सर्व बाबींवर महात्मा गांधीच्या तत्वप्रणालीचा प्रभाव दिसून येतो. महात्मा गांधींनी अस्पृश्यता निवारणाची गरज प्रतिपादन केली होती. सहकार चळवळीबद्दल देखील त्यांनी विचार मांडलेले आहेत. महात्मा गांधी म्हणतात “देशाचे सामर्थ्य हे केंद्र सरकारवर अवलंबून नसून ते ग्रामपंचायतीवर अवलंबून आहे” म्हणून ग्रामीण भागाच्या विकासासाठी राजकीय व आर्थिक विकेंद्रीकरणावर ते भर देत असत. महात्मा गांधींनी देशाच्या उभारणीसाठी सर्वांगीण दृष्टीकोनातून भारतापुढेच नव्हे तर सर्व जगासमोर सर्व पैलूतून आपले विचार ठेवले. ज्यामध्ये सत्य, अहिंसा, बंधुभाव, कृषि विकास, ग्रामीण विकास, ग्रामोद्योग, राजकीय बाबी, शैक्षणिक विचार, गुणवत्ता वाढ, विचारांची देवाण घेवाण, शांती, संयम, सदाचार, व्यायाम, नितीमत्ता, आरोग्य, न्याय इ. बाबींचा त्यात समावेश होतो.

महात्मा गांधीचे सर्वोदयी तत्त्वज्ञान – महात्मा गांधींनी सर्वोदय ही कल्पना अन टू द लास्ट या ग्रंथातून घेतली आहे. सर्वोदय याचा अर्थ मुळात जास्तीत जास्त व्यक्तींचे हित साधणे होय.

महात्मा गांधीजींनी सांगितलेली सर्वोदयी तत्त्वज्ञानांची मुलतत्वे –

1. काही व्यक्तींचे हित साधण्यापेक्षा सर्व व्यक्तींचे हित साधता आले पाहिजे.
2. सर्वोदय संकल्पनेत संपूर्ण समाजाची भरभराट कषाप्रकारे करता येईल यावर भर दिला आहे.
3. सर्वोदय ही संकल्पना आपल्या देशापुरती मर्यादित नसून ती जागतिकीकरणावर आधारित आहे.
4. सर्वोदयामध्ये देशाचा विकास करण्यासाठी विकेंद्रीकरणावर त्यांनी भर दिला असून उत्पन्नाची सर्व साधने ही एका व्यक्तीच्या मालकीची न राहता ती सर्वांच्या मालकीची कधी होतील याकडे महात्मा गांधीजींनी भर दिलेला आढळतो.
5. खेडी स्वयंपूर्ण करण्याकडे त्यांचा कल होता. सत्तेचे विकेंद्रीकरण करून आर्थिक विकास घडवून आणण्याचे स्वप्न त्यांनी पाहिले होते. पंचायत राज हे त्यांचेच मूर्त रूप आपणास पहावयास मिळते.
6. महात्मा गांधीजींना गरीब श्रीमंत दरी कमी करून वर्गविरहित समाज निर्माण करावयाचा होता.
7. महात्मा गांधीजींनी ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्थेवर भर दिलेला होता आणि ग्रामोदयोगांना प्राधान्यक्रम दिला होता. आजही शासन ग्रामोदयोगांना संरक्षण देताना आढळते याचाच अर्थ गांधीजींचे विचार आत्मसात करते.
8. सर्वोदयी समाजात पिळवणूक होवू नये यासाठी खाजगी मालमत्तेचा नाईनाट करण्याचा हेतू होता.
9. सर्वोदयी समाजात श्रमदानाला प्राधान्यक्रम दिलेला होता.

सर्वोदय आणि खादी ग्रामोदयोग – गांधीजींनी संपूर्ण भारत पिंजून काढला त्यावेळेस त्यांच्या असे लक्षात आले की, भारतात प्रचंड दारिद्र्य आहे. ते आजही आपणास पहावयास मिळते. दारिद्र्य हे बेरोजगारी मुळे निर्माण होते तर बेरोजगारीचे प्रमाण वाढण्याचे कारण उदयोगधंद्याचा अभाव आहे. आजही मोठ्या प्रमाणावर आपण परदेशी वस्तूंचा वापर करीत आहोत. त्या काळी गांधीजींनी खादीच्या वापरावर भर दिला होता त्यामुळे देशामध्ये ग्रामोदयोगांना चालना मिळून बेरोजगारीचे प्रमाण कमी करता येईल असे त्यांना वाटत होते. ग्रामीण भागात ग्रामोदयोग उभे राहिले तर प्रत्येकाच्या हाताला काम मिळून देशातील बेरोजगारी दूर करण्यास मदत होईल. शिवाय खादीचा कापड उन्हाळा, पावसाळा आणि हिवाळा या तीनही ऋतूंमध्ये षरीराला आल्हाददायक असतो. ब्रिटीष काळी यंत्रावर आधारित उदयोग वाढल्यामुळे कुटीर उदयोगाचे मोठ्या प्रमाणावर नुकसान झाले. त्याकाळी गांधीजींनी ग्रामोदयोगावर भर देण्याचे आवाहन केले होते आजही ग्रामीण भागात त्याला मोठा वाव आहे. त्यामुळे ग्रामीण भागात अशा प्रकारच्या सुधारणा केल्यातरी पुन्हा गांधीजींच्या स्वप्नातील सुराज्य आल्याशिवाय राहणार नाही.

ग्रामनियोजन – सर्वोदयामध्ये ग्रामनियोजनास देखील महत्त्वाचे स्थान दिलेले होते. गांधीजी असे म्हणत की, मोठ्या उदयोगामुळे संपत्तीचे केंद्रीकरण होते. ग्रामीण भागात लघुउदयोग निर्माण झाले तर संपत्तीचे केंद्रीकरण होणार नाही व त्यामुळे गरीब व श्रीमंत यामध्ये फार मोठी दरी निर्माण होणार नाही. गांधी विचाराला तिलांजली दिल्यामुळे देशातील संपत्ती ही एका वर्गाकडे केंद्रीत झालेली आपणास आढळते.

खेडयाकडे चला मंत्र – महात्मा गांधीजींनी महत्त्वाचा संदेश दिला आहे तो म्हणजे खेडयाकडे चला, हा संदेश अत्यंत महत्त्वाचा वाटतो त्याचे कारण म्हणजे आज शहरं गजबजलेली आहेत. खेडयातील माणसं शहरात येवू लागली आहेत. ग्रामीण भागातील माणसं शहरात फ्लॅट घेउन समाधान मानू लागली. खेडयातील सुंदर मोकळी हवा बाजूला ठेवून शहराकडे धाव घेवू लागली आहेत. शहरीकरणामुळे असंख्य प्रश्न निर्माण होत आहेत. जागेचे भाव गगनाला भिडले आहेत. अशा परिस्थितीत गांधीजींनी सांगितलेला मंत्र अत्यंत महत्त्वाचा ठरतो. खेडयामध्ये प्रत्येक वस्तू ही किफायतशीर किंमतीत मिळते. खेडी ही जर स्वयंपूर्ण झाली तर देशातील असंख्य प्रश्न दूर झाल्याशिवाय राहणार नाही आणि महात्मा गांधींच्या स्वप्नांतील उदयाचा भारत देश ताठ मानेने उभा राहिल्याशिवाय राहणार नाही यात तिळमात्र शंका नाही. महात्मा गांधीजींच्या मते ग्रामस्वराज्याची ही संकल्पना विकेंद्रीकरणाच्या माध्यमातून अस्तित्वात आणता येते विकेंद्रीकरणाचा केंद्रबिंदू हा ग्राम असेल आणि त्या खेडयाच्या केंद्रस्थानी व्यक्ती असेल. प्रत्येक व्यक्ती आपल्या गावासाठी आत्मसमर्पण करण्यासाठी तयार राहिल. गावातील लोक स्वयंस्फूर्तीने, सहकार्याच्या बळावर आपआपल्या गरजा भागवू शकतील याच माध्यमातून खेडी स्वयंपूर्ण आणि शांततेने आपले जीवन जगू शकतील.

महात्मा गांधींनी आपल्या ग्रामस्वराज्य संकल्पनेत श्रमाला प्रतिष्ठा मिळवून देतात. व्यक्ती हा श्रीमंत असो की गरीब असो त्याने श्रम हे केलेच पाहिजेत. श्रम हे संपत्ती किंवा भांडवलापेक्षा कमी नाहीत. व्यक्तीने श्रमाची पुजा करावी सर्वानी श्रम करण्यामुळे समाजातील वर्ग व्यवस्था नष्ट होईल श्रमामुळे मानवाला शारिरीक स्वास्थ्य देखील लाभेल. गांधीजी काम न करता सुट्ट्या घेणा-या लोकांचा तिरस्कार करतात व श्रमाला प्रतिष्ठा मिळवून देतात.

