Promoting Principles of Non-violence for Conflict Resolution

National Foundation for Communal Harmony

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New Delhi
2012
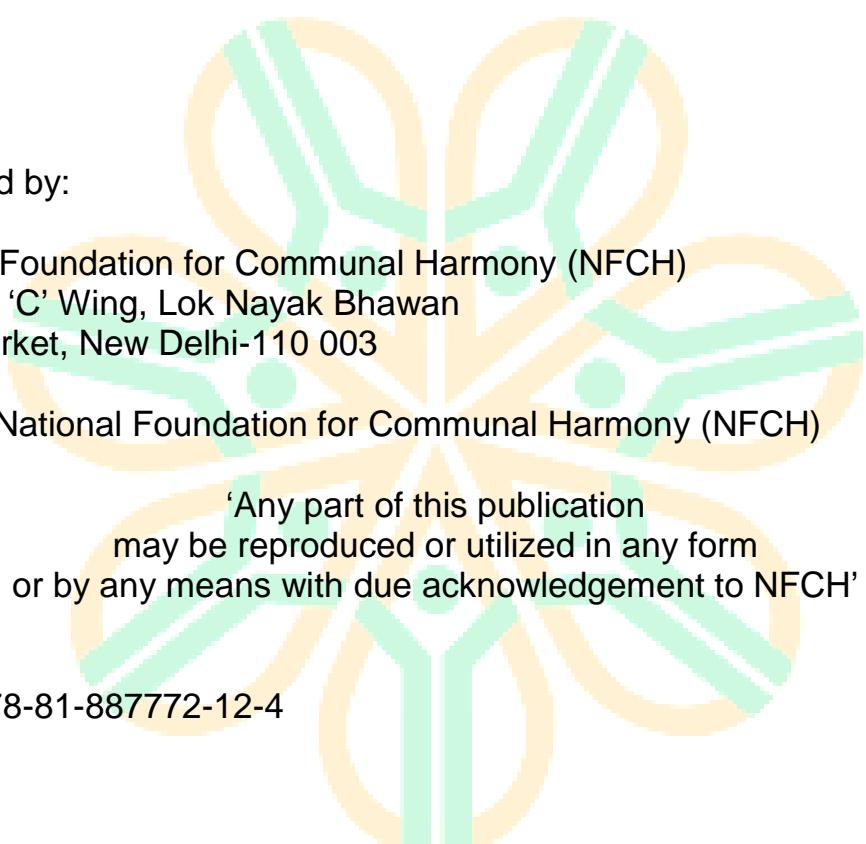
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Preface

The National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH) has been working to promote peace and harmony in the country. Among other activities, NFCH also encourages promotion of principles of non-violence in resolving disputes between different religious and other groups.

Over the years, the Foundation has been organizing yearly essay competitions among the new officers of the All India Service and Group 'A' Central Services, who undergo training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.

This e-monograph is the result of another such essay competition organized by LBSNAA, Mussoorie during the 83rd Foundation Course. This year's theme 'Promoting Principles of Non-violence for Conflict Resolution' is apt and appropriate in the present times, when Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent methods need to be re-invented.

> We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence. – **Mahatma Gandhi**

The authors have written eloquently on this topic by citing examples from around the world. We are grateful to the bright and young officers for finding time out of their busy schedule to write on this important topic. I am optimistic that these essays will help in raising awareness on employing non-violent methods in conflict resolution in India as well in other parts of the world.

The views expressed in these essays are those of the contributors alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the Foundation. However, any editorial mistake is subject to correction by NFCH.

Secretary
NFCH

# PROMOTING PRINCIPLES OF NON-VIOLENCE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

CONTENTS

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Promoting Principles of Non-violence for Conflict Resolution

Principles of non-violence can be calming balm

RUBY JASPREET

The conflict in the society are as old as the soceity itself. In any society or nation-state, the resolutions of conflict, and restoration of normalcy is a cyclic process, which can be controlled by inculcating the values of coexistence and syncretism among the citizens. Where a society is rooted in principles of non-violence, resolving conflict at its incipient stage and controlling it in its escalated state becomes easier.

No conflict can be everlasting, absolutely unavoidable or a total waste. In the dynamic society we live in today, conflict can prove fruitful by bringing about a positive social change. However, the psychological and social turmoil that it induces, can instigate a person or society into resorting to violence, defeating thereby any kind of purpose that conflict may serve. It is in this context that principles of non-violence gain significance.

'Non-violence' as an ideology and as a practice is not a new concept. it is as old as the tenets of Buddhism and as new as the latest UN initiatives. It is as widespread as the underlying force against racism and as personal as individual choice. Societal or individual, principles of non-violence are a potent force for resolving conflict as well as for better directing social change.

The varying conflict situations in which non-violence has been used as a force or a tool temporally and spatially have broadened the scope of its principles. While basic principle of non-violence would be not resorting to violence in a conflict situation, it has been interpreted varyingly to mean much more. Martin Luther King during the civil rights movement in USA said that, "Non-violence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but refuse to hate him." The principles thereby included not just tolerance but mutual love as well. When Gandhi rooted non-violence 'stays' truth become its principle. When Jesus

said 'love thine enemy', mutual harmony also became a principle of non-violence. Whatever the interpretation, <u>these principles go on to build a society where conflict doesn't turn into violence but is more peacefully channelized into better shaping the society.</u>

History provides us with a lot of examples where principles of non-violence not just resolve conflict but also channelize it into positive and varying notions. The use of these principles is ending apartheid in South Africa and racism in USA, ended the conflict plaguing the society and also introduced idea of equality and mutual coexistence. <u>When Mahatma Gandhi propagated and practiced non-violence he not only ended an imperial intrusion, but from this conflict situation emerged principles that an independent India inherited.</u> Principles of non-violence then ended conflict, restored stability and went beyond to induce self-respect and self-confidence in a troubled nation that India was Non-violence is not just pacifism rejecting just the use of violence but is an ideology and a tool presupposing the end of conflict and bringing about social change.

While principles of non-violence may also be individually practiced, they have more significantly been used as a tool and a counterforce in ending conflict in society. <u>The popularity and widespread acceptability of these principles make non-violence a potent tool providing moral legitimacy to the grieving party and weakening the accused.</u> So when the Dalai Lama fights against Chinese hold over Tibet, he not just attempts at ending conflict but becomes a more loved and respected person than a whole institution.

<u>Also, Dalai Lama not just gains respect but popularises peace and harmony as better alternatives to killing and plundering in conflict situations around the world.</u> Principles of non-violence thus go beyond just resolving conflict to better channelizing it into introducing more effective institutional mechanisms or socio-political alternatives.

These principles may be religious ethical or just pragmatic. They may be forced by law or may be naturally imbibed in a society. They may be an educated individual's choice or a socially shared value system. <u>Whatever their interpretation or scope, they are a potent force that can prevent a conflict from shifting its focus from instigating violence to finding solutions.</u> Where principles of non-violence are the norm in a society, conflict can be better targeted and more effectively resolved. Where a society is rooted in principles of mutual love, peace and tolerance, latent conflict is positively resolved before manifesting as violence.

Extremely significant though these principles of non-violence are, no society can be called completely free from violence. It is because of this that promotion of these principles becomes important. This promotion can be done directly or indirectly, by the government or the civil society, in normal times or in crisis.

In normal times, concentrated effort can be made by the government to spread the message of non-violence. This can be done through advertisements, hoardings and more significantly through its education policies. <u>So when our NCERT books shed light upon Gandhi's policy of non-violence and how it shook an established imperial set-up, the government incorporates it into the socialization of the child.</u> Similarly, when leaders like Aung San Suu Kyi incorporate the ideology of non-violence into their struggle, peaceful resolution of conflict becomes a popular norm worldwide.

Media has and can further play a more significant role in promoting principles of non-violence. Be it a historical movie or a group discussion, an editorial or a radio-show, both print and electronic media can promote principles of peace and mutual harmony. <u>So when NDTV debates about naxalism, an intellectual thought provocation is done regarding the need for non-violence in resolving conflict situations</u>. Media, by spreading awareness on social

movements around the world that have successfully incorporated non-violence, promotes such principles consciously or unconsciously.

So when a child in India learns about the success of non-violence in the violent revolution of Ukraine or the Civil Rights movement in USA, he is more likely to resolve his conflicts with non-violence when he grows up <u>and when history books teach him to hate Hitler and love Gandhi, non-violence as an ideology gets more deeply rooted.</u>

There have been attempts, in this globalised world, to mutually promote principles of non-violence as solution to conflict. The UN decision to celebrate 2nd October every year as International Day for Non-Violence is a step in this direction. <u>Such initiatives not only aim at promoting principles of non-violence successfully but also institutionalise these principles in to socio-cultural set-up, so that conflict gets resolved in its latent stage itself.</u>

This institutionalisation of principles of non-violence into a social set-up and their internalisation as part of the socialization process plays a far-reaching role in resolving conflict. A society rooted in non-violence, when faced with conflict would not immediately resort to violent means. <u>Just means are more likely to reach just ends and thus conflict can be more responsibly and peacefully handled. It is because an independent India inherited these principles that it enjoys a reputation in global scenario of a responsible and peace-loving nation.</u> It is a direct consequence of this that it wins an IAEA exemption and a possibility of a UNSC seat when disturbed nations like Pakistan and North Korea do not.

Also, principles of non-violence can very effectively resolve conflict even in its escalated violent stage. This is because the principles of peace, stability and mutual love derive their potence from the legitimacy that they enjoy. <u>It is natural human instinct to appreciate values of peace over violence, thereby associating with these principles a strong moral authority.</u>

Fidel Castro in his biography 'My Life' argues that by resorting to violent means, any revolting group loses its legitimacy even amongst those it is fighting

for. So, non-violence forms a strong counter-ideology against any form of violent conflict, be it terrorism or coercive suppression of masses. This is precisely why Myanmar, in spite of the pathological situation it is facing, has the world's sympathies with the monks and anguish against the ruling junta. Simple though it may see, non-violence is a potent counter-ideology to any kind of violent conflict.

The third manner in which promoting principles of non-violence can resolve conflict is by presenting its focus from shifting from finding solution towards instigating violence. Conflict in any society may arise out of genuine reasons. Naxalism may have relative socio-economic and political deprivation as a genuine causal factor. But promoting and popularising the significance of non-violence can help concentrate on finding solutions to the very cause behind conflict. a peace-loving society would not deviate its efforts towards violent means but would remain focussed on resolving conflict as to better direct social change.

When Mahatma Gandhi used 'non-violence' as a tool, he did much more than just ending foreign rule. Not resorting to violence helped a whole lot of people focus on better management of the conflict situation and thus arose ideas of parliamentary democracy, local governance, social upliftment, etc. Non-violence, thus, is the soothing factor that resolves conflict to evolve more effective socio-political mechanisms and more efficient institutional alternatives. So the civil rights movement in USA saw legal measures as solutions and not coercive action making thus a long-lasting impact.

Non-violence as an ideology, however, has had some criticism as well, which deters the promotion of its principles and peaceful resolution of conflict. Many social movements have resorted to violence either in the beginning or after peaceful means have failed. Practicing non-violence, especially in a conflict situation, has been seen as ineffective and slow. Amongst its many critiques are George Orwell and Subhas Chandra Bose who argued that non-violence was in

keeping with the expectations that a suppressing party would have from the grieving.

However, what matters is that solutions that come out of peacefully resolved conflict are long-lasting while violent conflict are seen to have brought no solution at all. Be it the violence in Israel or the terrorist activities in Pakistan, coercive conflicts are endlessly stretched for they take away the focus from solution finding. So this defeats the argument that non-violent movements are slow or ineffective.

Also, these principles have been criticized as being 'Politics of the Ordinary people'. But saying this in a derogatory manner is to forget that all social and political movements are actually run by the ordinary masses. So when Martin Luther King said, "we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer", he was showing faith in the resilience and strength that a struggling set of people can show. When Aruna Roy led a whole lot of so-called ordinary people to peacefully fight corruption, result was a long-lasting and tremendously impactful legislation. Promoting principles of non-violence can thus establish a real potent force against any kind of conflict, latent or manifest.

Non-violence gets wrongly criticized when it is confused with in-action. Principles of non-violence do not imply suffering silently a conflict situation but emphasize upon dealing with it positively and pro-actively. This includes what in modern day language has come to be known as *Gandhigiri*. Promoting principles of non-violence thus also calls for promoting peaceful means and their acceptance, like petitions, writs, PIL's, speeches, civil disobedience, non-cooperation, etc. Modern day tools like PIL's are as it is a significant non-violent measure in resolving discontent.

Non-violence has its roots in all space and time. It transcends these boundaries as well when imbibed as part of mythologies, epics or religions. While terrorism may be wrongly accused of having religious undertones, the Quran itself stresses on non-violence and forgiveness of sin; Buddhism talks

about love for all living beings while Christianity talks of loving one's enemies. It is not just an ideology but a strong force that has shown the potential to change power equations and spread mutual harmony.

The significance of non-violence is well internalized into the ethical side of the human personality and a further promotion of its principles can establish it in practice as well. The principles of non-violence and consequently of love, tolerance and sensitivity are implicitly a part of various social movements as well as individual behaviour. Be it vegetarianism or resistance against development of nuclear power, non-violence is both individually and socially imbibed. It may be a religious compulsion, an ethical obligation or a pragmatic decision, but resolving conflict with non-violence is one of the most effective conflict resolving mechanisms that mankind has evolved.

Promoting principles of non-violence through organized intentional mechanisms or through unconscious indirect means can help target conflict much before it escalates into violence. Natural as its occurrence is, conflict can prove fruitful only if its causal grievances are positively dealt with. In a dynamic society, conflict is intricately and inevitably linked with social change and this change can be well deliberated and effectively directed only if non-violence is the social norm.

An absolutely peaceful society may be as utopian an idea as Marxian communism, but promoting principles of non-violence can go a long way in peaceful resolution of conflict. Their promotion is not just a practical strategy but a potent ideological force hitting conflict at its roots without leaving scope for its non-fruitful diversion into violence. Promotion of these principles is significant thus, so that conflict resolution may lead to better alternatives, more effective institutions and a positive social change and not chaos, disorder, deaths and violence.

So, when egos flare up or sentiments are hurt, when the id takes over the super-ego or when tensions take shape of violence, principles of non-violence can

be a calming balm that prevent tensions taking an ugly form. Promoting these principles would go beyond just resolving conflict. When incorporated into the socio-cultural mileau and having become a personality trait world wide, these would result in a more peaceful, intelligent and a harmonious global society. They would lead to a society where individuals would practice them in their daily living, where road rage or mob behaviour would be minimized and where social dynamics would be positively guided. Conflict, be it because of clash of ideologies or of interests, would be mutually resolved to bring desired results. Such a social set up may seem a utopian dream, but promoting principles of non-violence would minimize violent manifestation of conflict, establishing thus stability and coexistence in a peace-loving society.
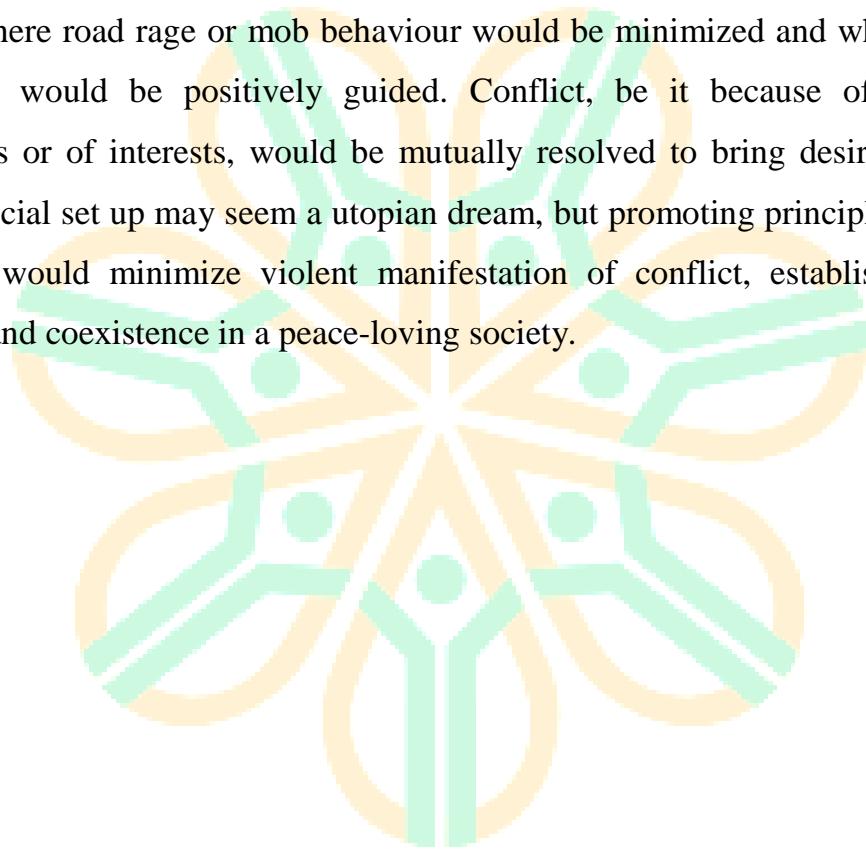
The non-violence technique is superior and most acceptable

TARUN KUMAR PITHODE

Since time-immemorial the world has been facing conflicts of varied nature and proportions. Every civilization, society and nation has seen them at one or other point of time. Nevertheless, humanity has survived. In the contemporary world we are witnessing various conflicts around us. Non-violence has proved to be the most potent weapon to resolve them. Though, violence has been resorted on many occasions, it only leads to more violence. Violence is thus, abhorred by all and there is an urgent need to promote the principles of Non-violence.

Conflict is actual or perceived disagreement over some issue. It has the potential to assume bigger proportions. Conflict could be social, religious, regional, national or international. Conflicts could be resolved in many ways. Violence is the most easy way to solve the conflict. However, Gandhiji remarked – "an eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind."

These words of wisdom explain the increasing proportion of loss of life, and property resulting from mindless violence in the world today. For instance, the PALESTINE-ISRAEL conflict has produced only blood, despair, death, helplessness and above all infinite hatred among the people. If we see and analyse any big or small regional conflict. We realize that violence has given us nothing but loss and guilt. May it be Sri Lanka vs. LTTE, America vs. Taliban, India vs. Pakistan and so on, the only loosers are people and people only.

People have become fed–up with the violence around them everyday; lives are being lost on account of bomb-explosion, terrorist attack, or violence resulting from some conflict. There are conflicts with the potential to annihilate' the whole world. The Russian-American arms race, North Korea-South Korea confrontation and nuclear assertion of both North-Koreas and Iran is the result of

violence and arrogant resolution of these conflicts. These all conflicts could be resoloved peacefully through the principles of non-violence.

Non-violence is not a new term, it has already been used many times to resolve conflicts the most famous and successful examples are the movement led by Gandhiji in both South Africa and India, Martin Luther king Jr. in USA and Nelson Mandel in South Africa. Non-violence has the potential to solve all kind of conflicts peacefully. May it be racial, casteist, class-oriented, regional, national or religious. As Martin Luther king Jr. once said, "At the centre of non-violence is the principle of love." Non-violence, thus, not only resolves the conflict, but, produce love. It is thus, definitely superior to violence.

The world today has lost the message of non-violence enunciated by great people and as a result we witness mindless violence with a fear creeping in our mind and paralysing us all the time, there is an urgent need to promote the principle of non-violence to stop ourselves treading the path of self-destruction.

Over periods of time with various movements (Indian Freedom struggle, Civil Rights movement in USA etc.), certain principles of Non-violence have emerged. These include peaceful resistance, spirituality, principle of love, worth of human being, compassion towards all, even adversary.

Specific Gandhian principle include Ahimsa, Truthfulness, Absorbing suffering, Respecting others, Understanding reasons of conflict, appreciating differences and compassion for all. According to him, "The only devils in the world are those running around in our own hearts that is where the battle should be fought," His version involved the battle within first and foremost. His method showed remarkable results both in South Africa and India. The most important struggles were Champaran and Kheda-Satyagraha, Non-cooperation movement, Salt-Satyagraha, and Quit India movement. Through his principle of Non-violence he could fight successfully against untouchability. He showed to the world that conflicts could be resolved peacefully through non-violent means. Eventually, British had to abandon their pursuit of colonalisation.

The non-violent technique was superior and most acceptable. It continues to be so today. This is a reason why we still enjoy good relations with England even after centuries of subjugation.

The Martin Luther King Jr's principle of non-violence were similar to that of Gandhiji and included defeat injustice, not people, suffering for a cause, win friendship and understanding an so on. These principles were also shared by Nelson Mandela in his non-violent and peaceful struggle in South Africa against Apartheid.

The glory of non-violence struggle is evident in the quest for democracy in Myanmar led by Aung San Suu Kyi has become the living legend and example of non-violence and suffering. Even after so many years of seclusion and confinement she has not lost her faith in non-violence and is continuing her struggle.

The promotion of principles of non-violence requires some pre-cursor. The most important pre-requisite is TOLERANCE and rejection of hatred. As Gandhiji said "Hate the evil not the evil doer." Tolerance is the virtue of most powerful, it is strength not weakness. Without tolerance, there can not be promotion of non-violence. We must remember that as a result of absence of tolerance and ability to suffer, Gandhiji had to suspend Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922 due to the incident of Chouri-Chaura.

Forgiveness is another important pre-requisite of non-violence. Forgiveness with tolerance evokes the love and compassion of even the most cruel. This was the reason that their was fear and inaction on the part of British towards Gandhiji and his followers. With all their power, might, arms and ammunition, they could not do anything or any harm to Gandhiji apart from jailing him. On the other side so many freedom fighters had to lay their life, who chose violence as a means for freedom.

Non-violence requires reconciliation not defeat. It also involve the capacity and willingness to absorb and accept suffering and never to inflict it. Love and

compassion are few other important ingredients of non-violence. One should continue to love his adversary in all circumstances. Love and compassion was the reason for *Angulimal* [the heinous bandit who used to kill people for their fingers] to leave violence under the influence of Lord Buddha.

The promotion of the principle of non-violence demands strong emphasis on the role of both agents and agencies of socialization. Agents are the leaders of non-violent struggle who have set examples before the world. These agents act as role models for others to follow. The success stories of non-violent struggle also act as the agents of change. Moreover, the school teacher, parents and other role models for the masses, make the best agents to promote the principles of non-violence.

The agencies to promote principle of non-violence include school, family, society, work place and media. Family is the place where the initial training of a child starts. Thus, families should be motivated to display strong-values of non-violence. Non-violence should be a part of child rearing practices. The family environment and the members of family serve as role models for children to emulate. Thus, it forms perfect initial setting to expose the children to the principles of non-violence. It should be told to parents to avoid physical punishment and violence in dealing with children.

School is the first formal agency to mould the covert and overt behavior of a child. It is here that a child comes under the influence of many agencies an agent under one umbrella. Thus, it becomes one of the most important agencies to promote the principles of non-violence. The stories of freedom struggle with non-violent means should form the integral part of curriculum there should be plays and dramas, being performed to highlight the importance of non-violence for resolving all kinds of conflict. The students who resolve conflicts through non-violent means should be rewarded and their success stories should be told and published in school magzines. It would help in establishing a non-violent

society. School teacher should act as exemplary leaders and messengers of the principles of non-violence.

The principles of non-violence should be an integral part of all organization work-culture and rewarding system. Those people who use principle of non-violence to resolve conflicts should be rewarded and their stories should be publicised by the organization through the means of weekly newsletters, magzines and patrikas. This method should be extended to the whole society to establish a structure of reward and punishments such that the values of non-violence to resolve conflicts are inculcated.

Media of all types has one of the most important role in promotion and establishing the principle of non-violence in conflict resolution. Media propagates the message and values directly. It creates big impact among people. With the availability of audio-visual, audio media with print media, the importance of media has grown many-fold. Moreover, media assists indirectly also by publishing and displaying the stories of success of non-violent movement and about the life of leaders. For instance, Nelson Mandela's struggle against Apartheid in South Africa and Aung San Suu Kyi struggle for democracy in Myanmar.

Smaller conflicts like caste conflicts in India could also be resolved through non-violence. It has already been done so many times already. Such stories should reach to the people.

Non-violent act produces sympathy, love and a feeling of guilt in the heart of the person in question (perpetrator of violence or tyrants). This helps in softening on his part resulting in help to resolve conflict. For instance, the news on story of Rosa Park's (USA, American Civil Rights Activist) refusal to obey bus driver's order to make room for white passenger became an inspiration for American Civil Right movement.

While promoting principles of non-violence it must be emphasized that the success through them does not follow some short path. It involves long drawn

process with heavy demand on time and other resources. However, the solutions obtained through non-violence are long lasting, does not create reaction and are acceptable. They are unlike violence which creates animosity and ground for further endless conflict.

Non-violence resolves the conflict in an integrated manner. It helps in taking the best route to resolve conflict. It provides the way for discussion, negotiation, compromise and integration of the final goal. For instance, Gandhiji took his route to resolve communalism, and untouchability. His words are immortal, "If man reaches the heart of his religion he has reached the heart of others too." These words provide the way for understanding of others and an integrative solution of the conflict. Non-violence teaches us that no religion deserves greater respect than other, thus, grounding the seed of unity, fraternity and tolerance.

The violent resolutions of conflict have produced further conflicts. Thus conflict over issues have become the conflict of identity. For instance, conflicts in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, North Korea and elsewhere, the fight to safeguard world peace has become a conflict between superpower USA and one weak adversary with unending frontiers. In light of this fact, principles of non-violence provide some hope of reconciliation and lasting world peace. Then promotion of such principles should assume the importance and should draw attention of all nation state, societies, communities, religions for the benefit of humanity. The principles of non-violence should form the syllabus of all schools and management institutes.

We had enough of violence and bloodshed. Now we must make the way for world peace through the principles of non-violence and role of national and international organizations is vital in this regard. United Nations Organization should coordinate and inspire the nations to evolve the universally acceptable principle of non-violence for conflict resolution.

The time has come to make a choice between principles of non-violence to resolve conflict and weapons of mass destruction. This choice should be collective choice of humanity and not of few elites. As this would determine the survival of the most intelligent species.

> "The aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness, while the aftermath of non-violence is the beloved community."
>
> - Martin Luther King Jr.
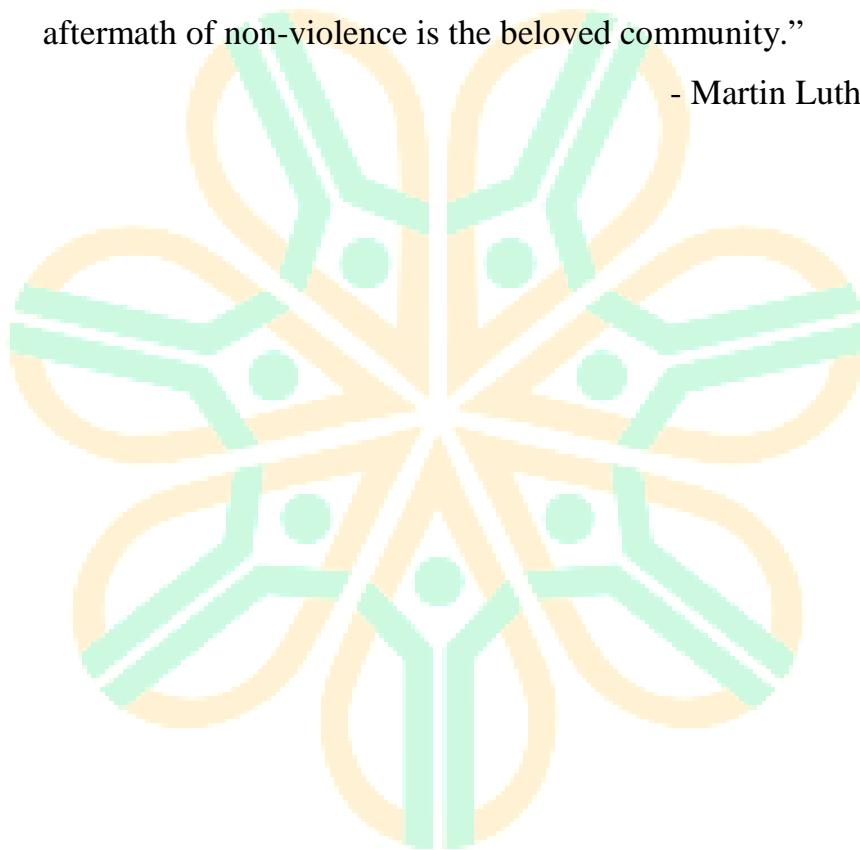
Mahatma Gandhi's methods are the best methods for conflict resolution

VINOD KUMAR D.K.

Needs and desires of people are the driving principles of life. When ones desire is contrary to another man, there begins difference of opinion when they try to ascertain their opinion with physical strength it leads to conflict. Conflicts have innately remained stumbling stones in the path of development, whether of a nation or that of an individual. In the complexities of modern world where peace is given the prime importance at least by the major institutions who have a broader view on the future of world, the concept of conflict resolution or that of resolving violence has an immense role to play.

While we continue to look for more complex ways to dissect and understand the complexities of violent behaviour. We are moving farther away from arriving at a solution. If we are going to bring peace to the people of this nation and world, we must first examine how violence has been misunderstood and misrepresented as the means to an honorable end. The process of resolving conflict and dealing with violence is not for personal gain, getting even, or getting by, it is for people who are honestly working on a solution to a problem and the establishment of democracy.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation, as per the definition of "World Health Organisation".

Three categories of violence can be identified:

1. Self inflicted Violence**:** it refers to intentional and harmful behaviours directed at oneself, for which suicide represents the fatal outcome. Other types include attempts to commit suicide and behaviours where the intent is self destructive, but not lethal.
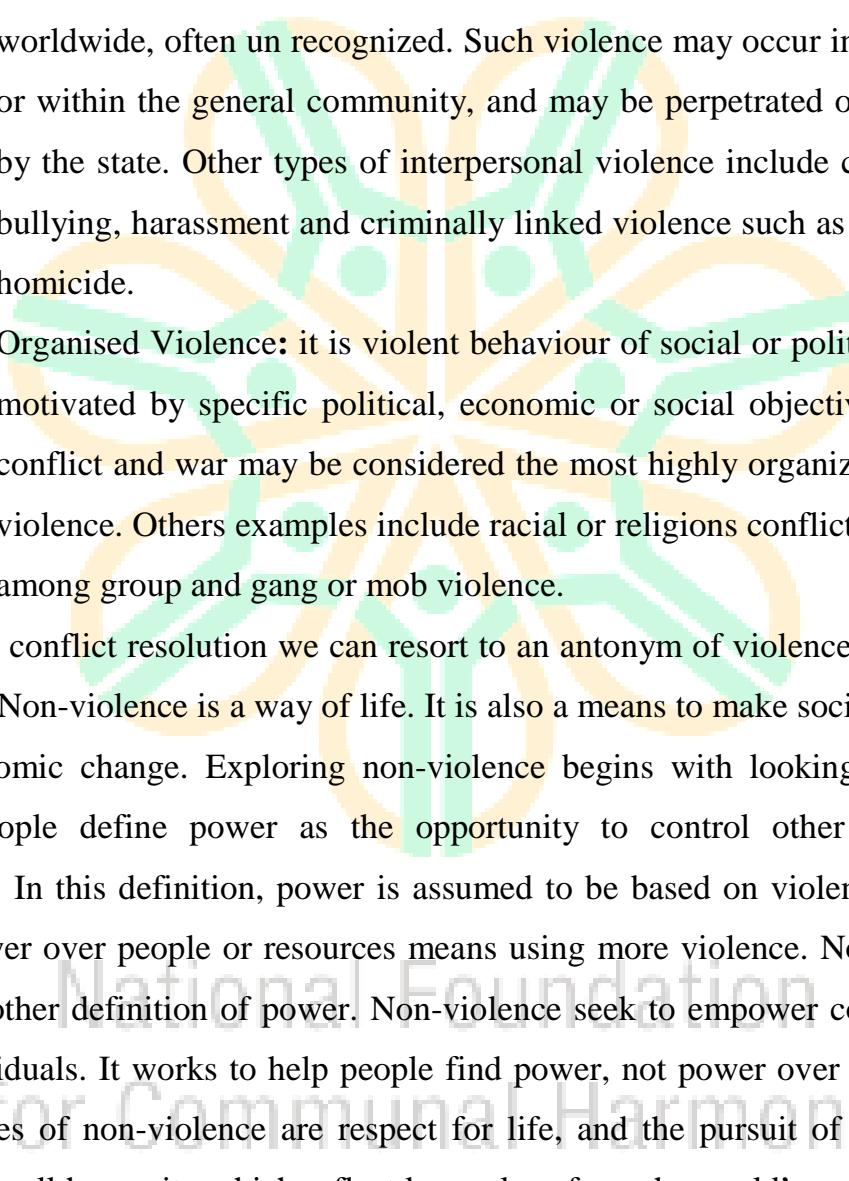
2. Inter Personal Violence: it is violent behaviour between individuals and can best be classified by the victim-offender relationship, either among acquaintances or among persons who are not acquainted. Interpersonal violence may also be specified according to the age or sex of the victim. Violence against women is an important example and is occurring worldwide, often un recognized. Such violence may occur in the family or within the general community, and may be perpetrated or condoned by the state. Other types of interpersonal violence include child abuse, bullying, harassment and criminally linked violence such as assault and homicide.

3. Organised Violence: it is violent behaviour of social or political groups motivated by specific political, economic or social objectives. Armed conflict and war may be considered the most highly organized types of violence. Others examples include racial or religions conflicts occurring among group and gang or mob violence.

For conflict resolution we can resort to an antonym of violence that is non violence. Non-violence is a way of life. It is also a means to make social, political and economic change. Exploring non-violence begins with looking at power. Many people define power as the opportunity to control other people or resources. In this definition, power is assumed to be based on violence: to gain more power over people or resources means using more violence. Non-violence offers another definition of power. Non-violence seek to empower communities and individuals. It works to help people find power, not power over others. The core values of non-violence are respect for life, and the pursuit of justice and dignity for all humanity which reflect key values from the world's main spiritual traditions.

Non-violence, according to advocates is neither merely a negation of violence, nor a call for passivism. Proponents of non-violence do not deny that conflict among human beings is inevitable, and they do not support submission to

persecution, obedience to unjust authorities or acceptance of conditions in which their own or others human rights are violated. To those who argue that violence is a natural human response to feelings of threat or fear, or that humans are naturally capable of doing evil, they respond that human beings have just as naturally a unique capacity for reason and a propensity to do good. Thus, violence and non-violence are but two opposing ways of responding to conflict, and humans may choose to practice one or the other. Whether the goal is as basic as self preservation or as lofty as peace on earth, advocates for non-violence maintain that the principles and methods of non-violence are more effective in both the short and long run that the course and consequences of violence.