ग्रामीण भागाची सक्षमता वाढवायची असेल तर आपणास चरखा, खादी व इतर ग्रामोद्योग ही गांधीची त्रिसुत्री ग्रामस्वराज्यात अत्यंत महत्त्वाची आहे. गांधीजी म्हणत शेतक-यांनी शेतीला जोडून इतर जोडधंदे सुरू करणे आवश्यक आहेत. तसेच गावाच्या पुर्ननिर्माणासाठी खाद्यतेल, अखाद्य तेल, तांदुळ, मध, दाळी, खेळणी, चटई, साबण, पेंड, हातकागद, मृत्तचर्माची पादत्राणे, गुळ अशा अनेक वस्तुंचे ग्रामोद्योग सुरू करावेत, ग्रामीण भागात गुरे ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्थेचा महत्त्वाचा भाग आहेत. सहकारी तत्वावर गुरांचे पालन केल्यास अधिक फायदा होईल. गुरांची जोपासणा योग्य प्रकारे करण्यात यावी. प्रत्येक गावात उपलब्ध दुधाच्या विक्रीसाठी सहकारी दुध पुरवठा केंद्र असावे. गांधीजी सांगतात की, आपल्या देशात पुष्कळ ठिकाणी शेतकरी चार चार, सहा सहा महिने रिकामा असतो त्याचा सर्व वेळ गुंतेल असे काम त्याला या काळात नसते तेव्हा तो विनाकारण वेळ काढीत असतो अशा रिकामपणात सुत काढणे हे वेळ जाण्यासाठी व अर्थ प्राप्तीसाठी चांगले साधन आहे. त्यामुळे दारिद्र्य व बेकारी कमी होईल. कापूस चटकन पिंजून काढण्यासाठी या ‘चरखाचा’ उपयोग करावा.

सारांश – आज खाजगीकरण, उदारीकरण, जागतिकीकरणाच्या काळात टिकाकार महात्मा गांधीजींच्या विचारावर टिका करत असले तरीही आज देशात विकासाचे कोणतेही मॉडेल हे गांधी विचार सरणीने प्रेरित असल्याचे दिसून येते संपूर्ण जग गांधींच्या ग्रामस्वराज्य संकल्पनेकडे आदर्शतेने पाहते. जे भारतात प्रत्ययास आले. जसे की अण्णा हजारेच्या राळेगणसिध्दीचा विकास, पोपटराव पवारांचे हिवरे बाजार इ. गावे आज संपूर्ण जगभरात प्रसिध्दीस आहेत. जगभरातून लोक येथे येऊन ग्रामविकासाचा अभ्यास करतात. ही गावे गांधीजींच्या ग्रामस्वराज्य संकल्पनेच्या विचारांच्या प्रेरणेतून घडलेली आहेत. बिहार सारखे राज्य आज व्यसनाधिनतेपासून वाचण्यासाठी संपूर्ण दारूबंदीचा निर्णय घेते. 73 वी व 74 वी घटनादुरुस्ती पंचायतराज सक्षमीकरणासाठी करण्यात आली. महात्मा गांधींच्या विचारांच्या प्रेरणेतून संपूर्ण देशभर स्वच्छ भारत अभियान राबवले जात आहे. विविध विद्यापीठांतून प्रौढशिक्षणाचा प्रसार, प्रचार कार्य सुरू आहे. सध्या स्थितीत शहराबरोबरच खेडयातील, ग्रामीण भागात सोयी सवलती, पाण्याच्या सोयी, सिंचन सोयी, रस्ते, आरोग्य शिक्षण ह्या सर्व सोयी ग्रामीण भागात निर्माण झाल्या तर गांधीजींच्या सर्वोदयी तत्त्वज्ञान देशाला महासत्तेकडे घेउन जाईल.

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प्रथम विश्व युद्ध के बाद बने राष्ट्र संघ नामक अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय संगठन की असफलता अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय व्यवस्था को समतापूर्ण एवं न्यायोचित बनाने हेतु UNO का उदय हुआ था जब द्वितीय महायुद्ध अपने विकराल रूप से पूरे विश्व के जनमानस को आतंकित कर रहा था। संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका के सेनफ्रांसिस्को नगर में 1 जनवरी 1942 को ब्रिटेन, सोवियत संघ, चीन तथा अन्य 26 मित्र राष्ट्रों के प्रतिनिधियों का एक सम्मेलन हुआ जिसमें यह निर्णय हुआ कि ये राष्ट्र सम्मिलित होकर धुरी-राष्ट्रों का सामना करेंगे। इस संगठन को संयुक्त राष्ट्र अथवा 'यूनाइटेड नेशन्स' का नाम अमरीका के तत्कालीन राष्ट्रपति फ्रैंकलिन डी रूजवेल्ट द्वारा प्रदान किया गया। अधिकार पत्र पर 50 राष्ट्रों के प्रतिनिधियों द्वारा 26 जून 1945 को हस्ताक्षर किये गये, पोलैण्ड का प्रतिनिधित्व अधिवेशन में नहीं हुआ था। उसने बाद में इस पर हस्ताक्षर किये और वह 51 सदस्य राज्यों में से एक मूल सदस्य बन गया। अधिकारिक रूप से वर्तमान में 193 सदस्य संख्या वाला संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ 24 अक्टूबर 1945 को अस्तित्व में आ गया था। संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ का विचार एटलांटिक चार्टर (1972) द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया गया था 30 अक्टूबर 1943 को यूएसए, इंग्लैण्ड तथा सोवियत संघ की सरकारों ने अपने-अपने विदेश मंत्रियों के माध्यम से एक सामुहिक घोषणा की तथा इसमें कहा गया की जितनी जल्दी हो सके एक अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय संगठन की स्थापना करने की जरूरत वे महसूस करते हैं, यह संगठन सभी शांतिप्रिय राष्ट्रों की सम्प्रभूता पर आधारित होगा। ऐसे सभी छोटे बड़े राज्य इसके सदस्य बन सकेंगे जो अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय शक्ति एवं सुरक्षा कायम रखने में विश्वास रखते हैं। UNO की पृष्ठभूमि बनाने के लिए बड़े राष्ट्रों के प्रतिनिधियों का सम्मेलन 21 अगस्त 1944 को वांशिगटन के डम्बार्टन ऑक्स भवन में आयोजित किया गया जो 7 अक्टूबर 1944 तक चला। डम्बार्टन ऑक्स प्रस्तावों में ऐसे अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय संगठन की कल्पना की गई। इसमें पुराने राष्ट्र संघ के बहुत से तत्व पाये जाते थे, पर साथ ही ऐसे विचारों का समावेश भी था जिनसे राष्ट्र संघ की त्रुटियों से सबक लिया जा सके। इस सम्मेलन में UNO के प्रमुख अंगों—महासभा, सुरक्षा परिषद, सचिवालय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय न्यायालय के बारे में निर्णय लिया गया। 4 फरवरी 1945 को रूजवेल्ट, चर्चिल तथा रूजवेल्ट का एक शिखर सम्मेलन याल्टा में प्रारम्भ हुआ। सुरक्षा परिषद में मतदान प्रणाली पर महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय याल्टा सम्मेलन में ही संभव हो सका। अमरीका के सेन फ्रांसिस्को नगर में एक नया अधिकार पत्र (चार्टर) स्वीकार किया गया जिसे UNO का चार्टर कहा जाता है चार्टर की शर्तों के अनुसार 24 अक्टूबर 1945 को संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ का प्रादुर्भाव हुआ 24 अक्टूबर को प्रतिवर्ष 'संयुक्त राष्ट्र दिवस' के रूप में मनाया जाता है।

संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ का लोकतान्त्रिकरण

सुरक्षा परिषद में सुधार :- सुरक्षा परिषद संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघ का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण अंग है, क्योंकि इसके प्रस्ताव बाध्यकारी होते हैं। विश्व में शांति और सुरक्षा बनाये रखने का मूल दायित्व सुरक्षा परिषद को सौंपा गया है शीतयुद्धोत्तर विश्व में, विश्व राजनीति में आमूलकरी परिवर्तन हुए हैं, परन्तु सुरक्षा परिषद की संरचना अभी भी द्वितीय विश्वयुद्ध के पश्चात् के शक्ति संतुलन को ही प्रकट करती है। इसलिए

समकालीन विषय में सुरक्षा परिषद की संरचना में परिवर्तन की आवश्यकता है। सुरक्षा परिषद की कमियों को दो भागों में बांटा जा सकता है – (1) पारदर्शिता का अभाव (2) वैधानिकता का अभाव।