A fundamental principle of non-violence is that human rights must not be compromised to achieve any end, and that all forms of violence, whether self inflicted, among individuals or among states, do violate human rights. For example, violent action contravenes rights granted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including:

- ❖ The right to life, liberty and security of person;
- ❖ The right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- ❖ The right to equal protection by the law;
- ❖ The right to the protection by the law against attacks upon one's honors an reputation;
- ❖ The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; and
- ❖ The right to freedom of opinion and expression;

Similarly, in the Declaration on elimination of violence against women, which defines violence against women as any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life, signatories affirm that:

❖ Violence against women constitutes a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

Finally, violence is described as being incompatible with children's rights in the convention on the Rights of the child, in which signatories commit to:

❖ Protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse; and to provided education directed to:

❖ The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom; and

❖ The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, gender equality, and friendship among all people, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

Violence as a means for resolving conflict must therefore be rejected, and other ways of handling disputes, ways that uphold the rights of all parties, must be found. This is the imperative to which non-violence responds. As described in UNESCO'S publication entitled "Non-violence and education", non-violent action is consistent with principles such as:

❖ Humanity, diversity, equality, respect, tolerance, solidarity and harmony.

❖ Rationality, morality, responsibility and universality.

❖ Freedom, justice, rule of law, cooperation and democracy.

The methods of non-violence can be described as falling generally into two broad categories:

❖ Those that encourage the development among individuals and in societies of understanding, attitudes and skills that help to reduce the incidence of conflict; and

❖ Specific practices for the peaceful resolution of disputes, for example, non-violent resistance, political/civil action, negotiation, reconciliation and mediation.

Bringing the principles and methods of non-violence together in a working definition for the term, UNESCO has defined non-violence as "a holistic theory and practice that rejects aggression and violence in order to achieve goals or resolve conflicts in a constructive way".

Six Principles of Non-violence

The six principles of non-violence were derived from "Pilgrimage to Non-violence" in Dr. Martin Luther King's book "Stride towards Freedom". The principles of non-violence can be listed out as;

- Principle one: Non-violence is a way of life for courageous people.
- Principle two: Non-violence seeks to win friendship and understanding.
- Principle three: Non-violence seek to defeat injustice not people.
- Principle four: Non-violence holds that suffering can educate and transform.
- Principle five: Non-violence chooses love instead of hate.
- Principle six: Non-violence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.

These principles are effective in solving all kinds of conflict. But it is necessary to obtain information about details before going into solving a conflict. To ensure the effective use of non-violence principles in conflict resolution eight steps are to be followed:

Step one**:** Observation

An assessment of the problem must be done to confirm that the problem truly exists and is a violation.

Step two: investigation

Examine the demographics, statistics and history of who is experiencing the problem.

Step three: Purification

The motive for solving the problem must be genuine and not the result of profit or personal gain.

Step four: Recommendation

Present a clear and workable alternative to solving the problem.

Step five: Education

Show how the conflict occurred and how each person's role attributed to the problem.

Step six: Demonstration

Exhibit facts that a violation has occurred and presently exists.

Step seven: Confrontation

Utilizing of direct action designed to resolve the conflict non-violently

Step eight: forgive the actions of all involved and agree to work collectively until the problem is solved.

The greatest example of how powerful the principles of non-violence is the way India got its independce because of a great man of vision and courage. Mahatma Gandhi the father of our nation was one of the greatest proponent of non-violence. His methods of showing non co-operation to British government through non-violent methods were new to the world then. Gandhiji put forward his philosophy with great eloquence, when he stated non-violence to be the "First article of his faith and the last article of his creed." Non-violence had always been the founding principles of Gandhian spirituality, and bedrock of his political philosophy.

Gandhi entered the political scenario soon after the ascendency of the extremists in the history of India's freedom struggle. Armed revolution was believed to be the only legitimate way to snatch political power from and

oppressive regime. Gandhiji's system of Satyagraha on the basis of non-violence and non-cooperation was largely unheard of, and generally distrusted. His Satyagraha was faith based not on arms and antagonism, but on extreme moral courage that drew its strength from innate truth and honesty. He applied his systems with success in South Africa and was convinced of its power Gandhiji introduced his non-violence modes with great success in the non-cooperation movement. It was a new era in the history of Indian freedom struggle.

The world saw the power of non-violence through the acts of our father of nation. His principles were upheld and propagated widely for effective resolution of conflicts. It is the best method which can be used in conflict resolution whatever be the nature and place of conflict. It has been proved by great personalities of world like Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi, Mother Teresa. The temporary nature of violent methods for conflict resolution can be pointed out best with the example of Hitler. We can conclude with the great word of the father of our nation "I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment."

Need to institutionalize conflict – resolution mechanisms

AYESHA RANI

India, the largest democracy of the world, is still evolving as a nation state. Like rest of the world, India do has its own frictions and resistances in its process of evolution. Given that conflicts are unavoidable and inseparable in any state of affairs, the means of resolutions are quite significant. Since the Indian civilization and culture are deeply rooted in the ethos of 'Truth' and 'Ahimsa', the non-violent methods have a special niche in the conflict resolution mechanism.

India is a land of unity in diversity. It is a unique nation across the globe; as good as a continent with a multitude of languages, traditions, lifestyles etc. Further the religious beliefs of the people differ from each other varying from Hinduism, Buddhism etc to Islam and Christianity that it imbibed from other cultures. The regional imbalance in terms of growth and development also adds to the differences among the people. These differences among the people at times causes centrifugal forces in the political system creating conflicts. The global issue of terrorism also has its own repercussions in the society further accentuating the conflicts. Thus these issues in turn act in a different manner negating the process of national integration.

Various forces against national integration since independence

There are various forces that tend to disintegrate the country since independence. The clamour for separate existence by states were successfully quelled by the political leadership; however there are certain problems still haunt our society such as communal riots, insurgency, naxalism, cross border terrorism, regional and region specific issues, river water disputes etc are to name a few.

India which was formed in the dark shades of partition and communal issues, still bear the brunt of such tensions. The Ayodhya - Babri Masjid issues, the Mumbai riots, the tensions in Gujarat, the attacks on Christians in Kandhamal in the recent past are major blows apart from the minor issues happening across

the country.

Apart from the communal issues, the regional issues involving the attacks on north Indians in Mumbai and at other parts of Maharastra, Assam etc are very much against the democratic ideals of the country. The regional imbalances among states and regions in terms of economic development are also matter of concern for a proper integration. Some states like Gujarat,Tamil Nadu etc are better off than the so called BIMARU states (Uttar pradesh, Bihar, Orissa etc). Further the regional backwardness within the states raises the mercury level of the political platform for the creation of newer states. The Telengana, Vidarbha, Saurashtra issues are debated quite often whether as to create them or not. Already states were divided on these lines, which are giving only mixed results. Hence that can't be a one-stop solution for the issues involved.

Further the river water disputes have become a major law and order problem for the states despite India being a nation blessed with a large number of rivers. The inter state river water distribution as in the case of River Cauvery had created a large number of issues among the states involved where the issue was taken up parochially and the innocent people were attacked.

Naxalism has become another major issue especially in the maintenance of the internal security of the country. The so called Red Corridor, extending from the north and north east to the southern parts of the country, is a matter of major concern and the integration of these areas to the mainstream of the country is quite often disrupted. The cross border terrorism and insurgency in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, North Eastern states are much against the existence of the country as a united nation.

Conventional methods of conflict resolution

The conventional methods resorted for resolving the conflicts include policing and enforcing the military to contain the situations. Many a times, the parties involved in these conflicts take laws of the land on their hand and act upon the opponent by violent means. When the state intervenes to solve the

problems, it too deals the situation with violent means. The police resorts to "Lathi Charging" and firing; the army also employs similar methods and thus ending up taking the lives of the people.

The issues of terrorism, naxalism etc are dealt with equal or a bigger amount of physical force. Instead of producing the desired results, it can only accentuate the troubles. These measures can give a temporary respite helping to control the law and order situation for a satisfactory period. The conflicts are not resolved from its roots and these measures won't leave any chance for understanding the fundamental issues involved in the conflict. This results in the recurrence of the conflicts.

The understanding of issues are quite time consuming and are not considered as lucrative given the political atmosphere of the country. The general public is also not involved as there are few opportunities for participation of the people in these means of resolution. Hence they are not quite conducive for the democratic ideals of the country as they are not participatory in the process of resolution. It is in this context that non-violent principles find its importance in conflict resolution.

Significance of non-violent principles in conflict resolution

The non-violent methods are not new for the people of the country. India is a country deeply rooted in the values of 'Satya and Ahimsa' (truth and non violence). The great religions preached these principles .The great religions like Buddhism and Jainism propagated these ideas across the globe. Non-violence has been the creed of the people and the people of this country demonstrated it during the freedom struggle under the eminent leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He taught the masses to employ non-violent means to free itself from the oppressive colonial rulers.

The mighty British forces were fought with the mightier swords of truth and ahimsa. Rather than resorting to any terrorist or forceful means, the British were made to quit the country by this way. This fact infact reinforces the concern

to resolve conflicts through non-violent measures. However these practices have almost vanished from the political arena. India should thus set standards for the rest of the world for finding means of non-violent measures in conflict resolution.

The promotion of principles of non-violence involves various techniques. The comprehensive understanding of the issues involved in the conflict is quite pertinent. It differs from the methods of suppressing the problems through policing or other means that the non violent methods resolve issues entirely without causing any damage to life, limb and property. The recurrence of the conflicts will be minimal as it goes to resolve them from roots.

Resolution through dialogues

One of the best methods engaged can be resolving through dialogues and consensus. It gives enough opportunity for both the parties to represent their views and grievances. The dialogues shall be conducted with an impartial mediator acceptable for both sides. The mediator should not have any vested interests in the issues involved and can be any eminent personality from the public life.

The state has a very important role to play in this context. The dialogue process shall be initiated at the behest of the concerned government authority. It is suggested that it should go away from the conventional structures and methodologies and may try to institutionalize the whole process of conflict resolution. It can set up *Conflict Resolution Cells* as part of the government machinery. The institutionalization of these kinds of departments would definitely give credibility in the ability to resolve conflicts. Further so far there are various agencies are being involved and the coordination issues among them at times undermine its ability to find solutions. These cells will be focussing only on issues of conflicts that try to negate the national integration.

Conflict Resolution Cells (CRC)

The institutionalization involves setting up of offices at state head quarters

and at the districts adjoining the collectorates. The central government shall have a nodal offices so as to coordinate the activities of the state governments. The government shall layout rules and regulations for these bodies through proper legislations. These cells shall be entrusted with the process of conflict resolution and almost all the issues shall be routed through these bodies.

The conflicts involved are of various nature that they cannot provide a one stop solution for the problems. It shall essentially initiate the dialogue process between both the parties involving a well-accepted mediator for the dialogue process. One of the major advantages of this mechanism is that as soon as the conflict breaks out, both sides shall be brought to a common table guaranteeing that they should maintain peace while proceeding with the dialogue process. The law and order situation can be kept under control with out much resistance through out these time frames.

If one of the parties involved is the state; as at times the issues are against the government; a senior officer from the concerned department shall be represented at the CRC. The office and the establishments can be in the lines of information officers of the departments after the implementation of the RTI Act. It will try to dispel confusions and clarify the process; further the officer will become quite conversant in the dialogue process.

Since the conflicts are of various natures such as social, economic, political; various specialized units are to be created within each CRC. If it involves a multidisciplinary approach; all the concerned units should cooperate and coordinate for finding ways to resolve it.

The organizational set up can be in the similar lines of other departments in the states and districts. The staff can be drawn from the state services on deputation with the district collector as the overall coordinator. However the specialized units like social, political, economic shall be manned by persons with specialization in the similar arena with out any political linkages**.**

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                    │  RESOLUTION CELL    │
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                   ↙          ↓          ↘

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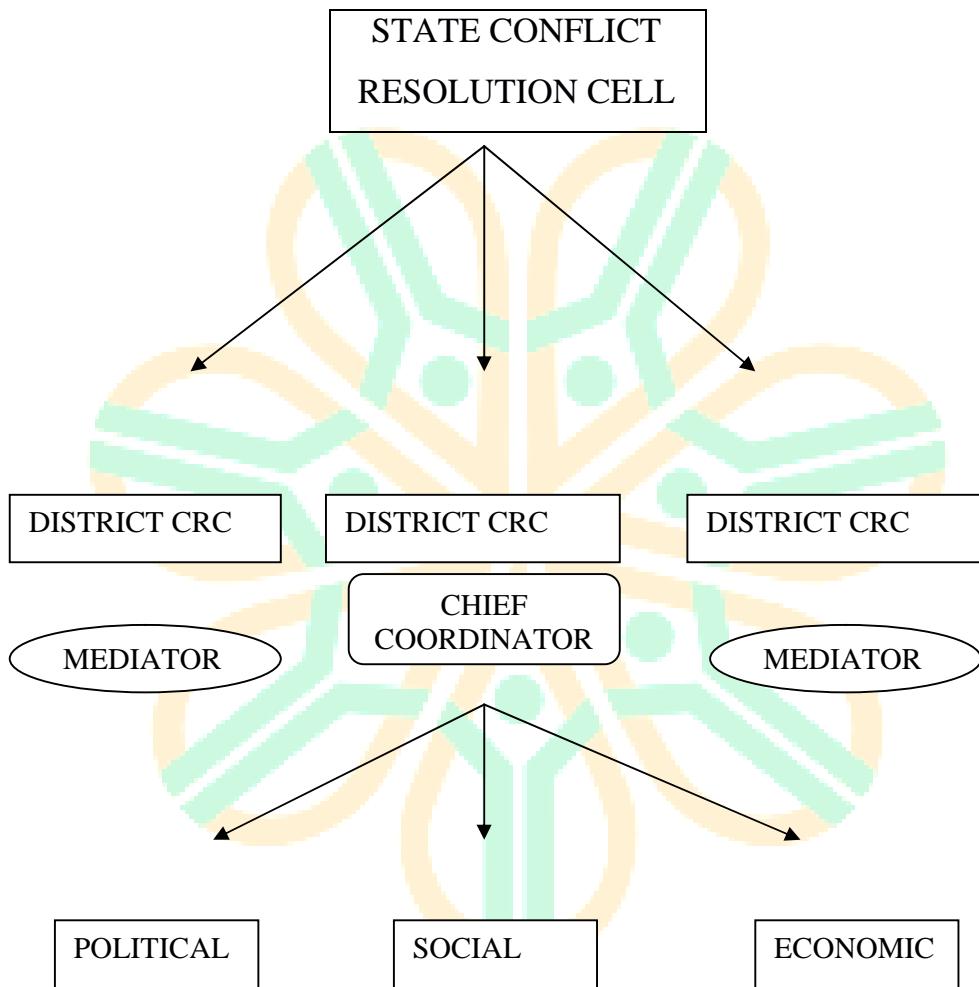
Fig: Structure of the Conflict Resolution Cells

The District Collector shall initiate the process of inviting both the parties for dialogue with the assistance of a mediator. Once the process is initiated, on analyzing the issues involved it shall be further referred to the special units. These cells should be linked with the Panchayati Raj Institutions and the elected members shall join the cell as ex-officio members.

The issues involving economic or other resources shall be linked with the district planning and shall be included in the state plan. The other issues including social and political aspects shall also be resolved amicably through

dialogues.

The CRC can involve itself with the conflicts by analyzing the underlying issues in each and every conflicts. On the analysis of various issues mentioned earlier such as communal tensions, naxalism, water disputes etc; it can be understood that the undercurrent of all these issues are mainly of social, political, economic in nature. There lies the solution of the problems as they are to dealt in their respective lines. For example the communal riots are of socio political in nature where as naxalism roots from economic issues

Thus the dialogue process shall be invariably on finding out the roots of these issues and to identify the causes of the conflicts. The communal riots are quite recurrent in our country and the conflict can be identified as a socio political problem. On breaking out of such an unfortunate incident, the district office shall immediately get in touch with the leaders of the concerned religion. They shall be invited for a dialogue in the presence of a mediator. They should engage in finding out the circumstances involved in eruption of violence.

This process gives participation of the concerned parties and on the mediation of an independent person, they would definitely strive for a win-win situation. Both sides can be persuaded to give in certain strong stances to find out a mutually acceptable solution. Further the media coverage as it happens nowadays on the sensitive issues give an onus to act as responsible citizens.

Recently the Christian churches were attacked at various places in the country. By involving the CRC, the priest or the religious representative and the leader of the right wing organization shall be brought on a common table apart from filing the FIRs and other enquiry system. The issues shall be discussed thoroughly and the various aspects involved shall be brought to the discussion forum. It shall ponder over the elements of provocation from the other side behind the attacks. If so, the other party has to ensure to prevent such incidents in the future. Even it had happened without any provocation, the other side has to explain the rationale behind their acts. Democracy does not guarantee anybody to

act upon their whims and fantasies.

The Constitution with its articles on fundamental rights and duties entrust the public to behave as responsible citizens. Until and unless they are not booked through these kind of mechanisms; they would continue to behave in a similar manner. The usual methods of arrest and detention do not guarantee any prevention and the judicial processes are quite time consuming. All these codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure are more of punitive and preventive in nature and it's high time that the system should come up with novel ideas and institution to resolve conflicts. The methods shall be transparent and participatory and thus the CRC kind of institution will definitely helps in resolving conflicts.

Similarly, naxalism which has become a matter of major concern in these recent years can also be dealt with a dialogue process. On analyzing the underlying issues of these naxal affected areas; it can be understood that the problems emanate from the basic socio economic disparities. These issues have later turned out to be a major political issue went even to the level of disrupting the general elections conducted recently. This problem is spread over a number of states eating up the resources of these states and the union government in curbing the law and order problems.