पॉल कैनेडी और मॉइकल रेसीमैन के अनुसार “सुरक्षा परिषद अत्यधिक शक्तिशाली संस्था है, लेकिन इसमें पारदर्शिता का अभाव है, क्योंकि सुरक्षा परिषद के स्थायी सदस्य गुप्त विचार-विमर्श के द्वारा किसी भी मुद्दे पर निर्णय ले लेते हैं, तथा मतदान औपचारिकता मात्र होता है। परन्तु 1994 से सुरक्षा परिषद के अध्यक्ष ने एक नई पहल की। जिसके अनुसार पहली बार गैर सदस्य राज्यों से भी सुरक्षा परिषद में विचार-विमर्श किया गया। विशेषकर शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रमों के संदर्भ में। इसके अनुसार सुरक्षा परिषद के द्वारा उन सदस्यों से भी परामर्श किया, जो शांति कार्यक्रमों में योगदान दे रहे हैं।

UNO के संस्थापक सदस्य 51 थे। लेकिन वर्तमान में इनकी संख्या 193 हो गई है, लेकिन अभी भी सुरक्षा परिषद के स्थायी सदस्यों की संख्या 5 ही है। (अमेरिका, इंग्लैण्ड, फ्रांस, रूस, चीन) अफ्रीका और लैटिन अमेरिकी महाद्वीप का स्थायी सदस्यों में कोई प्रतिनिधित्व नहीं है। भारत सृष्टि विषाल लोकतांत्रिक उभरती हुई महाशक्ति को अभी भी स्थायी सदस्यता प्राप्त नहीं है। वे जर्मनी, जापान, भारत, ब्राजील और द.अफ्रीका इसके प्रबल दावेदार हैं।

(1) **कोफी अन्नान के अनुसार :-** 11 मार्च 2005 तत्कालीन संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघ के महासचिव कोफी अन्नान ने सुरक्षा परिषद की सदस्य संख्या बढ़ाने का प्रस्ताव रखा तथा सुझाव दिया कि सुरक्षा परिषद की सदस्य संख्या 24 करनी चाहिए। परन्तु सदस्यों की यह वृद्धि वीटो रहित होगी। सुरक्षा परिषद के विस्तार के लिए इन्होंने दो मॉडल प्रस्तुत किये जो निम्नानुसार हैं। :-

प्रथम मॉडल :- इसके तहत स्थायी सदस्यों की संख्या में 6 बढ़ाने की सिफारिश की गई। इन 6 सदस्यों में अफ्रीका, एशिया प्रशान्त तथा यूरोप-अमेरिका से 2-2 सदस्यों को शामिल किया जाना है। इसके अलावा ही प्रमुख क्षेत्रों से 1-1 अस्थायी सदस्य भी शामिल करने का प्रस्ताव प्रथम मॉडल में शामिल है इसमें मुख्य बात यह है कि नए स्थायी सदस्यों को वीटो का अधिकार नहीं होगा।

(i) 6 नए स्थायी सदस्य, बिना वीटो के

(ii) 3 नए अस्थायी सदस्य, जिनका कार्यकाल 2 वर्ष का होगा।

(iii) सदस्यता में यह विस्तार क्षेत्र के अनुसार किया जाएगा। अफ्रीका महाद्वीप (कुल सदस्य संख्या -53), एशिया प्रशान्त (कुल सदस्य संख्या 56), यूरोप (कुल सदस्य संख्या-48), अमेरिका (सदस्य संख्या -35)

दूसरा मॉडल :- इसके तहत स्थायी सदस्यों की संख्या पूर्णवत ही रहेगी तथा इसमें कोई वृद्धि नहीं होगी, लेकिन अस्थायी सदस्यों की एक नई श्रेणी के सृजन की सिफारिश इसमें की गई, इस श्रेणी में 4-4 वर्ष की सदस्यता वाले 8 सदस्य होंगे तथा इन्हें लगातार अनेक बार भी महासभा द्वारा चुना जा सकता है (परिषद की 2-2 वर्ष की अस्थायी सदस्यता के मौजूदा प्रावधान के तहत किसी देश को लगातार दूसरे कार्यकाल के लिए नहीं चुना जा सकता) इस विकल्प के तहत एक और अस्थायी सदस्य 2 वर्ष की सदस्यता की श्रेणी में बनाया जाएगा।

(i) स्थायी सदस्यों की संख्या में कोई वृद्धि नहीं होगी।

(ii) 8 नए सदस्य सम्मिलित होंगे। जिनका कार्यकाल 4 वर्षों का होगा। लेकिन इनका पुनर्निर्वाचन भी संभव है।

(iii) एक सदस्य अस्थायी होगा। जिसका कार्यकाल 2 वर्ष का होगा, लेकिन इसका पुनर्निर्वाचन संभव नहीं है।

(iv) कुल सदस्य संख्या 24 होगी।

G-4 का प्रस्ताव :- जी-4 का प्रस्ताव इसके सदस्य भारत, ब्राजील, जर्मनी, जापान द्वारा लाया गया। इनके अनुसूचित प्रस्ताव की निम्न विशेषताएं हैं।

- (i) 6 नए स्थायी सदस्य, बिना वीटो के
- (ii) जी-4 के अलावा 2 स्थायी सदस्य अफ्रीकी महाद्वीप से।
- (iii) 4 नए अस्थायी सदस्य होंगे।
- (iv) कुल सदस्य संख्या 25 हो।

संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ में वित्तीय सुधार :- वर्तमान समय में UNO के लिए सबसे ज्यादा आर्थिक योगदान यूएसए का है इसके बाद जापान और जर्मनी UNO को आर्थिक सहायता देने वाले सबसे बड़े देश हैं। ये तीनों देश मिलाकर UNO के कुल खर्च का 50% भाग योगदान करते हैं। वित्तफॉक के अनुसार :- UNO का बजट न्यूयार्क राज्य के प्रशासन के बजट से भी कम होता है। 'इसलिए इनके अनुसार शीतयुद्धोत्तर विष्व में UNO के असक्त होने का मुख्य कारण इसकी वित्तीय कमजोरी है। जबकि शीतयुद्ध युगीन विष्व में वीटो के प्रयोग के कारण UNO का कार्यकरण प्रभावित हुआ। वर्तमान समय में UNO को प्रभावशाली बनाने के लिए निम्न वित्तीय सुधारों की आवश्यकता है।

- (i) प्रत्येक सदस्य राज्य द्वारा अपना निर्धारित योगदान निश्चित समय पर देना चाहिए।
- (ii) UNO के चार्टर के अनु-19 के अनुसार 'यदि किसी सदस्य राष्ट्र का वित्तीय अनुदान बकाया होता है तो उसे महासभा में मत देने का अधिकार नहीं है, परन्तु यह प्रावधान व्यावहारिक रूप में लागू नहीं किया जाता है। इसे सख्ती से लागू करने की आवश्यकता है।
- (iii) USA , जर्मनी, जापान अपनी निर्धारित राशि का भुगतान नहीं कर रहे उन्हें अपना भुगतान समयानुसार करना चाहिए।
- (iv) समकालीन भू-मंडलीकरण, उदारीकरण के युग में UNO के वित्तीय स्रोतों केवल राष्ट्र-राज्यों पर ही निर्भर नहीं होने चाहिए। विद्वानों ने UNO के वित्तीय स्रोतों में वृद्धि के लिए निम्न सुझाव दिये हैं :-
(1) साझी धरोहर के उपयोग पर कर (खुला समुन्द्र, खुला आसमान) (2) वैश्विक वित्तीय विनिमय पर करारोपण (3) अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय वायुसेवाओं के टिकट पर सरचार्ज (4) अंतर्राष्ट्रीय पर्यटन पर शुल्क, (5) ऐसे राष्ट्र जिनकी राशि बकाया हो, उन पर बिलम्ब शुल्क भी लगाया जाये, (6) दक्षिण केन्द्र ने सुझाव दिया की किसी भी देश की योगदान सीमा 12.5% अधिक न हो।

ब्रेटनवुड्स संस्थाओं में सुधार :- अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राकोष एवं विष्व बैंक दोनों ही ब्रेटनवुड्स सम्मेलन के निर्णयों की व्यावहारिक परिणति हैं विष्व बैंक द्वारा सदस्य राष्ट्रों में सन्तुलित आर्थिक विकास प्रोत्साहित करने हेतु दीर्घकालीन ऋण उपलब्ध कराया जाता है जबकि अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राकोष द्वारा सदस्य राष्ट्रों के भुगतान संतुलन में असाध्य को दूर करने के लिए अल्पकालीन ऋण उपलब्ध कराए जाते हैं। 22-23 फरवरी 2014 को आस्ट्रेलिया के सिडनी में सम्पन्न जी-20 देशों के वित्त मंत्रियों एवं केन्द्रीय बैंकों के गवर्नरों का सम्मेलन हुआ। इस सम्मेलन में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्रा कोष (IMF) की मौजूदा कोटा व्यवस्था में सुधार का आह्वान भारत सहित अनेक देशों ने किया। आई एम एफ कोटा की 15वीं सामान्य समीक्षा के संबंध में 2010 में ही सहमति हो गई थी, किन्तु अमेरिकी संसद में इसका अनुमोदन न हो पाने के कारण इसे अब तक लागू नहीं किया जा सका है। कोटा वृद्धि से भारत व उभरती हुई अर्थव्यवस्था वाले देशों के मताधिकार में वृद्धि होगी। कर सूचनाओं के स्वतः ही आदान प्रदान की माँग को स्वीकार करते हुए 2015 तक इसे लागू करने की बात व्यक्तव्य में कही गई है।

विष्व बैंक की प्रारम्भिक अधिकृत पूँजी 10,000 मिलियन डॉलर थी जो कि एक-एक लाख डालर के अंशों में विभक्त की गई थी सदस्यों की सहमति से बैंक की अधिकृत पूँजी में वृद्धि की गई है। 30 जून 1996 को बैंक की अधिकृत पूँजी 188.0 बिलियन डालर थी जिसमें से 18.06 बिलियन डालर की पूँजी सदस्य देशों को अंशों के रूप में जारी की गई विष्व बैंक के अंशों की राशि का भुगतान सदस्य राष्ट्रों द्वारा 2% भुगतान स्वयं अमरीकी डालर या एस डी आर में, 18% अपने देश की मुद्रा में

शेष 80% अंशदान विष्व बैंक द्वारा याचना किए जाने पर ही सदस्य देश द्वारा बैंक में जमा कराया जाता है। विष्व की नई उभरती विकासशील अर्थव्यवस्थाएँ विष्व बैंक की गतिविधियों में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका चाहते हैं। तथा ये प्रयास लगातार जारी हैं। बैंक की गतिविधियों कार्य संचालन संगठन में यूरोप एवं अमेरिका का दबदबा है जबकि बैंक द्वारा अब तक प्रदान किये गये ऋण का 75% भाग विकासशील राष्ट्रों के प्रदान किया गया है। उभरती नई विकासशील अर्थव्यवस्थाएँ बैंक की गतिविधियों संगठन एवं कार्य प्रभावी में अपनी भूमिका चाहती हैं।

विष्व बैंक की एक रिपोर्ट 3 सितम्बर 2003 को वांषिगठन में जारी की गई 'ग्लोबल इकोनॉमिक प्रॉस्पेक्ट्स 2004 : रिअलाइजिंग द प्रोसिस ऑफ दोहा एजेंडा' शीर्षक वाली इस रिपोर्ट को WTO के कैनवुन सम्मेलन के परिप्रेक्ष्य में विष्वतौर पर तैयार किया गया था। रिपोर्ट में इस तथ्य की ओर ध्यान आकर्षित किया गया था कि विकसित राष्ट्रों की व्यापारिक नीतियाँ विकासशील राष्ट्रों के प्रतिकूल बनी हुई हैं। इसमें कहा गया है कि औद्योगिक राष्ट्रों के उत्पादों की तुलना में विकासशील राष्ट्रों के उत्पादों पर ऊँचे प्रभुलक विकसित राष्ट्रों ने आरोपित किये हैं। इसके साथ ही विकसित राष्ट्रों पर यह आरोप भी रिपोर्ट में लगाया गया है की आवाजाही पर से प्रतिबन्ध हटाने की दिशा में कोई विष्व कदम विकसित राष्ट्रों ने नहीं उठाये हैं। कैनकुन वार्ता की सफलता के लिए कृषि को प्रदत्त संरक्षण में कटौती करने की अपील विकसित राष्ट्रों से विष्व बैंक ने की।

यू.एन.ओ. में भारत की भूमिका :- UNO विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में भारत की अतिमहत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है

भारत के द्वारा शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रम में पहली भागीदारी फिलिस्तीन में हुई। शीतयुद्धोत्तर विष्व में UNO द्वारा संचालित 23 शांति अभियानों में से 15 में भारत ने भागीदारी की। भारत कंबोडिया, सोमालिया, खांडा है तो और मोजांबिक के शांति अभियानों में अग्रणी भूमिका निभाई। शांति प्रयासों के संदर्भ में भारत का दृष्टिकोण:- (1) भारत के अनुसार संघर्षरत पक्षों पर सहमति के बाद ही शांति निर्माण अभियानों का संचालन होना चाहिए (2) शांति निर्माण प्रयासों एवं अन्य कार्यक्रम जैसे मानवीय सहायता में स्पष्ट विभाजन होना चाहिए। (3) शांति प्रयासों का निर्धारण देश की परिस्थिति एवं आवश्यकता के आधार पर हो। (4) शांति प्रयासों में भागीदार देशों के सैनिकों को सही समय पर वित्त का भुगतान होना चाहिए।

मार्च 2000 में संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के पूर्व महासचिव 'कोफी अन्नान' ने शांति कार्यक्रमों के अध्ययन के लिए लखादर ब्राहमी की अध्यक्षता में एक विष्व समिति की स्थापना की। इस समिति के अनुसार, शांति अभियानों में सेना के टिके रहने की क्षमता और खतरे उठाने का साहस अतिरिक्त महत्वपूर्ण है। क्योंकि लम्बे संघर्षों के परिणामस्वरूप सेना का टिके रहना कठिन होता है। जैसा कि 1992 में अमेरिका ने सोमालिया से अनेक सैनिकों को वापस आने का आदेश दिया। क्योंकि मोगादिषु में अनेक अमेरिकी सैनिकों की हत्या कर दी है। क्योंकि संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के खतरनाक अभियानों में सोमालिया के अभियान को शामिल किया जाता है। 1993 में भारत के सैनिकों की हत्या हुई और तीन डॉक्टरों की भी हत्या हुई। लेकिन भारत, नाइजीरिया के अभियानों को भी भारत ने अतंतः पूरा किया। यद्यपि वर्ष-2000 में सियरालियोन से भारत ने सैनिकों की पहले वापसी कर दी। भारत के द्वारा संचालित शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रमों में अनेक कार्यक्रम गैर-सैन्यगतिविधियों से संबंधित रहे हैं उदारणार्थ - कंबोडिया, अंगोला, मोजांबिक में चुनाव का निरीक्षण करने के लिए भारतीय शांति सैनिकों को तैनात किया गया। सोमालिया खाण्डा में भारतीयों को पुलिस कार्य भी सौंपे गये। सिमरालियोन, अंगोला तथा कांगो में विस्थापित लोगो के पुनर्वास के लिए भारतीयों को तैनात किया गया। लेबनान तथा कंबोडिया में सिविल प्रशासन और राष्ट्र निर्माण में भारतीयों का कार्य सौंपे गये। यह उल्लेखनीय है कि शीत युद्ध के बाद के युग में राज्यों के अन्दर उत्पन्न होने वाले गुह युद्ध की संख्या में निर्णायक बढ़ोतरी हुई है। इसलिए वर्तमान समय में अधिकांश शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रम राज्यों के आन्तरिक संघर्षों के संदर्भ में

संचालित किये जा रहे हैं। जबकि शीत युद्ध के दौरान ज्यादातर शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रम दो राज्यों के मध्य होने वाले संघर्षों में तैनात किये गये। भारतीय शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रम में उल्लेखनीय उपलब्धि सतीष नांबियार द्वारा 1992 के यूगोस्लावियाई शांति अभियान कार्यक्रम के मुखिया थे। जबकि वर्ष 2000 में जनरल विजय जेटली को सियरालियोन के शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रम में अध्यक्ष बनाया गया। 27 सितम्बर 2014 को महासभा के 69वें सत्र को सम्बोधित करते हुए भारत के प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने इस बात पर बल दिया कि यू एन ओ पीस कीपिंग मिशनों में सैन्य टुकड़ियों का योगदान देने वाले देशों को निर्णय प्रक्रिया में शामिल करना