These areas are relatively socio-economically backward. The efforts shall be resorted to resolving conflicts in these areas through peaceful means. The state should act more benevolently in finding out the solutions. It may sound value loaded; but is quite practical as well if it can be executed with a larger political will.

For resolving these issues, the naxal leaders shall be brought to the political process with a mutually acceptable mediator. They shall be given full freedom in participating the dialogue forum. The cases and the warrants shall be held suspended and their views and opinions shall be invited. The special cells shall find means to accommodate the various economic and social issues involved and the economic issues shall be brought in the purview of state and

national plans. There shall be enough provisions for meeting these financial obligations. The cost incurred in solving would be definitely less than the cost incurred in maintaining law and order problems.

Thus the application of non-violent principles are more participatory as the people involved are given an opportunity to represent their views. This is essential in a democratic set up as the process is more transparent and inclusive. No democratic system can survive without the People's Participation. The citizens' engagement with the political process shall not end up with the voting process. The active participation is rather important than the passive presence in the democracy. Further the need of the hour in our administrative mechanism is Good Governance. Good governance can't be delivered properly with out the Peoples' Participation and the involvement of the Civil Society.

The issues shall be publically debated and the views are also to be articulated in the process of decision-making. The role of media is also significant in this context. The media should also take up the issues more rationally than sensitizing them. It should play a major role in creating awareness among the public. This fourth estate also shall play a very important role in the national integration.

However the non-violence methods cannot be seen as a panacea given the peculiar conditions of the law and order situations in the country. It is quite pragmatic that the initial frictions shall be waned out through policing or other means to contain the situations; other wise they may blow up to a higher proportion. Therefore a fair mixture of both methods shall be employed in resolving the conflicts. Further the sincerity and involvement of the people involved too decides the outcome of the dialogue process.

As mentioned at the outset, these non-violent measures are not novel in India. It has always been practised to resolve conflicting situations. The Gujjar issues agitated the political system of Rajasthan and Delhi in the recent past. Despite all efforts by the state, the issue could be dealt only with the dialogue

process by a mediator. The situation was almost similar in the case of Amarnath land issue in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Hence it is only suggested to institutionalize these mechanisms.

In a country like India with multitude of aspirations; the non-violent methods are the best possible course of action in resolving conflicts. It will accentuate the process of integration where by the citizens participate actively in the political process. It is also suggested to set up the Conflict Resolution Cells across the country to institutionalize the process. They can delve into the undercurrents of the conflicts thus providing a holistic solution. Despite all the odds; the country stands united for more than sixty years after independence. It could not have been achieved if it had been moved away from the fundamental values of truth and non-violence. Much to the envy of many varied interests; the country is united for many decades and will continue to remain so.
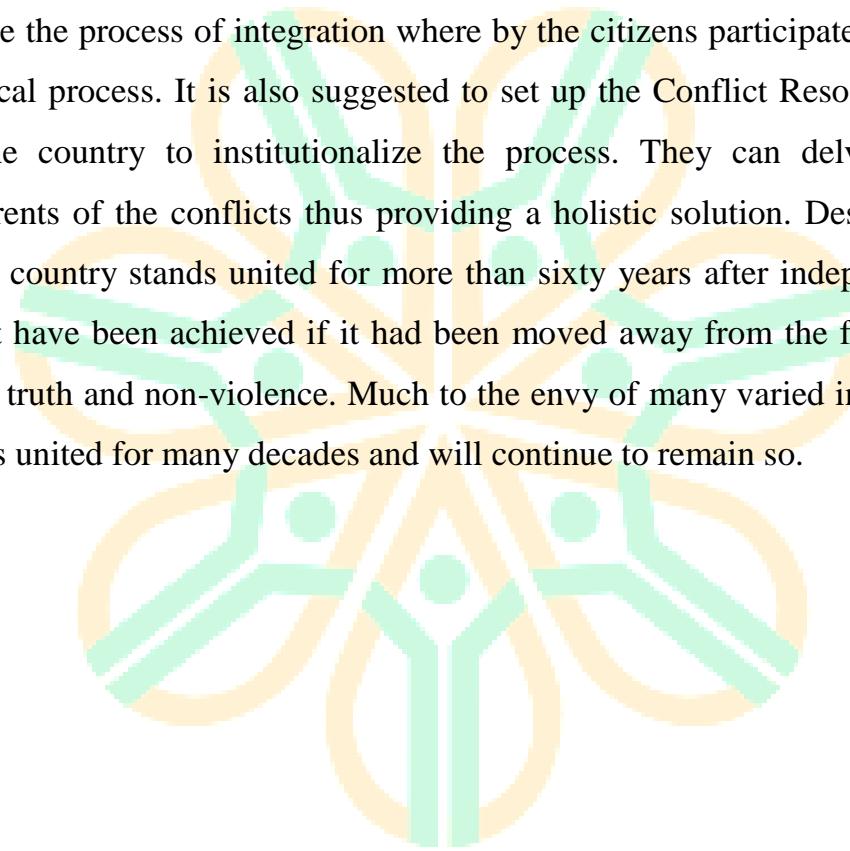
Non-violence is the harbinger of peace and conflict less environment

MANASI R. SAHAY

Today the world has become a scene out of Lord of the Rings where you will find darkness and destruction everywhere. One can come to know where the evil has touched, with its cold fingers, by the absence of harmony, peace and love Things that have been harped upon by countless predecessors right from Ashoka to Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Dalai Lama now seem to be from some bygone era, with the remnants akin to ruins that people visit, marvel about and then forget.

Present situation in the world

Today we are experiencing a volatile situation throughout the world, characterized by poverty, unemployment, recession, limited resources, global warming and confrontations between cultures. Violence and discrimination contaminate the daily life of broad sectors of the population. Armed conflicts plague many areas, and we now have a profound crisis in the international financial system.

Kosovo, Rwanda, East Timor, crazy gunmen, corrupt politicians, global warming depleting the already depleted resources; a very high probability of nuclear conflict; is the order of the day.

Today, there is a growing global awareness of the meaning and importance of non-violence. Although violence is still rife and very much kicking, the belief, that this world is coming to its senses and is gung-ho about doing something about this and does not take it in a *chalta hai* way is, growing like a healthy baby.

What is Conflict?

The dictionary defines "conflict" as "a struggle to resist or overcome, contest of opposing forces or powers; strife; battle. A state or condition of opposition; antagonism; discord. A painful tension set up by a clash between

opposed and contradictory impulses". No matter how hard we try to avoid it, conflict periodically enters our lives.

Conflict happens when two or more people or groups have, or think they have, incompatible goals.

According to UNPO:

> Violence is not limited to the use of arms, but can include cultural genocide, forced assimilation and destruction of the environment on which people's existence and development depends.

Reaffirmed the fundamental rights of nations and peoples to exist and develop as they choose, in accordance with their right to self-determination. Recognized that in some cases nations and people feel compelled to use armed force to defend themselves against armed aggression, genocide and other prolonged or massive forms of violence against them.

<u>Types of Conflict</u>

There are many different types of conflict experienced by communities all around the world. Some of them are:

1. <u>Surface conflict</u>: This has shallow or no roots. It may be due to misunderstanding of goals.
2. <u>Latent conflict</u>: This is conflict below the surface. It might need to be brought out in the open before it is discussed.
3. <u>Open conflict</u>: This conflict is open and has deep roots, sometimes over several generations
4. <u>Interpersonal conflict</u>: between people who have different and antagonistic goals.
5. <u>Intrapersonal conflict</u>: within an individual who cannot decide what he believes in.
6. <u>Conflict over sparse resources</u>: due to depletion of already spare resources and exponential growth of population and its ever growing demand for more and more.

Causes of Conflict

Conflict starts because people do not believe in an issue. Issues of disagreement in recent large-scale conflicts include territory, language, religion, natural resources, ethnicity or race, migration and political problem.

A conflict can have a single matchstick that can light it but it will have a stack of hay that has been piling on quite a ling time. So in order to avoid the fire one needs to ensure the stack is not there. The most important influence is power. Others include culture, identity and rights.

What is conflict resolution?

There are many ways to resolve conflicts: surrendering, running away, overpowering your opponent with violence, filing a lawsuit, etc. The movement toward Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), sometimes referres to simply as conflict resolution, grew out of the belief that there are better options than using violence or going to court. The various components of ADR may be listed as follows:

- Negotiation
- Mediation
- Arbitration
- Mediation-Arbitration
- Early neutral evaluation
- Community conferencing
- Collaborative law
- Negotiated Rulemaking
- Peer Mediation

Why do we need to resolve conflict?

The reason why "conflict" is talked about so much or why a monster has been created out of it is that people have witnessed the havoc it can create. The effects can be clubbed under various heads:

- Political effect

- Psychological effect- relationship difficulties, physical health problems and ongoing conflicts overwhelm an individual's ability to cope
- Social effect
- Economic effect
- Anthropological effect
- Environmental effect

Different ways of resolving conflict

Conflict resolution is a range of methods for alleviating or eliminating sources of conflict. Processes of conflict resolution generally include negotiation, mediation and diplomacy. The processes of arbitration, litigation, and formal complaint processes such as ombudsman processes, are usually described with the term "dispute resolution", although some refer to them as "conflict resolution". Processes of mediation and arbitration are often referred to as "alternative dispute resolution".

Why non-violence means is the best

It has been seen that violent means of handling conflict has never resulted in a "win-win" situation for both the parties. There has always been residual animosity in the air. In order to ensure that there is fragrance of peace in the air we have to resort to peaceful ways of resolving conflicts. For non-violent communication technique development by Rosenberg and Gandhi. The process of Non-Violent Communication (NVC) encourages us to focus on what we and others are observing, how and why we are feeling, what our underlying needs are, and what each of us would like to have happened. Thus this helps in resolving not just external conflicts but internal conflicts also which is, in reality, the root cause of all the problems in the world. Thus it resolves conflict and leads to the development of the individual by acting as a mirror that shows the true colours of an individual.

<u>What should we do to ensure non-violence become a way of life?</u>

People talk about peace and non-violence once in a blue moon, especially, if it happens to be the birth anniversary of the father of the nation or international peace day. So we celebrate it and then conveniently forget it. We need to make it a part of our lives something like breathing. How can we do so?

We can start it at the very basic by what was preached by Mahatma Gandhi: be truthful, say truth not just to people but to yourself also. Respect others if you want them to respect you. Treat no work as small. Spread love even if the person in front of you is angry. Be patient. Listen to people, give people the benefit of doubt. Treat the entire world as one family. There is enough for ones need but not for ones greed. Have faith in yourself as well as others.

It would not be incongruous at this stage to make a reference to King's steps to social change which would be guiding us in conflict resolution.

King's Six Steps to Social Change:

1.   Information gathering
2.   Education
3.   Personal Commitments
4.   Negotiation
5.   Direct Action
6.   Reconciliation and Healing Process

<u>Principles of Non-Violence</u>

There are 6 principles of non-violence as postulated by Martin Luther King Jr., which are listed below:

1.   Non-violence is a way of life for the courageous people.
2.   Non-violence seeks to win friendship and understanding.
3.   Non-violence seeks to defeat injustice and not people.
4.   Non-violence holds that suffering can educate and transform.
5.   Non-violence chooses love instead of hate.
6.   Non-violence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.

<u>The Gandhian Principles of Non-violence</u>

"The only devils in the world are those running around in our own hearts, that is where the battle should be fought….."

"Truth is my religion and non-violence (love) its only realisation"

-M K Gandhi
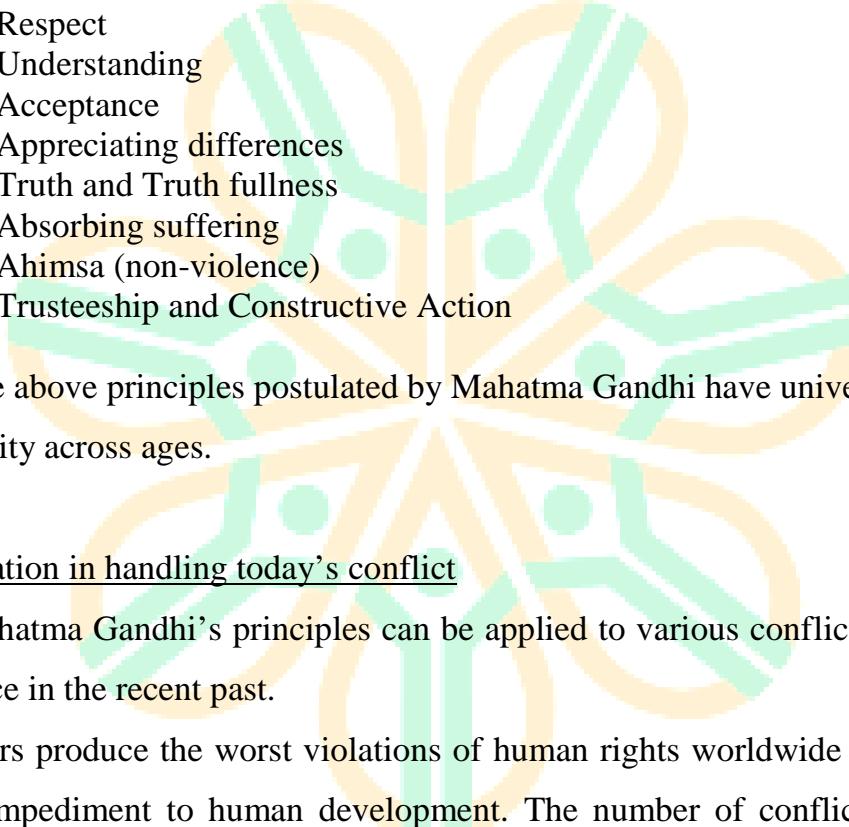
1. Respect
2. Understanding
3. Acceptance
4. Appreciating differences
5. Truth and Truth fullness
6. Absorbing suffering
7. Ahimsa (non-violence)
8. Trusteeship and Constructive Action

The above principles postulated by Mahatma Gandhi have universal applicability across ages.

<u>Its application in handling today's conflict</u>

Mahatma Gandhi's principles can be applied to various conflicts that have taken place in the recent past.

Wars produce the worst violations of human rights worldwide and are the greatest impediment to human development. The number of conflicts between nations has decreased since World War II, yet there have been more than 50 major armed conflicts since the Cold War ended in the late 1980s. Most of those have been internal clashes over religion, national or ethnic identity, or access to natural resources or wealth.

Some recent wars have been the bloodiest, most devastating of modern times: 4 million people were killed in the Democratic Republic of Congo; two million people got killed in Sudan and genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 2007, 14 major armed conflicts were active in 13 locations in the world.

Some instances where Gandhiji's principle of non-violence comes into picture are:

1. <u>India-Assam:</u> The Assam conflict is an insurgency in the state of Assam. It started in 1970s. It stems from the tension between Assamese and Bengalis, as well as group with separatist aspirations. Additionally the state is rich in oil resources. Here Gndhiji's principles of respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciating the differences and theory of trusteeship can play a huge role. Thus the separatist intention of inciting people on the basis of the difference of region and language can be taken care of by making them understand the true intention of the insurgents and making the people accept the fact that all individuals are different, whether they belong to the same region or come from various parts of the country. They should respect each other and not try to degrade or demean people form other region. Theory of trusteeship can also help the present generation to act responsibly and not think that they own this world and can do whatever they want to. In order to win the resources they are spoiling the already fragile environment.

2. <u>India- Kashmir:</u> The Kashmir conflict refers to the territorial dispute over Kashmir. India claims it as an integral part of the country, whereas Pakistan calls it a disputed area. This is happening on religious grounds. Again Gandhiji can come to the rescue, but the problem is that people don't want to solve it for political reason. Thus we suffer from amnesia and keep reselecting the government that promises to solve the problem no matter how unsuccessful it may have been at the work in the past. The solution is simple, we need to forget the difference and respect each other.

3. <u>Ivory coast-Civil War:</u> Experts put the blame, of conflict escalation on the fact that Ivory Coast is rich in resources. Natural resources such as cotton, diamond, and cocoa are the reasons behind the war that refuses to get extinguished. If we start practicing Gandhiji dictum that there is enough for everyone's need but not enough for one's greed, we can very well take care of the problem. The only thing that can save the day is if we start believing that we are the trustees and not the owners of this land. It is our duty to pass over the possession without taking away its essence from it, in as pure a form as we can keep it in.

4. <u>Nepal-Maoists:</u> The aim of overthrowing the Napalese monarchy and establishing the "Peoples Republic of Nepal" was the genesis of this insurgent problem. Thus lack of respect, understanding seem to be at the root of this problem.

Some other wars are Russia - Chechenia war, Sudan-Darfur and United States – Iraq. These are results of the present generation not reading history and the thoughts of great people, mentioned in the form of principles, on the basis of their experiences. History is replete with such incidences that can be a guide as to what to do, what not to do, how to do, etc. which have been dealt with, by people who have concluded that peace is the only way forward. Nothing works like love and peaceful co-existence.

How do we promote principles of non-violence?

We need to adopt multi- dimensional strategies to promote the principles of non- violence in order to ensure effective and consistent conflict resolution in all walks of life. We need to focus on the source of conflict to promote appropriate principles of non – violence which may include negotiation, mediation, respect to other's views, understanding the differences, mutual consultation and discussion etc. People need to be exposed and made aware of different principles of non – violence as propounded, preached and practiced by different personalities of the world from time to time. Lessons from history always need to be kept in sight while aiming for conflict resolution through non-violence.

Whenever confronted with any dilemma or doubt over the adoption of suitable ways for conflict resolution, one has to keep in mind that the method of non – violence is the only permanent and effective method. People of all ages irrespective of sex, caste, creed, race, religion and nationality, will have to be indoctrinated through various means to the efficacy of non – violent means.

In a nutshell, it would be most appropriate to infer that promotion of non–violence is the only potent tool, nay strategy, to ensure conflict resolution in any sphere of human life. In today's world, where we have been witnessing a lot of conflict in all fields, be it social, political, religious, ethno-cultural or economic

etc., non-violence is the only panacea. We need to believe in it, preach it and practice it in true sense if world is to be made a perfect place to live in. Needless to emphasize, non-violence is the harbinger of peace, conflict-less environment by removing both external and internal conflicts and ensuring a "Win-Win" situation for all parties.

In conclusion, let us all forget consciously and sincerely all our differences and disputes by imbibing the culture of non-violence and then, conflict-free world would not be a dream.
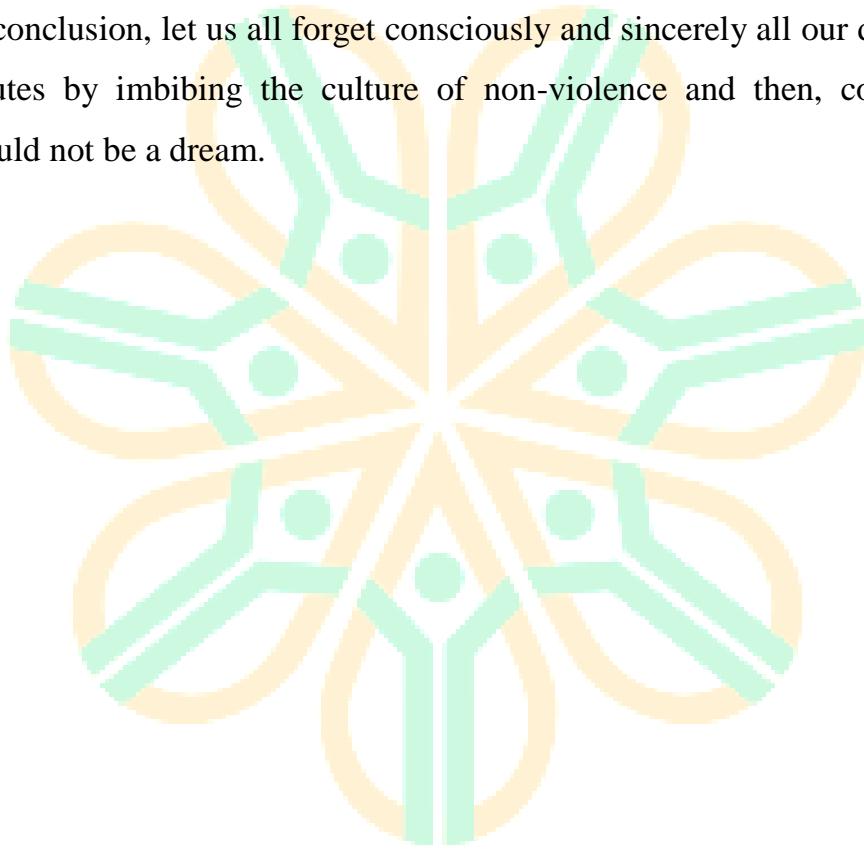
Non-violent methods will lead to productive resolution of conflict

PRIYANKA MARY FRANCIS

Today we are living in an age of chaos and conflicts. The world is frantically in search for the right solution to the day-to-day problems. The range of solutions varies from *Pranayama* for some to 'the vacuum bomb' for some others. Still no permanent solace is achieved by the mankind. This is because we have all along been treating the symptoms of our problems and not their root causes. There is a dearth of understanding about the right approach to conflict resolution in our lives. Before we can analyse the methods for resolving conflicts, it is necessary to look into the concept of conflicts.

What are conflicts?

The word conflict takes its origin from the Latin word 'Conflictus' which means confrontation or a clash between opposing forces. Conflicts have been described by *Weber* as existing whenever incompatible activities occur, when there is a state of tension between two actors and when one individual, community, nation or even supranational bloc desires something that can be obtained only at the expense of what another individual or group desires. According to *Fink* a conflict emerges whenever two or more persons seek to possess the same object occupy the same space or the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain incompatible goals, or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purposes. An open conflict is never instantaneous. It will be springing up from an underlying tension that lies dormant. *Deutsch* calls the former situation as manifest conflict to distinguish it from the underlying conflict. Manifest conflict cannot be resolved permanently unless the underlying conflict is dealt with.

When we analyse conflicts it can be seen that these can be destructive or constructive. According to *Weber* a conflict becomes destructive when the participants in it are dissatisfied with the outcomes and they feel they have lost as a result of the conflict. Destructive conflicts have a tendency to expand and escalate becoming independent of the initiating causes. A conflict is constructive if the participants are satisfied with their outcomes and feel that they have gained as a result of the conflict. Always constructive conflicts are fruitful in the sense that these aid open and honest communication of relevant information between the participants.

Nader and Todd have broken down conflict situations into three evolutionary phrases. First there is a grievance or pre-conflict stage in which an injustice or grounds for resentment are perceived by one party. This is followed by the conflict stage where the aggrieved party opts for confrontation and communicates his feelings to the offending party. Finally, the conflict enters the dispute stage when it becomes public and third parties become involved. There may be trigger events that lead to the escalation of disputes from one stage to another. The role of outsiders is also important in precipitating a conflict. Thus if a conflict occurs as a result of conscious or unconscious escalation from differences that can be considered natural and also as a result of external influences, it follows that events or changes in attitudes can intercede between one stage and another thus stalling or preventing escalation. It is this possibility, which gives us the opportunity to prevent the precipitation of violent conflict, and the responsibility to discover effective methods of intercession.

Conflict Resolution

It is always desirable that a conflict is resolved to the satisfaction of the participants. Conflict resolution involves a range of methods for alleviating or eliminating the sources of conflict. There are many ways of dealing with conflicts- violent as well as non- violent. For many of us violence may appear to

be a superior technique of solving conflicts to non-violence because it has obvious and tangible strategies and weapons. But the fact is that violence in any of its many forms has the tendency to become self-perpetuating through the cycle of vengeance and counter vengeance. Conducting a conflict in a non-violent non-threatening way prevents the opponent from reacting out of fear in mindless reflex action. If conflict resolution is based on principles of non-violence, then it will be productive, as it leaves no necessity for further threats or force. Before we investigate the different non-violent ways of conflict resolution it is necessary to look into the principles of non-violence.

Principles of non-violence

Principles of non-violence have been laid down by many great men during their lifespan. Of these, those perpetuated by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. are worth mentioning. According to Gandhi, we are called to celebrate both our differences and our fundamental unity with others. Also the non-violent journey is a process of becoming increasingly free from fear. Martin Luther King, Jr. thought that non-violence is a way of life for courageous people and also that it seeks to win friendship and understanding. *Barbara Deming,* the famous activist and writer has explained the concept of creative non-violence. According to her active non-violence has two hands i.e. it is a process that holds two realities - of non-cooperation with violence but open to the humanity of the violator. This process refrains from violence, to break the cycle of escalating and retaliatory violence, reach out to the opponent and to potential allies and seek to reveal more clearly the truth and justice of the situation. Applying these principles, we arrive at different non-violent methods of conf1ict resolution.

1) Accommodation

This is the most common mechanism among the different non-violent methods оf conflict resolution. In this mechanism the opponent resolves to grant the demands of the non-violent activists without having changed his mind fundamentally about the issues involved. The main reason for this new

willingness to yield is the changed social situation produced by the non-violent action. *Gene Sharp* has found that there may be many other factors as well. The opponent may become convinced that despite his view of the rights and wrongs of the issues at stake in the conflict, continued repression of the non-violent group by various types of violence is inappropriate. Sometimes opponents may grant the activists' demands or make concessions, simply because they regard the group or certain consequences of the conflict as a nuisance which they wish to end. In some cases the non-violent action may create deep internal rift over politics and repression within the opponent's group. Then the leaders of the opponent group may find it to their advantage to grant some or all of the demands of the non-violent activists.

2) <u>Non-violent Coercion</u>

In this method the demands of the non-violent group are achieved against the will of the opponent through the following ways:

a) The defiance may become too massive and widespread to be controlled by the opponent's repression.

b) The non-cooperation and defiance may make it impossible for the social, economic and political system to operate unless the activists' demands are achieved.

c) Even the opponent's ability to apply repression may be undermined and may at times dissolve.

There is a vast difference between the above described non-violent coercion and violent coercion. In violent coercion deliberate injury is inflicted upon the individual whereas non-violent coercion mainly rises from no-cooperation and at times removal of the opponent's ability to inflict violence. There are many factors that may influence non-violent coercion like opposition within the opponent group, degree of the opponent's dependence on the non-violent activists for the source of his power etc.

3) Conversion

By conversion we mean that through the work of the non-violent activists the opponent comes around to a new viewpoint, which embraces the ends of the non-violent actor. According to *Gene Sharp,* one approach to induce conversion may be to change the social situation drastically, eliminating the opponent's power or profits, so that he may examine the stand taken by him in a new light. More often non-violent groups which have sought to convert have emphasized direct appeals to their opponent's better nature. All non-violent activists who follow this technique have accepted the necessity of willingness to suffer in the face of repression so as to bring about a conversion of opponent's mind. But effectiveness of this suffering is determined by the social distance between the contending groups-the degree to which there is or is not fellow feeling and mutual understanding between them. Also there should be respect shown by the opponent group for the non-violent activists and this respect comes from the courage on the part of the non-violent activists. But one important aspect of non-violent conversion is that it may not be possible to win over all members of the opponent group simultaneously. A step-by- step approach with much patience and courage is to be adopted for successful conversion. The method of non-violent conversion claims a higher position among other methods of conflict resolution as none other than Mahatma Gandhi has advocated this method through his technique of *"Satyagraha".*

Satyagraha

Gandhi devised Satyagraha as he believed striving for conversion is the morally correct way to conduct conflict because only through a dialectical process can truth be arrived at and such quest for truth is according to him the aim of human life. According to him the essence of Satyagraha is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves and the Satyagrahis object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoer. In conflict situations

Satyagraha merely means that the Satyagrahi follows no other plan than the adherence to non-violence and has no other goal than to reach the truth. While adopting Satyagraha for conflict resolution, there is no threat, coercion or punishment. The Satyagrahi instead undergoes self-suffering with the optimistic belief that the opponent can be converted to see the truth of his or her claim by touching the opponent's conscience or that a clearer vision of truth will grow out of the dialectical process for both parties.

But it must be clear that just any kind of suffering is not likely to set in motion the processes which may lead to changes in the opponent's feelings, attitudes and beliefs. For suffering to lead to conversion, *Lakey* points out that the opponent must experience feelings of identification with the non-violent group. This identification in turn requires a new perception of a common quality between the two groups. Such perception depends not only on the actual suffering but on the way in which the non-violent activists behave prior to and during such suffering. Therefore suffering by people who have demonstrated their bravery and non-violent determination is far more likely to produce a significant sympathetic response in the opponent than is suffering by people who behave like cowards.

According to Gandhian thinking, there are at least eight factors influencing conflict, resolution through conversion, which are under the control of the non-violent group.

a) Refraining from violence and hostility. Deliberate rejection of violence in favour of non-violent means is regarded as having an important psychological impact on the opponent, which may influence his conversion.

b) Attempting to gain the opponent's trust through truthfulness, openness concerning intentions and chivalry.

c) Refraining from humiliating the opponent. Humiliation is an unlikely step toward sympathy, voluntary change and conversion.

d) Making visible sacrifices for one's own cause. Only if suffering is offered by people directly involved in the grievances it will be perceived as sincerity and therefore influence conversion.

e) Carrying on constructive work. When people begin to engage in humanitarian and constructive work the opponent group may take their statements and behaviour seriously.

f) Maintaining personal contact with the opponent. Such contact may help keep personal relations friendly despite the conflict and achieve maximum accurate understanding of the other's views, motivations and intentions.

g) Demonstrating trust of the opponent. As per Gandhian thought, when the non-violent group has high expectations of the opponent's intentions and future behaviour, those expectations, it is believed, may encourage him to live up to them and may lead to successful conflict resolution.

h) Developing empathy, goodwill and patience toward the opponent. Demonstrated respect for the individual members of the opponent group and understanding of their outlook and problems may in turn make them more sympathetic and less hostile to the people who challenge non-violent methods.

Effectiveness of the principles of non-violence in conflict resolution

When we analyse the effectiveness of non-violent ways in resolving conflicts it can be seen that defeat is always possible in non-violent action, just as it is in war or in other types of political violence. Although not immediately successful, if the non-violent activists increase their spirit of resistance, expand their organizational strength, improve skill in applying this technique, and gain sympathy and friends which may be useful in the future, then even defeat may become a prelude to success. In the cases of successful conflict resolution we often cannot single out a particular non-violent method, which has led to the success. Instead change may be produced by some combination of these

mechanisms. Advocates of the use of non-violent action in place of techniques of violence have sometimes argued that the results achieved by non-violent action are likely to be more permanent and satisfactory than those achieved by violence. According to *Gregg,* victory achieved by violence is likely to result in hatred and desire for revenge, which may lead to a new war to achieve revenge or restitution. The results of a successful non-violent struggle are going to be different, in that there will be no aftermath of resentment or revenge and no necessity for further threats of force. Due to insistence on non-violence there will be lack of bitterness towards the non-violent activists even after the latter have won their demands.

The greatest example of successful conflict resolution through non-violent method is the Indian independence struggle itself. Gandhi through his method of Satyagraha had achieved conversion of the minds of British authorities. Similarly Dr. Martin Luther Jr. King led a major struggle to eliminate racial segregation and discrimination in U.S.A. through his non-violent methods.

Conclusion

Conflicts had always been and will always be part and parcel of human lives. Every one of us engages in different kinds of conflicts in our daily lives. According to *John Dewey,* conflict is the gadfly of thought. It stirs us to observation and memory. It forces us to investigate our viewpoints. If we realize this truth then it will easily occur to us that there is no benefit in violently pursuing a conflict. As noted by many thinkers' violent ways of conflict resolution may appear to be effective for a while; but these will not give any concrete and permanent results. Only non-violent methods will lead to productive resolution of conflicts as seen in the earlier analysis. Under some conditions the non-violent struggle may have lasting effects on the opponent group, such as stimulating new ways to achieve their objectives, bringing new outlooks and goals or modifying the system itself. We should not forget the fact that

instantaneous success may not accompany non-violent struggles. But we should build our patience while dealing with such conflicts, as the end results of other alternatives will be grave and painful. As envisioned by our great leaders let us strive towards a better world to live in by not taking the shortcut of violence but pursuing the longer path of non-violence.
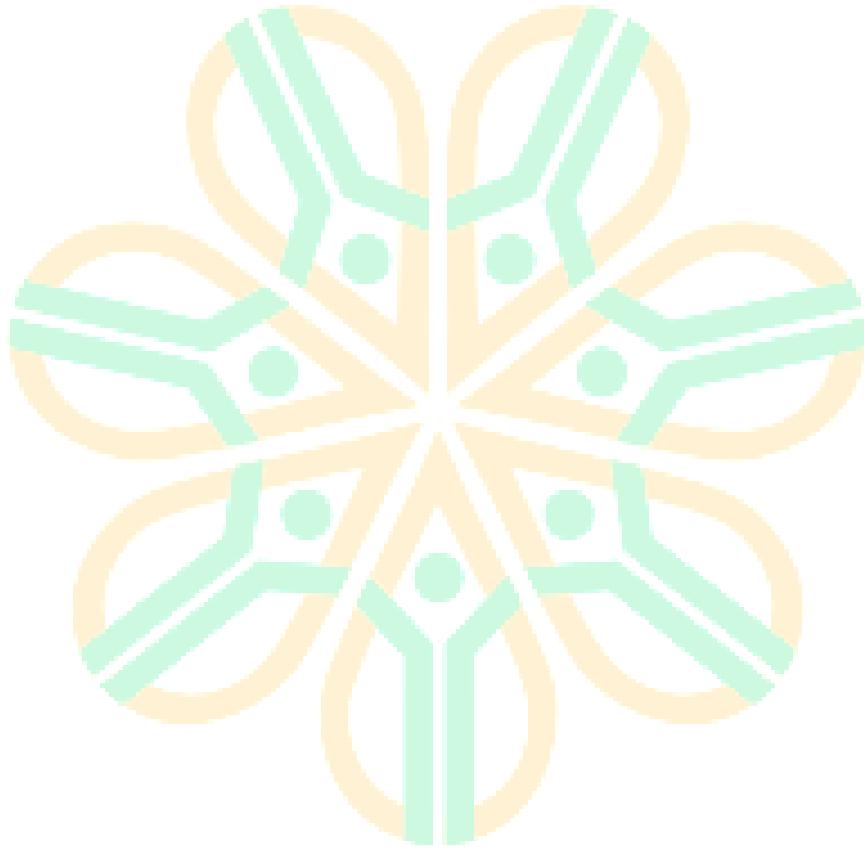
Let us have to educate future generation about being tolerant towards others

SUDHI CHOUDHARY

One day after the Kalinga war was over, Ashoka, the great Mauryan ruler of India ventured out into the eastern city. All he could see were burnt houses and shattered corpses. This sight made him sick and he cried, "What have I done?" The brutality of his conquests filled him with great sorrow and he gave up violence for "Dharma-Vijaya" or victory through non-violence and peaceful means. This legendary extract reflects on the importance of the use of principles of non-violence for the resolution of conflicts that might range from kindergarten bullying to genocide.