सामाजिक-आर्थिक परिषद के द्वारा पूरे विश्व में लोगों के सामाजिक-आर्थिक कल्याण के कार्य संपादित किये जाते हैं। जिससे विश्व में युद्ध और संघर्ष की परिस्थितियां समाप्त हो जाये। सामाजिक-आर्थिक परिषद के द्वारा विश्व में शांति स्थापित करने का सकारात्मक प्रयत्न किया जाता है। भारत सामाजिक आर्थिक परिषदका पहला अध्यक्ष निर्वाचित किया गया था, परिषद के द्वारा विश्व में बीमारी, गरीबी और अपिक्षा के उन्मूलन के लिए 'सहस्राब्दि विकास लक्ष्य' को क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा है। इस संदर्भ में सहायता के द्वारा इन लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। सामाजिक आर्थिक परिषद के अन्तर्गत कार्य करने वाली विभिन्न एंजेसियों में भी भारत की भूमिका उल्लेखनीय है। इन एंजेसियों से भारत को बड़ी आर्थिक सहायता भी प्राप्त हुई है उदाहरण के लिए यूनिसेफ के द्वारा अभी भी भारत को सबसे बड़ी आर्थिक सहायता प्रदान की जाती है दूसरी और 'संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ विकास कार्यक्रम' के द्वारा भी भारत को सर्वाधिक सहायता प्राप्त होती है पर्यावरण के संरक्षण के लिए स्थापित 'यूनाइटेड नेशंस फ्रेमवर्क कन्वेंशन ऑन क्लाइमेट चेंज (UNFCCC)' में भारत की भूमिका उल्लेखनीय है। अक्टूबर 2014 में भारी बहुमत से भारत को यूएनओ की आर्थिक सामाजिक परिषद हेतु पुनर्निर्वाचित किया गया है।

यू एन ओ में महासभा सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण अंगों में से एक है। क्योंकि सभी राज्यों को इस संस्था में समान प्रतिनिधित्व प्राप्त होता है। यू एन ओ महासभा के 13वें अधिवेशन में भारत को अध्यक्ष निर्वाचित किया गया। समकालीन समय में गठित होने वाले शांति निर्माण आयोग में भी भारत सदस्य है। क्योंकि विश्व के पहले 5 राज्यों शांति निर्माण कार्यक्रमों में योगदान देने वालों में भारत शामिल है।

वर्तमान विश्व, लोकतंत्र और मानवाधिकारों का युग है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के द्वारा मानवाधिकारों के संरक्षण को और प्रभावी बनाने के लिए वर्ष 2006 में मानवाधिकार परिषद् की स्थापना हुई। इस परिषद में भारत को सदस्य के रूप में निर्वाचित किया गया। वर्तमान में भारत सरकार इसका सदस्य है श्रीलंका के मुद्दे पर मानवाधिकार परिषद में पहली बार भारत ने किसी देश विषय के विरोध में मतदान किया। क्योंकि तमिलों की स्वायत्तता पुर्नवास के संदर्भ में श्रीलंकाई सरकार के द्वारा किये गये प्रयत्न पर्याप्त नहीं थे। अक्टूबर 2014 में मानवाधिकार परिषद हेतु भारत का पुनर्निर्वाचन हुआ है।

विश्व वैधानिक संघर्षों के शांतिपूर्ण समाधान के लिए संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ का एक महत्वपूर्ण अंग 'अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय न्यायालय' है जिसमें अनेक भारतीय न्यायाधीशों की भूमिका उल्लेखनीय रही है वर्तमान में दलबीर भंडारी, अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय न्यायालय में न्यायाधीश के रूप में कार्यरत भारतीय है।

ब्रेटनवुड्स संस्थाओं में भारत की भूमिका के रूप में भारत का अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्रा कोष से घनिष्ठ संबंध रहा है। इसकी नीति निर्माण एवं कार्य संचालन में भारत निरन्तर योगदान देता रहा है। समय-समय पर आर्थिक सहायता एवं परामर्श द्वारा भारत IMF से लाभान्वित हुआ है। भारत IMF का संस्थापक सदस्य रहा है। IMF में भारत का प्रतिनिधित्व एक कार्यकारी निदेशक करता है। जो अन्य तीन देशों – बांग्लादेश, श्रीलंका, व भूटान का प्रतिनिधित्व भी करता है। 1970 तक भारत अधिकतम अभ्यर्थों वाले प्रथम पाँच देशों में से था और इस नाते उसको कार्यकारी निदेशक मण्डल में स्थायी स्थान प्राप्त था और इस नाते उसको कार्यकारी निदेशक मण्डल में स्थायी स्थान प्राप्त था। IMF के 14वीं कोटा समीक्षा के तहत भारत का कोटा 5821.5 मि. SDR से बढ़कर 13114.4 मि SDR हो गया। IMF में भारत का

आठवां बड़ा कोटाधारी स्थान हो गया है। भारत दान के रूप में IMF के सब्सिडी खाते में पैसा देता है और 10 लाख डॉलर प्रतिवर्ष अर्थात् 15 वर्षों तक कुल 1.5 करोड़ डॉलर प्रदान करने का वायदा भारत ने IMF से किया है। भारत ने IMF के (Poverty Reduction Growth Facility-PRGF) ट्रस्ट के सब्सिडी खाते को जुलाई 2006 के दौरान तेरहवीं वार्षिक किस्त के रूप में 10 लाख डॉलर का भुगतान किया था जो कि लगभग 4.7 करोड़ रुपये के बराबर था।

27 दिसम्बर 2014 को न्यूयॉर्क में यू एन ओ महासभा के 69वें सत्र के सम्बोधन में भारत के प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ की विगत वर्षों की उपलब्धियों पर संतोष व्यक्त किया तथा साथ ही आगे आने वाली चुनौतियों के संदर्भ में इस संगठन में सुधारों की मांग दोहराई। तथा जीवन शैली में बदलाव लाने की आवश्यकता बताते हुए योग के महत्व का उल्लेख किया तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस की दिशा में कार्य करने का आह्वान किया परिणाम स्वरूप संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ ने भारत के प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के प्रस्ताव को स्वीकार कर 21 जून को प्रतिवर्ष 'अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस' के रूप में मनाने का निर्णय लिया है।

उपर्युक्त विवेचनार्थ स्पष्ट है कि भारत ने शांति स्थापना, निःशस्त्रीकरण, उपनिवेशवाद के उन्मूलन, नवीन सदस्यों के विषय संस्था में प्रवेश आदि प्रश्नों पर यू एन ओ के साथ पूर्ण सहयोग किया। भारत यू एन ओ के अंगों का सक्रिय सदस्य रहा है भारत सात बार सुरक्षा परिषद का सदस्य रहा है संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ का विषयव्यापी बनाने में भारत की भूमिका अद्वितीय रही है। भारत यू एन ओ में शांति स्थापना बजट में अपना प्रादेशात्मक अंश दान देता रहा है संयुक्त राष्ट्र में भारत के योगदान के संदर्भ में मांग की जा रही है कि सुरक्षा परिषद के विस्तार में भारत को भी स्थायी सदस्यों की श्रेणी का दर्जा दिया जाये। जिसकी मांग यू एन ओ महासभा के 69वें सत्र को सम्बोधित करते हुए भारत के प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने की।

संदर्भ :—

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राष्ट्रीय एकता और साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव की प्रतीक सूफी दरगाह खानकाहे-नियाजिया का संगीत में योगदान

डॉ० रुचि गुप्ता

एसो०प्रो० संगीत

साहू रामस्वरूप महिला महाविद्यालय

बरेली (उ०प्र०)

भारत के ऋषि-मुनियों, सूफी संतों का मुख्य उद्देश्य सदा से ही अमन-चैन शान्ति-भाईचारे की परम्परा रहा है। आध्यात्मिकता की सीढ़ी से उन्होंने जन सामान्य को एकता के सूत्र में पिरोने का काम किया। सूफी मत में संगीत को विशेष माना गया है क्योंकि वे संगीत को अपनी साधना का माध्यम मानते हैं। सूफी संतों की यह दृढ़ मान्यता है कि आत्मा के अस्तित्व में संगीत भी घुला हुआ है। भारत में अनेक ऐसी दरगाहें और खानकाहें हैं जहाँ सभी धर्मों के लोग श्रद्धा से अपना सिर झुकाते हैं और रुहानी सुकून का अनुभव करते हैं।

बरेली स्थित खानकाहे-नियाजिया वास्तव में साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव और राष्ट्रीय एकता की जीतीजागती मिसाल है। यह वह स्थान है जहाँ से जाति, धर्म से अलग प्रेम-मौहब्बत और नेकी का संदेश निकलता है, इंसान को इंसान बनाने का संदेश फैलता है। सही अर्थों में यह कौमी एकता का घर ही है। हजरत ‘मौलाना शाह नियाज़ अहमद’ साहब बरेलवी ने खानकाहे-नियाजिया की बुनियाद रखी। नियाज़ साहब चिशितया सिलसिले से सम्बन्ध रखते हैं। वे ‘ख्वाजा गरीबनवाज’ के रुहानी जानशीन (प्रतिनिधि) थे। ख्वाजा गरीबनवाज में ‘बसंत’ की परम्परा आप ही के द्वारा प्रारम्भ की गई जो आज भी वहाँ हर साल उत्सव के रूप में मनाई जाती है। वहाँ इस अवसर पर जो ‘बसंत’ गीत के रूप में गाये जाते हैं वह ‘अमीर खुसरो’ और नियाज साहब के द्वारा ही रचित होते हैं।