Non-violence or 'Ahimsa' means to do no harm to anyone. It resists violence of the spirit as well as of the body. Love for the enemy is a fundamental concept of non-violence. The goal is not to defeat the enemy but to win them over. Violence is the language of the weak, untruth and of the wrong doers. Non-violence in turn is the voice of the strong, truth and righteous.

Non-violence forms a part of the major tenets of each of the important Abrahamic religious (i.e. Islam, Judaism and Christianity) as well as in the major Dharmic religious traditions (i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism). Gene Sharp, the Machiavelli of non-violence points out that despite the growing awareness of non-violence, there is widespread confusion about what it really is. He further noted that this confusion is primarily due to the fact that much of that which is subsumed under overlapping concepts as pacifism, non-violent resistance, and passive resistance is not clear and ambiguous at the operational level. Further, differences and intolerance between individuals and groups leads to confrontation which furthers manifests itself in conflict. Economic deprivation, social and political subjugation are the primary causes of all conflicts. The major conflicting groups include privileged and the deprived, men and women, rich and the poor one religion and the another one caste and the other. These various

social groups can be brought about within the purview of the powerful idea of non-violence which could bring about the desired change in the world.

In recent times, non-violence has been used as a powerful tool for social protest Mahatma Gandhi led a long non-violent struggle against the British rule in India which eventually brought about her independence in 1947. In the 1960's Cesar Chavez raised a campaign of non-violence to protest the treatment of farm workers in California another recent example of a non-violent movement was the 'Velvet Revolution' of Czechoslovakia that saw the overthrow of the Communist government in that country. Few more non-violent movement like the one led by Nelson Mandela in South Africa, for the abolition of 'Apartheid' or racial segregations of the blacks, was quite a remarkable one.

Martin Luther King adopted Gandhi's non-violent methods in his struggle to win civil rights for African Americans. He came up with a set of principles of non-violence. According to him non-violence is a way of life for the courageous people. It seeks to win friendship and understanding. Also, according to him evildoers and also victims, thus, evil should be hated and not the evil-doer. Furthers, non-violence holds that voluntary suffering can educate and transform. It accepts suffering without retaliation. Knowing that the return might be hostility. It believes that universe is on the side of justice.

It is clear that violence cannot be tackled by counter-violence. Achievement of the balance of power is the central problem in case of a conflict. Balance of power means interlocking of mutual interests, capabilities, and wills. The means of arriving at this balance are varied. Firstly, one should try to clarify the situation. Conflict is a condition plagued by cross perceptions and miscommunication. Therefore, the process of balance of powers can be shortened and antagonism minimized by simply uncovering the hidden goals and perhaps even conscious and unconscious beliefs and values.

Fact finding is one of the most important ways of reducing misperception and misunderstanding seeking mutual agreement on issue, clams and justifications is as important as understanding the other party's frame of reference. This may not help disperse the conflict per se but it-would certainly help focus on the real issues. Instead of using coercion for frustating the other party's goals, if we could focus on invoking common goals and mutual exchange. Making attractive offers and rewarding agreements provide durable solution to conflict situation. Though this may not always be possible especially if one of the party is insistent one should have a favorable disposition towards exchange.

The more one can establish some legitimate reason, explanation or justification for the decision one wants, the more likely one is to induce a yes. And the best way to do so is to seek precedent which might be existing in the form of previously made formal decisions, agreements or behavior. It is also beneficial to involve a legitimate third party like a religious or a social leader with sufficient credibility.

Distancing the parties form one another can also help calm emotions. This would lead to simply fading out of the conflict situation. Voluntarily formed racial or ethnic groups can also contribute towards keeping peace.

Resisting aggression is one of the most important principles of non-violence that needs to be undertaken in a conflict situation. Always resort to negotiation, mediation and compromise. But this reaction should be proportionate to its strength. An over reaction risks escalation to a more extended and intense conflict and the under reaction risks repeated aggression. But most importantly one should display a genuine will for conflict resolution. Display of this commitment has a great impact on the other party's positive or negative responses.

After analyzing the principles of non-violence, the next question that arises is that what is the need for the promotion of these principles? It is because the contemporary society has become extremely complex. There are various dis-

unifying tendencies between various individuals and groups. These can be political, social, religious, economical, ethnic etc. it is necessary to alleviate these innumerable sources of conflict through peaceful means.

Our world has already witnessed two world wars, caused essentially due to intolerance resulting in massive destruction, loss of lives and property. Another war at such a massive scale is undesirous for humanity. The rapid development of technology has also made the promoting of non-violence obligatory. The presence of weapons of mass destruction with numerous countries is a threat to humanity. The nuclear arsenal, if used, would lead to unimaginable destruction. To stop brutalities like Hiroshima and Nagasaki for strengthening of human rights, it is necessary to resolve conflicts through negotiations, mediation and diplomacy.

Violence breeds violence. It not only encourages its future use, but also motivates others to do like wise. In this era of globalization, there is a shift in the balance of power towards multi polarity from unipolar world. This has caused a number of conflicts in the past and is quite likely to cause numerous others. In order to ensure an all-round development and good of all humanity a peaceful and non-violent resolution of conflicting interests is what is desired for.

Taking the example of poverty stricken and war torn Africa where non-violence remains a mammoth challenge. In some parts of Africa, the destruction of non-violent leadership is still proceeding. The tragedy cycle begins when the leadership passes form non-violent hands. What the statesmen and politicians who control Africa's destiny today have yet to discover is how to meet the challenge of non-violence in a civilized manner, how to avoid repetition of the tragedy that follows from the failure to afford, in time, adequate constitutional channels, and training and experience in polities and the art of government.

Non-violence has been a central concept in green political philosophy. It is included in the global greens charter Greens believe that society should reject the current patterns of violence and embrace non-violence. The greens philosophy

draws heavily from both Gandhi and the Quaker traditions, which advocate measures by which the escalation of violence can be avoided, while not cooperating with those commit violence. They also believe that the current patterns of violence are incompatible with a sustainable society because it uses up limited resources and many forms of violence, especially nuclear weapons are damaging for the environment. Some green political parties, like the Dutch Green links, evolved out of the cooperation of the peace movement with the environment in their resistance to military use of nuclear energy. As green parties have moved form the fringes of the society towards becoming more and more influential in the government circles, this commitment to non-violence had to be more clearly defined.

Many critics of non-violence, for example Leon Trotsky, Subhash Chandra Bose, Frantz Fanon etc., observe that it is morally incorrect for anyone being brutalized to continue to accept that brutality without doing something to defend himself. Even the Bhagwad Gita which preaches of the concept of *Ahinsa parmo dharmah* (non-violence is the ultimate duty) considers unavoidable violence reluctantly undertaken for the purpose of stable sing a rule of righteousness (Dharma Sansthapna) for the betterment of the society and for the sustenance of ones body as justifiable and calls this too as ahinsa. Thus, according to this view the principle of non-violence is quite different from pacifism. This could justify the two pronged strategy for curbing menaces like terrorism and naxalism by the use of both the military and the development methods.

However, the importance of promotion of principles of non-violence for conflict resolution for recognized chiefly after the Second World War when the United Nations was created for peacefully resolving conflicts between nations and preventing any armed conflicts. Another organization playing a major role in this arena is the Amnesty International which helps those who have been victims of violence. Therefore, promoting and spreading the massage of non-violence.

The adoption of the principles of 'Panch Sheel' by nations has also promoted non-violence in international politics. Various other means like media have helped in promoting and making the principles of non-violence known and understood by common masses. Hindi film 'Lage Raho Munnabhai' is a good example of non-violence resistance as a way of conflict resolution. The film was not only a blockbuster but also the first Hindi film to be shown in United Nations. This clearly reflects the popular acceptance of non-violence and its principles. Celebration of days like International Day of Non-Violence on the 2nd of October, organising of world march for peace and other such events help popularize the principles of non-violence.

The path of non-violent protests and persuasion demands a lot of patience from the people following it. This is clearly visible in the case of Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar. Recently, Barack Obama, the United State President, was awarded Nobel Peace Prize of his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between people. He has created a new climate in international polities. The vision of a world free from nuclear weapons has powerfully stimulated disarmament and arms control negotiations.

Let us hope that his positive environment continues and a world which the King of Pop, Michael Jackson dreamt of in his song "Heal the world, make it a better place, for you and for me and the entire human race……" can be created.

In order to ensure that this happens each one of us have to contribute in our own way. We have to be understanding, respecting and promoting the principles of non-violence, educating the people around and the future generations about being tolerant towards others. If all of us do this, the day is not far when the saying "Loka Samasta sukhino bhavantu" (let the whole world be prosperous and peaceful) comes true.

We need non-violence as the supreme law of life

BIJAY KETAN UPADHYAYA

"Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force"

Mahatam Gandhi

The importance and essence of non-violence can be well guessed from the above statement of Gandhi. However, in today's world we do not practice non-violence in our personal relations, but we hope to use it in bigger affairs. Non-violence to resolve conflicts must begin at home. Non-violence should become a way of life and it should not be applied in a piecemeal manner.

Non-violence refers to "mutual forbearance" it has to be practiced towards those who act violently towards us. It must be applied to nations as well as individuals. To practice non-violence and to promote it for resolving conflicts a certain amount of training is necessary. The beginning will be small. But if we have the courage of conviction, we can adapt it as way of life.

But the training on non-violence and promoting, the principle of non-violence is not going to be easy. As Rabindranath Tagore has said:

"It is easy to train an army of violence, even a year's drill may be good enough for that. But it takes a lot more time to train and prepare men to attain enough maturity and strength for a non-violent struggle".

Non-violent conflict resolution methods and principles

Conflict resolution is a very dynamic and vast field especially in the context of conflicts in every walk of life. It is practised by people throughout the world. The need for evolving peaceful ways of resolving conflicts has become more urgent than ever with the expansion in the number and variety of conflicts.

Conflicts have been described as existing whenever incompatible activities occur, when there is a state of tension between two actors irrespective of how it

originated or how it is terminated. Conflicts can occur between many varying combination of parties and for great many reasons.

Conflicts may arise from differences in information or belief. may reflect differences in interest, desires or values, may occur as a result of scarcity of some resource or may reflect a rivalry in which one person tries to out do or undo the other. A conflict is said to be resolved when both parties have given up any hope of changing or amending the situation.

However, in the Gandhian dialectic, conflicts can only be said to have been resolved when all parties are satisfied with the outcome, that is, when some mutually consistent set of actions is worked out. Such solution greatly reduces the fragility of resolutions.

Academics, educationists, freelancers and kindred souls have seminal role to play in the conflict prone era of our time conflicts are manifold, cumbersome and chronic. Our contemporary world faces value crisis, character, moral crisis and ethical crisis.

Conflicts may be of different kinds. For examples, value conflict, separatist and national conflicts, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, regional conflicts etc.

The conflict can be terminated or concluded in three ways through the procedural methods of dealing conflict. They are:-

- Reconciliation
- Compromise
- Award

In Reconciliation, the value systems and differing images of each party undergoes dramatic change, which accelerates the process of mutually agreeable preferences or solution to end the conflict.

Compromise is the position in which the conflicting parties do not alter their value system, however, they mutually agree to find more pragmatic and less idealistic solution rather than continue the conflict. Compromise is arrived mostly

through bargaining in which parties are willing to give up some of their demands in favour of arriving at a solution.

Award is a kind of settlement in which the solution comes in the form of verdict of an outside person or agency with which the parties agreed to accept.

However, today's civil society has the responsibility not only to make the world free from destructive conflict but also to creat on atmosphere where the conflict can be resolved creatively and effectively. The tool for doing this is non-violence. We do not know what is the potential of non-violence and the complete range of techniques in it. As Gandhiji pointed out:-

"We are constantly being astonished by the amazing discoveries in the filed of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the filed of non-violence".

But we must know that non-violent action without the cooperation of the heart and the head cannot produce the intended result. The failure of our "imperfect Ahimasa" will be visible to the naked eye. In our life the most persistent and urgent question should be, "what are we doing for the others?" with the asking of such a question we will find our doubts and self melt away and we will be more tolerant and humble. We will stick with love.

According to Martin Luther King, Jr "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". Injustice is created when any conflict is resolved violently. This also breeds hate, envy, contempt and jealousy. To overcome this we must not think nonviolence as a personal virtue. It should be cultivated as a social virtue.

In a society based on nonviolence voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence. All society is held together by nonviolence, even as the earth is held in her position by gravitation. When society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of nonviolence is when only non-violence principles will be applied for conflict resolution, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. What is happening today is

disregard of the law of nonviolence and enthronement of violence as if it were an eternal law.

By its very nature, nonviolence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But nonviolence can do more; it can effectively control and guide power without capturing the machinery of Government. This feature of non-violence is its greatest asset in resolving conflicts. That is its beauty. Mankind is essentially non-violent in nature. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. However, there is no denying the fact that in the duel between forces of violence and non-violence, the latter will always come out victorious in the end. Thus, we should give peace and non-violence a chance to resolve our conflicts.

For non-violence principles to succeed we must have faith on it. Our faith must be the brightest in the midst of impenetrable darkness. It must be recognized as "a living force, an inviolable creed, not a mere policy". Nonviolence is a means to resolve conflicts. If one takes care of means, the end will take care of itself. In a society based on nonviolence, the idea of superiority and inferiority will be wholly obliterated and conflicts will come to a natural conclusion and not to an imposed one.

Whether it's across a living room or across a border, conflicts will be settled either through violent force or through nonviolent force. Conflict, by definition, means only this: we need to change our way of dealing with each other; the old way on longer works. It's almost a signal to get another way of dealing with a disagreement. The young are hungry to learn the skills of nonviolence and it is teachable.

No nation has so vast a literature on non-violence as India. Yet, judging from our history of wars, our high rates of homicide, spouse and child abuse, abortions, the killings of animals for food, our death row executions, it's as if the art of resolving conflicts non-violently were as hard to learn as astrophysics in Urdu.

It isn't that hard. The following steps should be promoted to decrease or end conflicts in a non-violence manner:-

1. Define the conflict, objectively and not subjectively.
2. It's not you against me, it's you and me against the problem. The problem is the problem. By focusing on the problem and not the person with the problem, a climate of cooperation, not competition, is enhanced.
3. List the relationship's many shared concerns and needs, as against one shared separation.
4. When people have tought, don't ask what happened. We should elicit facts, not opinions. Misperceptions are to be clarified, not prolonged.
5. Work on active listening, not passive hearing. Conflicts escalate when partners try to talk more than listen and then only listen as a timeout for verbal rearming. We must remember that listening well is an act of caring.
6. We should choose a place to resolve the conflict, not the battleground itself.
7. We should start with what is doable. Restoration of peace can't be done quickly.
8. We should work on one small doable rather than many large undoable.
9. We must develop forgiveness skills. Forgiveness looks forward, vengeance looks backward.
10. We should purify our hearts. We need to get our own messy life in order before we can instruct others how to live.

These ten steps of nonviolent conflict resolution must be promoted in every nook and corner of the world. However, sometimes the conflicting partners are so emotionally wounded or ideologically hidebound that nothing can stop the violence. But large numbers of conflicts can be resolved without killing or wounding the other side, provided the strategies for non-violent peace making are known.

Gandhi routinely said, don't bring your opponents to their knees, bring them to their senses. Nonviolence means prevention before the crisis. Violence says the opposite. Conflicts can be reduced by introducing "peace education" in schools i.e. systematically teaching the literature of peace and techniques of conflict resolution.

The origins of conflicts are many. Feelings of injustice or deprivation give rise to conflict. These feelings may have some real basis or it may be only because of some false or imaginary ideas. Sometimes false ego gives rise to conflict. Conflicts are also created or imposed upon by interested persons or groups for some ulterior motive to make some gain out of it.

In a democratic country like ours political conflicts will always be there and these are not discouraging if they do not result in violence or go against the interest of the people. However, they must be resolved through nonviolence which is "a weapon of the strong". There are infinite possibilities in the individual to develop the techniques of nonviolence. In a gentle way he can shake the world. In other words love towards fellow human beings is the only way forward. It is an eternal reminder to a generation depending on nuclear and atomic energy, to those who depend on physical violence that love and non-violence are the only creative, redemptive an transforming power in this world.

However, military interests in economic, political, ethnic or nationalist guise, do not want people to develop more tolerance, nonviolence and compassion. These must be guarded against. When we engage in nonviolent direct action we are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. Thus, when commercial interests with their advertising industry do not want people to develop contentment and less greed, non-violence principles teach us to be at peace with oneself and the world.

Non-violence teaches us to focus on wisdom and not on information. We should know the meaning and purpose of life to appreciate the importance of others lives. We must not spend our life being indifferent to others. As T.S. Eliot says:-

"Where is the life, we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom, we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge, we have lost in information?

Thus, for peaceful conflict resolution we must focus on larger things like life and wisdom and our world should not be broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls. In such a nonviolent society "knowledge will free and the clear stream of reason will not lose its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit". When conflicts will be resolved through nonviolent means our mind will be without fear and our head will be held high. Our conscience will regain its pristine purity.

When conflicts are not reduced or settled through negotiations or other constitutional and nonviolent means, it gives rise to violence. Violence is taken as a short cut method for resolution of conflicts. Suppressed sense of deprivation or injustice finds vent through violence and in extreme cases it leads to terrorism.

Root causes of such violence is hatred against an individual or group of people or society or country. Hatred is inherent in human character which is kept subdued by rationality and wisdom. When this rationality and wisdom disappear in the name of religions or ethnic superiority or strong sense of injustice or deprivation, conflicts develop and violence sets in. Still, there is hope that one day mankind will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed, and nonviolent redemptive goodwill will proclaim the rule of the land. The mankind will not rise to such an occasion then they will be like "hollow men", headpiece filled with straw, and will behave as the wind behaves. They will have "shape without form, shade without colour, paralyzed force, gesture without motion". This is the way their world will end, "not with a bang but a whimper".