‘खानकाहे-नियाजिया’ बरेली में स्थित है। बरेली उत्तर-प्रदेश का एक महत्वपूर्ण और समृद्धशाली नगर है, जो लखनऊ और दिल्ली यानि प्रदेश और देश की राजधानी के मध्य का केन्द्र है। इस शहर का इतिहास लगभग पाँच हजार वर्ष पुराना है। यह प्राचीनतम ‘पांचाल’ नाम से प्रसिद्ध राज्य का एक हिस्सा है। इसी सांस्कृतिक पृष्ठभूमि वाले शहर में यह सूफी दरगाह साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव की अनूठी मिसाल है। सभी धर्मों के लोग यहाँ बिना किसी भेदभाव के इकट्ठा होते हैं क्योंकि खानकाहे-नियाजिया की बुनियाद ही इसी मूल्य पर रखी गई है कि ईश्वर के साथ सीधा-सच्चा रिश्ता तभी बन सकता है जब इंसानों के साथ हमारा प्रेम व स्नेह निस्वार्थ हो। इस दरगाह की मूल विचारधारा ही है इंसानियत के क्या मायने और अर्थ है यही महत्वपूर्ण है, धर्म और जाति से ऊपर है इंसानियत। यही कारण है यहाँ सभी धर्मों के लोग अपना सिर नवाते हैं।

खानकाहे-नियाजिया में प्रतिवर्ष ‘जश्ने चिरागां’ का आयोजन होता है जिसमें सभी धर्मों के लोग दिल में मन्नत और मुराद लिये हुये चिराग रोशन करते हैं और दुआयें माँगते

हैं। इस पर्व का मूल संदेश ही है जैसे बाहर ये चिराग रोशन होकर चारों तरफ प्रकाश फैला रहे हैं वैसे ही हम सबके दिलों में भी चिराग रोशन हों और अंदर का अंधेरा खत्म हो। जब इस सूफी दरगाह में चिराग जलते हैं तो हर तरफ रोशनी ही रोशनी बिखरी होती है और खानकाहे-नियाजिया दुल्हन की तरह रोशन दिखाई देती है। बिना किसी मजहबी भेदभाव के इस अवसर पर मन्नों के चिराग उठाने के लिये लोग दूर-दूर से इकट्ठा होते हैं।

इसी सूफी दरगाह की एक खास और आम रवायत कि यहाँ एक साथ एक ही दस्तरखान पर सभी धर्मों के लोग बैठते हैं। रमजान में तो हर दिन रोजा इफ्तार में एक साथ हिन्दू-मुस्लिम-सिख-ईसाई खाते-पीते दिखाई देते हैं। सबसे बढ़कर तो यह है कि यहाँ से जुड़े ब्राह्मण हिन्दू तक जो बाहर से आकर अपनी तरफ से रोजा इफ्तार कराने यहाँ विशेष तौर पर आते हैं। यही अंदाज और परम्परायें खानकाहे-नियाजिया की अलग पहचान बनाये हुये हैं। किसी भी धर्म का कोई भी व्यक्ति अगर यकीन और श्रद्धा लेकर आता है तो उसको फायदा जरूर मिलता है। यही वजह है कि यहाँ से सभी की आस्थाएँ जुड़ी हुई हैं।

चिशितया सिलसिले से जुड़ी इस सूफी दरगाह का संगीत से विशेष सम्बन्ध रहा है। यहाँ के सभी सूफी संत संगीत के बहुत बड़े ज्ञाता और पारखी रहे हैं। संगीत के विश्वस्तरीय लगभग सभी बड़े कलाकार यहाँ के मुरीद रहे हैं, वे सभी धर्मों के हैं। ये पद्मपुरस्कारों से सम्मानित कलाकार समय-समय पर यहाँ दरगाह में ही आयोजित होने वाले संगीत समारोहों में अपने कार्यक्रम की प्रस्तुति के रूप में हाजिरी देना अपनी खुशकिस्मती समझते हैं। यहाँ ‘बड़े गुलाम अली खाँ’, ‘उ० अमहद जान थिरकवा’, ‘शंभू महाराज’, उ० मुश्ताक हुसैन खाँ’, ‘उ० अलाउद्दीन खाँ’, ‘उ० बिसमिल्लाह खाँ’ ‘लच्छू महाराज’, ‘बिरजू महाराज’, ‘पं० वी०जी० जोग’, ‘पं० शिवकुमार शर्मा’, ‘उ० विलायत खाँ’, ‘बेगम अख्तर’, ‘गिरजा देवी’, ‘रीता गांगुली’ जैसे न जाने कितने कलाकारों की एक लम्बी फौरिस्ट है। यहाँ की महफिलों का स्वरूप देखकर वे खुद अचम्बित हो जाते हैं और स्वयं यहाँ आकर धन्य मानते हैं। उनका मानना है कि उनके कला के शिखर तक पहुँचने में खानकाह के इन सूफी संतों की दुआओं का ही असर है। यह बरेली का सौभाग्य है कि इस सूफी पवित्र स्थली के कारण अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय ख्यातिप्राप्त कलाकारों को वे देख-सुन पाते हैं।

संगीत यहाँ के कण-कण में बसता है। अपनी स्थापना से लेकर आज तक यहाँ के सूफी संतों की सात्विक खुराक रहा है संगीत। संगीत की नाद-ऊर्जा से इंसानों के मन-शरीर और आत्मा को एक सूत्र में पिरोया जाता है फिर धर्म तो बहुत पीछे छूट जाता है यहाँ। यहाँ के सूफी साधकों ने संगीत से परमानंद की प्राप्ति की वरन् उन कलाकारों को भी उस ब्रह्मानंद-सहोदर का अनुभव कराया जिन्होंने यहाँ अपनी कला का प्रदर्शन किया। यही कारण है, वो कलाकार बार-बार यहाँ आकर उसी आत्मतृप्ति का अनुभव करना चाहते हैं जो उन्हें और कहीं नहीं प्राप्त होती।

यहाँ किसी प्रकार का कोई चंदा नहीं, लेन देन नहीं। संगीत को सजाने-संवारने

का जो काम यहाँ के वीतरागी सूफी बिना किसी प्रचार की चाह रखते हुये कर रहे हैं वह अतुलनीय हैं। प्रत्यक्ष और अप्रत्यक्ष रूप में वे साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव को सहेजने का काम कर रहे हैं। साम्प्रदायिक द्वेष का यहाँ कोई स्थान नहीं, यहाँ तक कि विकट विपरीत परिस्थितियों में भी साम्प्रदायिक धार्मिक विद्वेषों से अछूती रही है यह सूफी दरगाह। वस्तुतः संगीत ही ऐसी विधा है जो बैर खत्म कर दिलों को आपस में जोड़ती है और श्रोता सारे भाव भावनाओं को भूलकर सुरों में ही रम जाते हैं। खानकाहे-नियाजिया वह आध्यात्मिक इकाई है जहाँ धर्म नहीं बल्कि प्रेम और सद्भाव व्यक्ति को व्यक्ति से, कलाकार को कलाकार से, कला को भाव से जोड़ रही है। न केवल पुरानी पीढ़ी के कलाकार, वरन् युवा पीढ़ी – नई पीढ़ी के कलाकार यहाँ से जुड़ कर संस्कारित हो रहे हैं। न केवल संस्कारित हो रहे हैं बल्कि पुरानी परम्परा और विरासत को आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं। उनके अनुसार कलाकारी तौर तरीके, विनम्रता, तहजीब सब यहीं से सीखने को मिलता है। अगर युवा पीढ़ी को भविष्य की सही राह मिल जाये तो निश्चित तौर पर भटकाव के स्थान पर निर्माण और सृजन ही होगा। नई पीढ़ी के कलाकारों का इस स्थान विशेष के लिये यह मानना है कि यह स्थान हमें एक सकारात्मकता, एक ऊर्जा देता है एक प्रकार की Positive Energy हमें यहाँ आकर मिलती है, हम तो यहाँ Recharge होने आते हैं यह बहुत बड़ी बात है। संगीत भक्ति का माध्यम है, यहाँ कलाकार यह पूरी तरह अनुभव करता है। खानकाहे नियाजिया में प्रदर्शन कर चुके सभी कलाकारों का यह अनुभव रहा है कि यहाँ प्रदर्शन करते समय वो खुद को भूल जाते हैं। प्रदर्शन करते समय उन्हें यह एहसास नहीं रहता कि वो कहाँ हैं? उपज अपने आप बनती चली जाती है। कला की सच्चाई, सादगी, सात्विकता जब आ जाती है तब कलाकार आत्मतृप्ति का अनुभव करने लगता है। समर्पण का भाव संगीत में आत्मतृप्ति और स्वरों में सच्चापन लाता है, जो कलाकार यहाँ आकर महसूस करता है।

यहाँ के लगभग सभी सूफी संतों-साधकों ने ब्रज, उर्दू, फारसी भाषाओं में बहुत-सा काव्य रचा है, जिसका न केवल काव्यगत वैशिष्ट्य है वरन् संगीत की दृष्टि से भी वह अनमोल है क्योंकि वह गेय है। यहाँ के सूफी संतों ने सांगीतिक महत्व की बेशकीमती रचनायें बनाई हैं और उनके राग, ताल भी स्वयं निर्धारित किये हैं। उनके वर्ण्य विषय मनमोहन, श्यामसुंदर हैं जो उनकी ब्रज के रचित पदों को देखने से पता चलता है। यह साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव नहीं तो क्या है? जिस प्रकार खुसरो ने धर्म से ऊपर उठकर बहुत सा काव्य रचा है उसी परम्परा का अनुसरण यहाँ के सूफी संतों ने किया है। बानगी के तौर पर कुछ उदाहरण यहाँ दे रही हूँ-

1. सुन धुन मुरली मनमोहन की, सुधबुध सब बिसरानी
सखी सहेली, संग की खेली नाहिं परत पहचानी
2. मनमोहन जब छब दिखलाई, सरसों फूली आँखिन मां
प्रेम की जर्दी मुख पर छाई सरसों फूली आँखिन मां
श्यामसुन्दर की जब सुध आई सरसों फूली आँखिन मां
3. मनमोहन प्यारों मोहि तज दीन्हों री

पहले तो बांकी आन दिखा के,
मन मेरौ हर लीनो री

4. होरी खेलन श्याम से , मैं चली बृज की नगरिया

साम्प्रदायिक एकता और सद्भाव का इससे बड़ा प्रमाण और क्या हो सकता है। संगीत और अपने काव्य के माध्यम से हिन्दू-मुस्लिम एकता की मशाल को जलाये रखने में खानकाहे-नियाजिया का योगदान कम नहीं आंका जा सकता। आज के बिगड़ते माहौल और अलगाववाद के दौर में यहाँ के सूफी संतों का यह मानना है कि इस स्थान से संगीत के सुरों के माध्यम से प्यार-मौहब्बत, खुलूस और अपनेपन का पैगाम पूरी दुनिया में अपने पैर पसारे।

सन्दर्भ—

खानकाहे नियाजिया पर किये
गये शोध के आधार पर

The role of panchayats in rural development: An appraisal

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Abstract

The Panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. Plan documents of both the central and state governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments. Second five-year plan envisaged a panchayat as responsible for village development keeping transformation of social and economic life of rural areas as its goal of development. It says that, the rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organization in the village which can bring all the people, including the weaker sections, in to common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of administration. To achieve this objective the second Five year Plan entailed the Panchayats to perform civic, developmental, land management, land reform and judicial functions. Subsequent plans and policy pronouncements of national leader to emphasized the role of Panchayats in village development-The role of panchayat Raj institutions as instruments of rural reconstruction and development needs no emphasis. They have been reorganized with wider powers and financial resources not merely as institutions of political participation but institutions of social and economic development. The present paper is an attempt at understanding the role of panchayat raj institutions in rural development in India.

Introduction

Rural communities have been in existence in India since time immemorial. These rural communities used to be administered by the village panchayats i.e. a local body consisting of elderly persons of the concerned village at local level. It represented a system by which the innumerable village republics of India were governed /administered. The system survived in spite of turmoil's and changes because the village folk were fully confident of their own capabilities of sound thinking and right approach to problems. These village panchayats functioned as little republics mainly concerned with adjusting civil disputes besides a wide spectrum of activities covering administrative, developmental and executive. The advantages are derived from its ability to involve people in decision-making, bring in awareness and motivate people, build up development psyche, discover dormant resources and skills and endeavor to activate them. It has also the advantage of realistic appreciation of local needs and participation of people in planning.

Structural and functional changes in the instruments of society are either brought about in planned or unplanned manner. With planned social change desired goals can be achieved in shorter span. Some people consider only structural change should be there and then in various forms inputs should be given to accelerate the pace and this may be achieved through proper planning. But others think that structural change automatically leads to functional change. Keeping this in mind panchayat raj institutions (PRIs) were enacted. In other words, PRI is an attempt to bring planned social change in rural society in particular. Planned social change

tries to satisfy the masses so that they do not resort to revolution. But is this a reality or myth, can be clarified only if we study various aspects of PRIs.

The evolution of panchayats

Villages have been the basic unit of administration in India since ancient times. In India, most indigenous local consultative bodies seem to have had a caste origin. Within most castes, there were panchayats meeting to hear cases and arbitrate between fellow caste members involved in disputes, and punish offenders against rules and customs. Inter caste panchayats were also formed to hear disputes between members of different castes. These Panchayats also carried out the functions related to social customs, marriage and rituals. The importance that was attached to the village organization (panchayats) in pre-historic India is evident from Vedic and post Vedic literature. Vedic hymns frequently prayed for the prosperity of the villages. Kings like Bimbisara used to convene a meeting of village headman to discuss important questions of administrative policy.

The village administration in ancient times was carried on under the supervision and direction of the village headman called gramani, gramika or gramnayaka in northern India, mununda in eastern Deccan, gramukuta or pattakila in Maharashtra, gavunda in Karnataka and mahattaka in U.P. His post was hereditary. He performed functions like defence of village, watch and ward, collection of government revenue etc. He also acted as ex-officio president of village council.

During Gupta period (300-500 A.D.) the village councils were known as janapadas. The village council looked after the village defense, settled village disputes, organized works of public utility, acted as trustee for minors, collected government revenue and paid them into treasury. The history of panchayats indicates that there are more ups and much more downs. During Pre British period panchayats received periodic jolts because in actual practice many kings failed to live up to the ideal. The tyrannical kings demolished the local institutions to achieve their selfish goals.

During British period the village institutions in reality break up. The most important reason was a change in the structure of administration attuned to the requirements of the rulers. Under the highly centralized system of British administration, all the activities were controlled and governed by directions from the head quarters, and village assemblies not established by state had no place. For the state to gain power, establish law and order, the judicial role of panchayats in administering criminal and civil justice was usurped by district courts.

It did not however take long for the British rulers themselves to realize the utility and importance of village organization, and soon, one after another, they began to shower fulsome praise on these organizations referring to them as “the soul of corporate life in the rural areas.” In the words of Elphinstone “these communities contain in miniature all the materials of a state within themselves and are almost sufficient to protect their members.” The British imperial government wanted the speedy development of infrastructure from the standpoint of its commercial and administrative interests. The central British government could not bear this heavy burden. In these circumstances, raising resources by levying local taxes for local objects was considered a financially wise proposition.

The need to relieve the burden on imperial finances by levying local rates and taxes prompted Lord Mayo to move a resolution culminating in Local Funds Act, 1871. It envisaged that

local interests and supervision be brought to bear on the management of funds devoted to sanitation, public works and education for the masses. The government would provide only grant-in-aid. Lord Ripon's resolution of 1882 increased the scope of revenues and functions of these bodies. In 1909, Royal commission on decentralization recommended local self-body at district level and sub district boards in each taluka and tehsil and village panchayat at village level. The government of India Act 1919 provided for the least possible outside control over the local bodies. Local self government became a provincial and transferred subject under an Indian minister. From 1887 to 1900 district boards and taluk boards were set up all over India, at least all over British India. They consisted mainly of nominated members and almost as many officials; and mainly their functions were roads, health and primary education.

At the time of formation of Constitution, the inclusion of Panchayats was not considered. After discussions in constituent assembly a provision was included in part IV of the Constitution (in the Directive Principles of State Policy) but under Art 40 local bodies and panchayati raj as a subject was vested with the states. In the Constitution panchayati raj was not made mandatory and operational but accommodated only as a policy directive, because Ambedkar condemned these feudal, feud-stricken, localists, communalist sinks of medieval vintage where the weaker sections were the victims.

Early initiatives for rural development

In pursuance of the development ideology to which the country is irrecoverably committed, the Government of India initiated a bold and systematic programme of rural development known as community development project on 2nd October, 1952. It was to cover whole India by the end of third 5-year plan. This programme introduced a new unit of development administration namely the block that comprises about 100 villages and was administrated by state government functionaries who were enjoined to enlist the people's participation in its execution.

Community development was defined in different ways but it was to assist each village first in having effective panchayat cooperatives and schools and then through these village institutions plan and carry out integrated, multiphase family, village, block, district plans for increasing agricultural production, improving existing village crafts and industries and organizing new ones, providing health services, educational facilities for children, adult education programmes, and programmes for village women and youth. It enlarged social services more rapidly than the production of rural incomes. It did not sufficiently improve the economic condition of the distressed poor, the sharecroppers and labourers.