To resolve conflicts we must promote "true pacifism". True pacifism is not resistance to evil, but nonviolent resistance to evil. It is not unrealistic submission to evil power. It is rather a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love. Nonviolence and true pacifism are powerful and just weapons which cut without wounding and ennoble the man who wields them. In a nutshell, nonviolence is "a sword that heals".

Lord Buddha said more than 2500 years ago that enmity can not be put to an end by enmity. Only by amity and equanimity peace can be achieved. Retaliatory violence is not going to serve any purpose an "eye for an eye" is not the solution as it will only result in a world full of blind people, violence can not be put to an end by counter-violence. It can be put to an end by nonviolence once and for all. Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time; the need for mankind to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence.

The application of nonviolent principle must be all encompassing and must touch every facet of our life. Truth and nonviolence are no cloistered virtues. Without truth and nonviolence there can be nothing but destruction of mankind. We must adopt a nonviolent way of life as nonviolence is the means of realizing God and absolutely essential for the existence of humanity. To foster nonviolent peace should be our primary goal of life.

We should be inspired by the preaching's of Buddha that non-violence and peace is the most valuable asset of human civilization. Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for the cause of love, justice and peace. An important preaching of Bible is "Thou shall Not Kill". Gandhian philosophy, if applied in true spirit, can lead to conquest of violence and conflict. Hazrat Muhammad, founder of Islam, also preached for justice, peace and love. Thus, all religions preach that practical application of nonviolence can resolve conflicts and thereby improve happiness, health and wealth in a community.

In a seminal article "Gandhian philosophy, conflict Resolution Theory and practical Approaches to Negotiation". Thomas Weber mentions three norms to resolve conflicts.

1. The first norm relates to goals and conflicts and states that one should act in conflicts (for one's own group or self, out of identity and out of conviction); define the conflict well (state your goals clearly, try to understand the opponent's goals, state conflict relevant facts

objectively); and have a positive approach to the conflict (give the conflict a positive emphasis, see it as an opportunity).

2. The second norm relates to conflict struggle and enjoins one to act non-violently in conflicts (do not harm or hurt with words, deeds or thoughts, prefer violence to cowardice, do good even to the evil doer); to act in a goal-consistent manner (by including constructive elements, acting openly rather than secretly, and by aiming the struggle at the correct point); not to cooperate with evil, to be willing to sacrifice (by not escaping from punishment and being willing to die if necessary); not to polarize the situation (by provoking the opponent) and so on.

3. The third and final norm relates to conflict resolution, and it directs that conflicts should be solved (do not continue the struggle for-ever always seek negotiation, seek positive social transformation and seek transformation of both the self and the opponent); that one should insist on essentials rather than non-essentials (do not trade with essentials, be willing to compromise on non-essentials)

Resolution of conflict without resorting to violence is the essential condition for establishing peace in the society. Peace is an attitude towards life which strengthens social cohesion and makes life worth living. Education can play a positive role in this direction. It can develop a culture of amity and peace with love for others, mutual respect for each other and better understanding for others' feelings creation and not destruction should dominate human actions. Education prepares mind with universal love and tolerance irrespective of differences in religion, caste, ethnicity, language and culture.

It is peace and not violence that helps human civilisation to survive and progress. This fact has to be impressed in the mind of school children from early childhood violent activities often have some immediate thrill which draws people's attraction. It is a fact that a few extremely brutal persons have earned their place in history through their barbarous activities. But in all cases there might be some immediate temporary victory or gain but ultimately they all had to lose.

It is to be understood that ultimate victory is always that of peaceful, nonviolence, constructive and developing activities. We must realize that non-violence or peaceful methods have a bigger strength than that of violence. Through education qualities like fearlessness, self-control, tolerance, humility should be cultivated which will help in developing proper attitude towards life, a healthy culture of peace and a preference for non-violence techniques of conflict resolution. We must understand that victory begets conflict or enmity and the defeated party always have dormant tendency to retaliate.

Any conflicting situation should be faced with "a commitment for self-suffering" and a positive attitude to change the heart of the opponent. Politics should not be bereft of religion and morality and this can help in conflict resolution. In the economic field conflict can be reduced through reliance on cottage industries and just distribution of wealth through trusteeship.

Gandhi was an apostle of non-violence ways of resolving conflict. For Gandhi the appearance of a case in an adjudicative tribunal is a failure of the parties to settle the dispute and emerge as friends. Adjudication generally precludes the Gandhian dialectic to lead to a win-win situation.

Non-violent principles for conflict resolution afford fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour. Individuals and nations who would practice non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice their all except honour. Non-violence is an essential element of any "trust" a feeling of security and self-identity is acquired through developing a sense of security in responses of others removed in time and space.

Making use of non-violent techniques also helps in the elimination of fear from ones mind. 'Satyagraha' is the Gandhian approach to conflict resolution. Satyagrahi is not only a practitioner of conflict resolution skill but also is an embodiment of and ideal, a lifestyle that opens up truth as end and means both at the same time even if the condition of self-suffering may be a bit impractical. As Martin Luther, Jr. puts it:- "Nonviolence means avoiding not only external

physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him". A *satyagrahi* is one who has non-violence as an inseparable part of his being. He never takes nonviolence as a garment to be put on and off at will. A satyagrahi is one who has mastered the nonviolence techniques of conflict resolution.

Conclusion

In a human society conflicts will always be there between individuals, between groups, between nations because of differences of opinion, clash of interest, establishment of superiority and various other factors. There is theory of thesis and anti-thesis. Conflicts help in material and intellectual advancement. Economic deprivation and social subjugation are the basic causes of conflicts in human society. In the study of history of human civilization it is found that social injustices are constant source of discontent giving rise to conflicts.

To bring "reason in this madness" we must look towards nonviolence. Our world will be free from conflicts "only when the individuals composing it make up their minds to do so". This conviction of Gandhiji endorses the preamble of UNESCO, "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed". This can only be achieved by nonviolent means as in today's world we need nonviolence as the supreme law of life, as the greatest of all religions. In a nutshell, we must propagate "organized love" wishful thinking, yes, let us hope for peace won't do it. Serious thinking will. Be it the future of the world wish to look the other way, we can only say:-
"The sky is darkening like a stain, something is going to fall like rain, And it can't be flowers".

Non-violence can create a paradise on the earth

C. RAVI SHANKAR

"Peace will not come out of a dash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds".

- Mahatma Gandhi
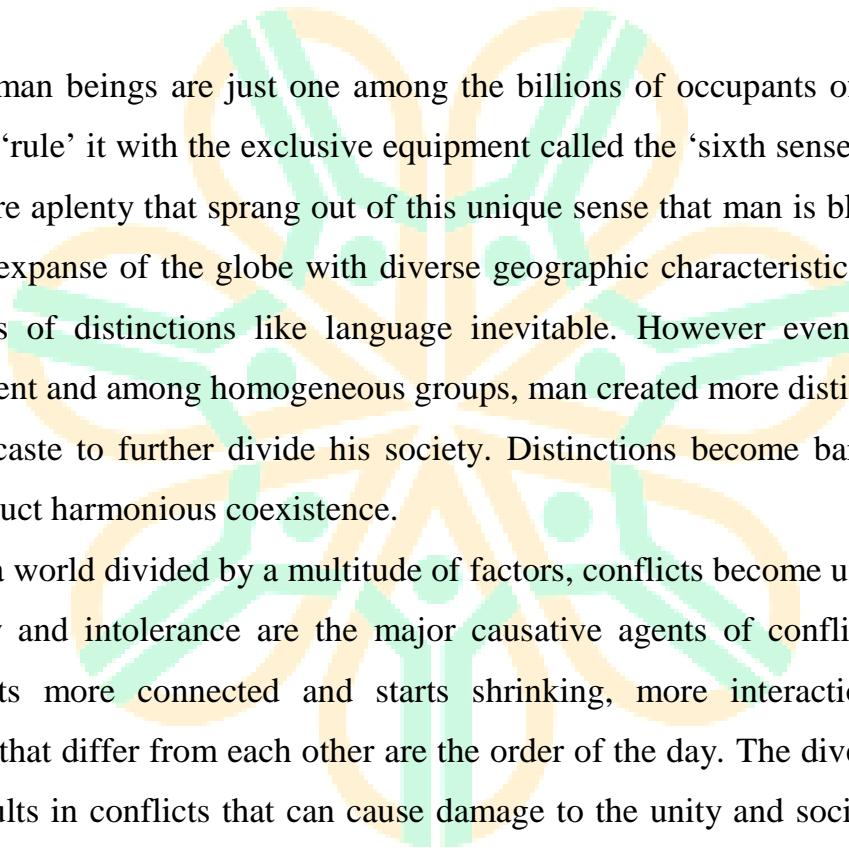
Human beings are just one among the billions of occupants of the Earth. Yet, they 'rule' it with the exclusive equipment called the 'sixth sense'. Artificial barriers are aplenty that sprang out of this unique sense that man is blessed with. The vast expanse of the globe with diverse geographic characteristics had made multitudes of distinctions like language inevitable. However even in similar environment and among homogeneous groups, man created more distinctions like religion, caste to further divide his society. Distinctions become barriers when they obstruct harmonious coexistence.

In a world divided by a multitude of factors, conflicts become unavoidable. Inequality and intolerance are the major causative agents of conflicts. As the world gets more connected and starts shrinking, more interactions among countries that differ from each other are the order of the day. The diversity many times results in conflicts that can cause damage to the unity and social fabric of the country. Hence conflict resolution is an absolute necessity and the various available methodologies of conflict resolution need a lot of study and research.

Intellectuals since time memorial have advocated non-violence and live as the panacea for all the ills playing mankind. Non-violent ways of resolving conflicts are the best among the known alternatives as they are inclusive and ensure justice to every section of the social system.

Why do conflicts occur?

Earth, the only planet to support life, is a vast expanse that is diverse in its topography, climatic conditions and numerous other features. The living beings

in a particular region develop unique qualities to adapt to the local environment. Owing to this reason, different races of mankind evolved. Lack of proper transport facilities often insulated a group of people from mingling with other groups living in other regions. This led to the rise of unique attributes like language and religion. The innumerable differences that arose due to geographical conditions were furthered by the artificial divisions later devised by man.

The animal instinct in man established the concept 'Might is right' almost as an universal principle. This tendency of domination by the powerful led to layering of the society and a hierarchy was established. Those at the top of the hierarchy, who tasted the comfort of power never wanted to let it go, while those who were deprived of it, always strived to size it by any means. Thus the gap created due to the hierarchical structuring of the society, was a good breeding ground for conflicts.

Though man is a social animal and has devised a setup to coexist together, the fact that everyone is unique and different, makes coexistence challenging. Differences in tastes, opinions, egos, background are just the manifestations of the diversity in human traits. Rather than appreciating the beauty in diversity, these diversities are perceived by man to be sources of conflict. Race, religion, region, class, caste, creed, language are among the most important factors that divide the human society. In a social system, where every entity is interdependent on each other, these, multifarious differences among them tend to pull the system in their own direction thus making it unstable.

Often people tend to disagree over issues as they do not appreciate others viewpoint. Most situations have at least two possibilities of outcomes and lead to formation of different viewpoints. People form a view based on their individual traits. Even when an issue is simple and straightforward, unanimous views are often rarities different interpretations of even a simple issue lead to multitude of viewpoints.

Conflicts arise when one tries to assert his view or decision over the other despite resistance. Thus this diverse world is a hot/bed of conflicts and it becomes absolute necessity to resolve them, if mankind has to survive.

How to resolve conflicts

Generally conflicts are resolved in three ways, namely

Domination
Compromise
Integration

Domination means that one asserts his view over the others, using sheer brute force due to the differences in power and resources.

Compromise is giving up ones stand or demand to avoid unfavorable consequences of a conflict.

Both the above ways are not 'per se' resolutions of a conflict. They are just measures to temporarily put off a conflict. However there is the third way to resolve a conflict, called integration.

Mary Parker Follet, a thinker propounded this concept of integration where the interests of both the conflicting parties are sought to be integrated. This is like a 'win-win' solution, where both the parties seek to find an innovative solution that satisfies both their demands.

An alternative has to be found out after pragmatic consideration of feasible alternatives. However, this option is difficult as it requires a lot of creativity and efforts. Even before that both parties must be willing to find a mutually acceptable solution.

This willingness to resolve the issue in a mutually beneficial way is even not found usually, because both want to get their demands fully met. One wishes to dominate over the other especially when at a relatively more advantageous position in terms of resources and power. Many a time, might wins over the right. In the process, the weaker party's genuine aspirations and demands go unfulfilled and unheard.

Thus when might is right and brute force dominates the weak and the meek, conflicts are not resolved and the causes that led to the conflict remain afresh only to erupt as a bigger conflict at a later time. Thus violence breads more violence, perpetuates the problem and often leads to denial or demise of justice. Momentary glory can at the maximum, be achieved through violence.

An ideal solution shall go to the root of the conflict and address the exact cause. It should not lead to any negative consequence subsequently. It should not be a quick-fix, reactionary effort that resolves the conflict temporarily.

Thus to resolve a conflict truly, a solution based on non-violence is the necessity. Non-violence based on truth that caters to the democratic aspiration is the effective way to resolve a conflict.

Barriers to resolve a conflict

The differences among the men become barriers for peaceful co-existence and a few among them are

i) Different social, political, economic, religious, regional background.
ii) Ideological differences.
iii) Differences in intellectual capacities.
iv) Language
v) Lack of effective communication.
vi) Lack of proper knowledge, skills and efforts.
vii) Lack of tolerance
viii) Unequal social structure.
ix) Uneven distribution of power and privileges
x) Common perception that might is right.

Usually lack of effective communication is the major reason for many conflicts Irrational decisions due to lack of sufficient knowledge and creativity also lead to conflicts. A level playing field for all the players is essential for a smooth coexistence and wherever the field is unequal and uneven conflicts are bound to arise.

Though non-violence is hailed as a lofty ideal, the common perception is that it is but an ineffective and impractical tool to resolve conflicts. Non-violence

is often perceived to be the equivalent of weakness and cowardice. In fact only the bravest can resort to non-violence. However the common perception is on the contrary owing to the animal instinct in man. Over coming all these barriers should be the objective of any conflict resolution strategy.

<u>Non-violent ways to resolve conflict</u>

The importance of love and non-violence has been preached by all the religions and intellectuals like Jesus, Buddha, Thiruvalluvar, Gandhi for ages. Their lives are themselves lessons of non-violence and their teachings form the core principles of non-violence.

In modern times, non-violent ways for resolving a conflict are many and a few among them are

i)   Pettitions
ii)   Peaceful processions
iii) Dialogue, diplomacy, negotiations
iv)   Peaceful demonstrations, fasts, etc.

These non-violent responses to a conflict have a genuine merit in them, which is that it is inclusive of both the strong and the weak. Anyone could resort to non-violence.

This very aspect of inclusiveness was the reason for mass participation in the non-violent freedom struggle led by Gandhiji. This feature of non-violence that gives voice to the voiceless is the essence of democracy.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. This can never happen except through non-violence." Thus non-violence and democracy are perfectly compatible and made for each other.

Moreover, non-violent responses are relatively better as the losses on either sides, especially the weaker side are minimal. Problem often does not perpetuate further and often justice is done.

Precedents of non-violent struggles

Though non-violence is perceived by many to be impractical, history has lots of precedents where non-violent struggles had been enormously successful, among the many who advocated and practiced non-violence. He's none other then Mahatma Gandhi who enunciated simple but effective non-violent strategies. Gandhi's name has almost become synonymous with non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi drew his inspiration from a lot of resources that had been developed prior to his time. Noble thoughts from religious books like Gita and the words of intellectuals like Voltaire, fuelled his thought process on non-violence. Practical applications of the principles were also found across the globe.

The swadeshi movement consequent to the partition of Bengal, in 1905 also shaped his thoughts on non-violent struggle.

In September, 1906 a protest meeting was held at the Empire Theatre in Johannesburg where it was decided by a group led by Gandhiji to disobey the draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. This could be said as the first instance where Gandhiji had tried to put his thoughts into practice. Later when the ordinance became law in July '1907, it was defied without violence.

With the experience gained in South Africa, Gandhiji started his practice of non-violence in India against the mighty British Empire. He sensed the pulse of the masses to the hilt and found that only non-violence could effectively suit the Indian masses. It was both socially and physically inclusive. Mass mobilization became easier when everyone sensed the uniqueness and simplicity of the struggle.

Mahatma Gandhi was a stern believer in the principles of non-violence where he didn't distinguish much between state violence and popular violence. Even when mass mobilization was hugely successful and the morale at its peak, Gandhi was firm enough in his belief when he prematurely withdrew the non-violent movement in response to popular violence at Chauri-chaura in 1922.

When the entire west and people even in India was sceptic of non-violence as a tool and more so, when it's used against the most powerful empire the world has ever seen, Mahatma fully understood its potential and finally proved he was right. He clarified to the world by saying, "My mission is to teach by example and precept under severe restraint the use of matchless weapon of Satyagraha, which is a direct corollary of non-violence and truth."

After Gandhiji pioneered the effective application of non-violence in mass struggles, the world realized its potential. There are several instances across the globe for its successful application.

Western concept of non-violence advocates peace research and non-participation on pacifist grounds. This sort of non-violence is more suitable for secondary conflicts. For acute conflicts, where compromise is not possible or justice is seriously endangered, such non-violent practices seem highly insufficient. The principles and practices advocated by Mahatma Gandhi are found to be more appropriate in case of acute conflicts. Mahatma's formulations of struggle against injustice without resorting to violence, were based on a solid foundation of truth. While holding the key to resolve acute conflicts, his non-violence strategy also could empower the oppressed.