Still process of rural development continued with launching of special programmes of rural development like Intensive Agricultural Development Programme (IADP); Employment Guarantee Scheme, Backward Area Development Programme; Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP), Hill Area Development Agency, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Minimum Needs Programme, Antyodaya Programme, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training Of Rural Youth For Self Employment (TRYSEM), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) etc.

Integrated Rural Development Programme incorporates rural construction, target sector, community development, between area development and growth center approaches and

transcends them all. It is a multidisciplinary programme, which makes in depth survey of areas and draws up a time bound schedule.

Later on in 1953, another programme the National Extension Service Programme (NES) was put into operation for the upliftment of rural masses through employment etc. But these programmes could not enthuse masses as these became government programmes with less degree of people's participation instead of people's programmes with government assistance (Dyal, 1970). The fundamental error due to which National Extension Plan failed was the failure to realize the importance of village initiative, village democracy, village economics, village government without bureaucratic incubus, beyond simple, being tools of developmental projects dictated by technological bosses and planning experts. The structural weakness of panchayats reduced them to only a structure overpowered by castes and political leaders.

Balwant Rai Mehta Committee

It was in such circumstances that the committee on plans projects appointed a study team in 1957 for special investigation into reorganization of district administration. The committee is known as Balwant Rai Mehta Committee. It commended the forum of a three tier hierarchical system of rural government to be called Panchayati Raj (Rule by local councils). The three tiers are the Village panchayat (Village level), Panchayat Samiti (Intermediate level) and Zila Parishad (District level). The principal thrust of this report was towards the decentralization of democratic institutions in an effort to shift decision making centers closer to the people, encourage their participation in development and power and put the bureaucracy under local popular control. The main executive powers were given to Panchayat Samiti and role of Zila Parishad was only advisory. It should coordinate between the Panchayat Samitis within the district. Nearly all the state governments accepted the principle of transfer of authority to various levels below the district, as outlined by Mehta team. Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh were the first states to implement this scheme in 1959. While inaugurating Panchayati Raj at Nagour, Rajsthan on October 2, 1959, Nehru said with understandable enthusiasm, “we are going to lay the foundation of democracy or panchayati raj in India.”

Ashok Mehta Committee

The flush of great expectations faded when the momentum was lost and long procrastination of elections, frequent suppressions, flourishing political intrigues, slow decadence and disarray, with no devolution of powers coupled with financial starvation, functional ennui made these gram raj organs ceremonial ciphers, feudal pools of communal feuds and happy hunting ground of power-brokers. A review of these pathological creatures by the Ashok Mehta Committee (1977) revealed a shocking picture. They found that the performance of the PRIs has been vitiated by political factionalism rendering developmental thrusts either wrapped or diluted, corruption, inefficiency, scant regard for procedures, political interference in day to day administration, parochial loyalties, motivated acts, power concentration instead of service consciousness have seriously limited the utility of panchayati raj for the average villager. The committee however, was not prepared to view panchayati raj as ‘a God that failed’. It noted some merits also like panchayati raj made average citizen more conscious of his rights than before, bridged the gulf between the bureaucratic elite and the people, generated young leadership and helped rural people cultivate a developmental

psyche.

In the light of above findings, the committee made the following recommendations to strengthen the PRIs:

1. PRIs should be empowered with powers to make their own decisions and prepare plans according to local needs.
2. The SC/ST should get representation on basis of their population in the elections.
3. To constitute mandal panchayats for keeping the balance between technological requirements and possibilities for meaningful participation by the people.
4. The block level panchayat samitis would become non-statutory committees of Zila Parishads, and the mandal panchayats would carry out the development programmes.
5. There should be a team with experts at the district level for preparation of district plans.

The constitutional amendment

There were efforts to revive true gram swaraj. Many more committees followed like the GVK Rao Committee and the L M Singhvi Committee. Accepting the recommendations of the Singhvi Committee the Central Government headed by late Rajiv Gandhi brought in the Constitution 64th Amendment bill which was passed by the Lok Sabha in 1989. It was an initiative not only to decentralize power, but to politically enfranchise the poorer sections of society. Unfortunately, this Bill could not be enacted, as it was not approved in Rajya Sabha due to lack of required majority. In the year 1990, the issue relating to strengthening to PRI's was considered afresh and based on detailed discussions in the Cabinet committee set up for this purpose. It was considered that a Constitution Amendment Bill might be drawn up afresh. The cabinet approved the Constitution Amendment Bill and model guidelines in July 1990 and it was decided that there should be a common Constitution Amendment Bill both for PRIs and Urban Local bodies. Further modifications were made in the Bill on the basis of the discussions with the leaders of various political parties. The Constitution 74th Amendment Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha on September 7, 1990 could not however, be taken up in view of the political changes. A comprehensive amendment was introduced in the form of Constitution 72nd Bill 1991 by the then government.

In view of the shortcomings that have been observed by various committees, it was considered that there is an imperative need to enshrine in the Constitution certain basic and essential features of PRIs to impart certainty, continuity and strength to them. The new bill has been passed by the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in 1992, as the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act and with in a few months, the basic and essential features of panchayats were enshrined in the Constitution. The Constitution (73rd amendment) Act of 1992 (Later on known as Central Act) is a watershed event for achieving rural development through democratic decentralization. Rural Development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. In order to provide the rural people with better prospects for economic development, increased participation of people in the rural development programmes, decentralization of planning, better enforcement of land reforms and greater access to credit are envisaged. Initially main thrust for development was laid on agriculture, industry, communication, education, health and allied sectors but later on it was realized that accelerated development can be provided only if governmental efforts are adequately supplemented by direct and indirect involvement of people at the grass root level.

Limiting factors

Caste in rural society is still important and caste identities have assumed greater significance with the implementation of reservation policy at the grass root levels of PRIs. Legislative measures have sharpened the wedge between castes particularly upper and lower ones and this is supported by political parties who try to avail political benefits by supporting the lower castes. This is evident from the fact that more funds are transferred to the Scheduled Castes headed Gram Panchayats than to the Non-Scheduled Castes headed Gram Panchayats under various schemes and even from the discretionary funds of the political leaders at the State and Centre level. This way caste and politics seems to be interrelated.

Another issue is that of land. Weaker sections particularly the SCs are forcibly occupying village common land and such occupancy is more in the villages headed by the Scheduled Castes sarpanch. It is justified through the support of political parties and lack of awareness (intended /unintended) about the duties related to forced occupancy of land and its vacation. This process is largely taking place because the lower castes are trying to control land with all means. Such tendency originates from the traditional system of power structure in which upper castes have been drawing their power through their hold over land. So, land is not only a symbol of prestige but of power as well

PRIs are also considered as a means to empower not only the weaker sections but also the women. But it have been proved that participation of women is limited to the extent of reservation. They are not important in power structure and decision making. It is the male counterpart of the family who actively participate in the decision making process. This reflects that as the prestigious male bastion in the village power structure starts breaking and allow women into its portal, it degrade the upper position of the male held so far. To cover it up, the male through their counterpart taking advantage of women reservation and their political linkage try to control the power structure. In spite of this, the women have started taking interest in the women related issues.

The functioning of the PRIs is marred by political and bureaucratic interference particularly at the first and second tier because of the low level of awareness among the electorates about the functions/rights/duties. No doubt, constitutionally all these have been specified but power to exercise these functions/rights/duties have not been devolved to these elected representatives at all levels. This may be due to lack of political will on the part of the State Government. Even, the

Gram Panchayats have not been given any right to generate resources to undertake rural development activities. They depend on State and Centre Government or other bodies for the same. There is no flexibility regarding utilisation of funds as funds are to be utilized for the purpose these are released.

Conclusion

The efforts of the Government to ameliorate the social and economic position of the weaker sections through panchayat raj institutions are hampered by the structural inequalities which have been perpetuating in the rural society. Such inequalities are further supported by the political structure. To attain the path of development of rural society, PRIs need to be strengthened by devolving powers including financial powers and use of the local resources including human resources. Such process may help these institutions to work more democratically without political interference and thereby, play an active role in the rural

development. Poverty reduction and economic growth can be sustained only if natural resources are managed on a sustainable basis. Greening rural development can stimulate rural economies, create jobs and help maintain critical ecosystem services and strengthen and strengthen climate resilience of the rural poor. Conversely, environmental challenges can limit the attainment of development goals. A vast majority of the works under MGNREGS are linked to water, soil and land. The list of ‘permissible’ works provide environmental services such as conservation of water, groundwater recharge, reduced soil erosion, increased soil fertility, conservation of biodiversity, reclamation of degraded crop and grazing lands, enhanced leaf manure, fuel wood and non-wood forest products supply among others.

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