Successful applications of non-violent struggle against injustice were on the rise after the end of Second World War.

Dr. Martin Luther King led from the front in the non-violent American Civil Rights struggle for securing the rights of the highly suppressed and depressed African Americans in the 1950s and 60s. In fact, African Americans owe a lot to the non-violent movements, for the status they have attained today. Barrack Obama, the President of a global superpower and the latest recipient of Nobel Peace Prize, is the perfect example of what could non-violent movements do to uplifting and empowering the oppressed.

Nigeria secured its independence through non-violent struggles led by Nnamdi Azikiwe.

Kwame Akrumach did it for Ghana (then Gold Coast) through his call for 'Positive Action' that was a combination of non-violence, education and electoral politics.

In 1986, the Philipinos overthrew the Marcus dictatorship by a non-violent uprising. In 2001, 'People Power Two' a non-violent peoples movement ousted President Estrada of Philippines for being corrupt.

Communist dictatorships in Poland and Czechoslovakia were put to end using non-violent struggles, in 1989.

Serb democrats rose up against Milosevic in early October 2000 in a carefully planned non-violent struggle led by Otpor, a movement of mostly young people, outside the political parties and the dictatorship collapsed.

These instances of non-violent struggles against politically powerful elites are firm evidences of non-violence as a tool. Non-violence has been used in all the sorts of conflicts in all the possible domains.

CHIPKO ANDOLAN (hugging of trees) is a clear example of non-violent people's movement against power and might.

Despite these successes, the lessons are not learnt and the world is in more danger than ever. Violence in the name of religion, region and numerous other divisive factors is on the rise. Tragedies due to such violent responses to a conflict are daily occurrences these days.

Terrorism naxalism have endangered every human's lives and property all over the world. Peace has become a distant dream for a vast majority of the world's population. Territorial disputes like that in Palestine, Kashmir or class struggles in central and northern India stand unresolved due to the paths chosen by those who stand for their cause.

Mahatma Gandhiji rightly said, "The only way to deal with violence is to understand what is the root cause of that violence. [Violence] may only postpone violence to another day."

Thus violence only perpetuates the crisis by postponing it to a later point of time. When Mahatma Gandhi heard about the bombarding of Hiroshima in 1945, he said "Unless the world now adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind",

The visionary statement had been gaining more and more relevance as the world gets globalized. The path many have chosen today, makes it an urgent necessity to spread the message of non-violence not just for resolving the conflicts but for saving the entire mankind.

Promoting Principles of Non-violence

In the current scenario of consistent eruption of conflicts across the world, conflict resolution strategies become complex and require dedicated devotion of intellectuals across the globe. Non-violence as a tool needs to be researched upon so as to evolve principles that cater to the diverse conflicts.

Before pondering over the development of non-violence principles, the various barriers along the route need to be addressed. Major obstacles are,

i) Lack of significant understanding of means of conflict and dynamics of the working of non-violence struggle.
ii) Ignorance about the range of available non-violence methods and the 'Know-how' to implement them.
iii) Limited knowledge of the experience of others who had struggled by relative means.
iv) Abundance of misconceptions and misrepresentations.
v) Lack of essential information and guidance.
vi) Irresponsibility of the government machinery that does not respond positively to non-violence protests.
vii) Lack of strategic planning.

A platform for effective implementation of the principles of non-violence can be laid only when the above barriers are effectively overcome.

To promote the principles of non-violence in conflict resolution, a lot needs to be done. The essential steps to be taken are

i) Dissemination of the realization that non-violence is the tool to resolve acute conflicts

ii)   Research on efficient and effective non-violent practices.

iii)   Strategic analysis and planning to understand the dynamics and workings of non-violence struggle.

iv)   Policy studies for dealing with different types of conflict situations like
- Dictatorships
- Coup de'etats.
- Foreign aggression and occupations
- Social and economic injustices
- Violation of human rights
- Inducement of violence in the name of religion, region, language, etc.

v)   Respecting and responding to non-violent means of communication or protests, in a positive way.

vi)   Spread of the message through education and fostering a way of life that is compatible with non-violence.

Innovative ways are needed to be found to inculcate the thought of non-violence deep in the minds of the people. Mere condemnations of violence and praising non-violent practices are not enough to make people believe that non-violence is a viable action. Non-violence has to be promoted through visible actions and tangible outputs. Its role in education, empowering masses needs to be highlighted. Conflicts need to be resolved not just for the sake of it but to set a precedent for the future generations to emulate that. Non-violence, as the only option that goes to the root cause and heals that, must be practically demonstrated.

The common perception that it is a weapon of the weak and is equivalent to cowardice needs to be changed. While it is true that it is the only weapon of the weaker sections, it must also be realized that only the brave could resort to non-violence. Now is the time to adopt non-violent principles and practices in a mission made.

Conclusion

When differences become inevitable, conflicts become unavoidable. Promotion of tolerance and reduction of inequalities are key factors to deal with conflicts. As Mahatma Gandhi said,

"Mutual toleration is a necessity for all time and for all races".

While violence could gain momentary glory when dealing with conflicts, it never resolves them. Postponing a crisis perpetuates it and in fact magnifies it. Non-violence is the only option to heal the wounds of conflicts and finally eradicate them fully.

Non-violence is not pacifism as Krishnalal Shridharani rightly put, it is "War without violence". The diverse roles non-violent movements play in educating, empowering masses while resolving conflicts and ensuring peace, need to be understood and appreciated.

Violence is a broader term that includes poverty, pollution, exploitation, deprivation and so on. As Mahatma Gandhi aptly pointed out, "Poverty is the worst form of violence", the other dimensions of violence need to be understood in broader and holistic terms.

Effective and efficient principles of non-violence need to be formulated and promoted to tackle all sorts of conflicts. The roots of violence have to be eradicated and uprooted using the tool of non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi enumerated the roots of violence "… wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, politics without principles ".

Today's world needs everyone of our. Efforts to save it from the numerous dangers posed by enemies of peace. It's our mission to tread along the route of non-violence to create a paradise on earth. Its not wrong if we are slow unless we are moving towards the goal. To conclude with the words of Gandhiji, "We may never be strong enough to be entirely nonviolent in the thought, word and deed. But we must keep nonviolence as our goat and make strong progress towards it".

We must address the roots of violence

NEHA PANDEY

"……In politics as well as in private life, the surest method of resolving conflicts, however slowly, is through a dialogue."

Octavio Paz

There are people everywhere who want to help create a better world - people deeply concerned about widespread suffering, environmental destruction, escalating materialism and the loss of our sense of community. There is a deep and growing hunger for a wiser and more loving society. Mahatma Gandhi modelled the vision to create such a society.

He claimed the power for social change lies within individual consciousness. That if we really want to create a wise and loving world, we must first become wise and loving ourselves. With a vision of a society governed by love and the common good -- we have a powerful antidote to the violence, distrust and division of today's politics of fear.

In practicing the relational principles of non-violence we seek to recover and renew ourselves, our families and our politics - so violence and secrecy no longer shape our behaviour. We realize that our lives, and those of our children, depend on our evolution. Learning to be non-violent is a new way of living - requiring a healing process that begins with the individual and ripples out into the larger world. As we heal our own relations we are demonstrating that people, organizations and governments can move the world pro-actively toward peace and wisdom.

Non-violence means to honour the inherent worth of every human being. In non-violence we naturally seek to understand each other, build friendship and community. Non-violence means believing that our lives are linked together, what we do impacts the lives of everyone we encounter. We are responsible to and for one another. We can trust one another and work toward the common

good. Non-violence means dedicating ourselves to the fundamental rights of every human being (justice, equity, equality).

Non-violence is courageously choosing to practice compassion with our adversaries. Non-violence opposes injustice, not people. Non-violence means recognizing love as the power of the human spirit to triumph over injustice, inequity, suffering - a true hero's journey of personal-social change.

Gandhian principles of non-violence included respecting others and the interconnectedness of all life. Gandhi believed that they place value on accepting the differences of others one must seek to move beyond acceptance into appreciation and celebration of difference. However, Gandhi's idea of non violence was rooted in reality cause he accepted that all forms of violence cannot be totally eliminated. His ideas of Ahimsa or non-violence vowed to help the adversary avoid all suffering, especially from the conversation.

Non-violence is a way of life for courageous people. Non-violence seeks to win friendship and understanding. Non-violence seeks to defeat injustice, not people. Non-violence holds that suffering for a cause can educate and transform. Non-violence chooses love instead of hate.

Gandhiji had used the strong weapon of ahimsa or non-violence to bring independence to the country from the colonial rule. Gandhi never preached violence-" Violence is the weapon of the weak. Non-violence is the weapon of the strong". He recalled the Non cooperation movement when the movement was at its zenith only cause of the Chauri-Chaura incident. He believed that people were not ready for a revolution. And Gandhiji was aggrieved at violence. He had been instrumental in inspiring movements for civil rights and freedom around the globe. UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon stressed on the importance of sustaining this momentum across the globe. He stated that the call to non-violence need not apply only to the use of deadly weapon. There is an urgent need to put an end to the human assault on our planet. Referring to the relevance of Gandhiji's principle in the modern world, UN Secretary General, Ban Ki

Moon called the non-violence as an enduring symbol of hope in curbing the growing number of hostile forces. He further continued that Gandhi had foreseen the eternal theory, which can change the world. He said, "He knew that individuals, working alone and together, could realise what others might dismiss as impossible dreams.

Is non-violence "feminine"?

Non-violence has hitherto been associated with women while violence is entirely the male domain. Non violent means of resolution of conflicts like dialogues and debates to come to a consensus is usually a female attribute while men like to solve things fair and square more often than not through violence-physical or verbal. Archbishop Desmond Tutu stated that if ever this world would witness a revolution, it would be brought about by the women. They have a way of doing things- nurture and care and that can resolve even the most deep-rooted conflicts in the world.

If not war, still a dialogue should continue. Through dialogues and discussion, one can unearth even the most intractable conflicts. One interacts with other on the basis of the meaning one attaches to the other. As one interacts more and more, the meaning one holds for the other undergoes a transformation. In addition, identity and interests of the two parties also change. This may lead to a better understanding of the other parties grievances and a genuine effort might be made to address them. This may lead to a sensitisation to the other's needs.

Generally speaking, the first non-violent act is not fasting, but dialogue. The other side, the adversary, is recognized as a person, he is taken out of his anonymity and exists in his own right, for what he really is, a person. To engage someone in dialogue is to recognize him, have faith in him. At every step in the non-violent struggle, at every level we try tirelessly to establish a dialogue, or re-establish it if it has broken down.

Nowadays, violence results from scarcity of resources- Most of the conflicts of the 21-century are fuelled by scarcity of resources- be it oil, water or land. Be burning Africa, Albania or Arab-Israeli conflict and there is a need to ensure that resources are equitably distributed across the globe. Unless and until we hit at the root cause of violence, address legitimate grievances, we can never ensure a just and lasting peaceful resolution.

Dialogue conquers all:

Promoting dialogue through various means like people to people contacts in order to ensure that the two hitherto warring parties interact amongst themselves at economic and cultural levels is imperative. This shall ensure that the parties develop some level of confidence and mutual trust, which is necessary, after which they can begin interacting at the political levels to solve the more intricate issues. For example India's multilevel talks with Pakistan to ensure that adequate confidence and mutual trust is build between two parties. In addition, it will lead to resolution of the Kashmir issue.

A case in point is the Sunshine policy of South Korea. The term *sunshine policy* originated in *The North Wind and the Sun,* one of Aesop's fables. In the fable, the sun and the wind compete to remove a man's coat. The wind blew strongly, but the man clutched his coat and kept it on. The sun shone warmly, and the man voluntarily took off his coat to enjoy the fine weather. The main aim of the policy is to soften North Korea's attitudes towards the South by encouraging interaction and economic assistance. The Sunshine Policy was the South Korean foreign policy towards North Korea until Lee Myung-bak's election to presidency in 2008. The doctrine emphasizes peaceful cooperation, seeking short-term reconciliation as a prelude to eventual Korean reunification. Since its articulation in 1998 by South Korean President Kim Dae *lung,* the policy has resulted in greater political contact between the two nations and one of historical moments in Korean peninsula, two Korean summits in Pyongyang

(June 2000) which broke ground with several high-profile business ventures, and brief meetings of separated family members. In 2000, Kim Dae *lung* was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize as a result of the Sunshine Policy.

Similarly, taking the case of Arab-Israeli Conflict, we can infer that though not resolved, but numerous attempts have been made by the parties themselves, the major players of the Middle East as well as the outside actors (US, EU, Russia, UN) to resolve conflict through a dialogue. The Oslo accords of 1993 were acumination of a series of academic conferences, which were convened to address five core issues of conflict: settlement, water, border, Jerusalem, refugees. Even though the talks failed, the parties addressed the contentious issues for the first time and recognised that the people wielding rifles at the other side of the fence are also human beings like them. Even though the parties may not be at peace with each other, it is imperative to continue the dialogue. Seldom, the civil society groups and the population may, owing to their relations with the other party may put pressure on their government to open channels of dialogue at the political level.

However, it is unfortunate that the advocates of non-violence have more often than not met with violent end. Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela are pioneers of non violent methods. They are embodiment of the fact that even the most protracted and most intractable conflicts can be resolved through non violent means successfully.

Gandhi routinely said, don't bring your opponents to their knees; bring them to their senses. Non-violent means prevention before the crisis. Violence says the opposite: intervention after intervention with fists, guns, bombs, and armies. However, the level of political maturity in many of the societies is very low. This works against the solution of conflicts through non-violent means. Society has to be prepared to give up arms. Resorting to arms is very easy. Renouncing war as a means of resolving conflict is difficult. However, just and lasting peace can be ensured only through non-violent means.

Keeping the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi alive:

Best way to promote peace is to promote development. No principle of non-violence would work if people are empty stomach. People resort to violence in desperate situations.

Ensure availability of food and basic necessities to the most backward and war torn societies to ensure that their energies are channelised somewhere else in providing basic infrastructure and facilities to their people. Be it Wangari Mathhai, Kim de *lung,* Martti Athisari, Shirin Ebadi or Mohammed Yunus, they all aim at promoting development to ensure dividends for peace.

Conflict, by definition, means only this: we need to change our way of dealing with each other; the old way no longer works. Conflict is a neutral term, neither positive nor negative. It's not you against me; it's you and me against the problem. The problem is the problem. Most people and nations go into battle convinced, I'm right, you're wrong; I'm good, you're evil; I'm wise, you're foolish; I'm going to win, you're going to lose. Even if one side does win, the first reaction of the loser is, I want a rematch: I'll come back with meaner words, harder fists and bigger bombs. Then you'll learn, then you'll be good and then we'll have peace forever. This is an illusion, but few can give it up. By focusing on the problem, and not the person with the problem, a climate of cooperation, not competition, is enhanced.

Towards a "culture of non violence":

Nelson Mandela stated that the Twentieth century would be remembered as a century marked by violence. It has burdened all with its legacy of mass destruction, of violence inflicted on a scale never seen before in human history. Less visible and more widespread is the legacy of individual suffering. This is the suffering that reproduces itself, as generations learn from the violence of the generations past, as victims learn from victimizers and as the social conditions that nurture violence are allowed to continue. No country, city or community is

immune, but neither are we powerless against it.

Violence thrives in the absence of democracy, respect for human rights and good governance. There is a talk about how a "culture of violence" can take root. Patterns of violence are more pervasive and widespread in societies where authorities endorse the use of violence through their own actions. In many societies, violence is so dominant that it thwarts hopes of economic and social development.

Many who live with violence day in and day out assume that it is an intrinsic part of the human condition, however, it is not true. Violent cultures can be turned around. Violence can be prevented. South Africa is a classic example of how violence has been countered. Governments, communities and individuals can make a difference.

Violence is easy. In place of weapons of violence, you have to use your mind, your heart, your sense of humor, every faculty available to you. We owe our children- the most vulnerable citizens in any society; a life free from violence and fear. In order to attain this, we must be tireless in our attempts not only to attain peace, justice and prosperity for countries, but also for communities and members of the same communities and members of the same family. We must address the roots of violence. Only then will we transform the past century's legacy from a crushing burden into a cautionary lesson.

Non-violence is not the ultimate means to resolve conflicts

PREETI MAITHIL

"I and the people know, what all school children learn. Those to whom evil is done, do evil in return".

W. H. Audens

Time and again uncompromising regimes force people into a position, where they have nothing to loose and resort to political violence. Those who respect human rights, value freedom and desire peace must examine the circumstances carefully, objectively and passionately to penetrate the fog of propaganda and censorship that obscures truth and ultimately denies justice. The answer to this perpetual and vicious cycle of conflicts is non-violence.

Non-violence in all Indian philosophical and mythological texts is interpreted as *Ahimsa*, which is a Sanskrit term, meaning to do no harm. Ahimsa is the rule of conduct that bars the killing or injury of living bearings. In the 19th and 20th century, prominent figures of Hindu spirituality such as Swami Vivekananda, Bhakti Vedanta Swami, Maharishi Raman, Maharishi Shivanand emphasised the importance of Ahimsa to all the living beings.

The term ahimsa appears in the Paittriya Samhita of the Yajurveda and occurs several times in the Shatpatha Brahmna' in the sense of non injury the earliest reference to the idea of non-violence to animals apparently in the moral sense is in the Kapisthala Katha Samiuta of the Yajurveda which have been written in about 8th century BC. The Chandogya Upnishad which is one of the oldest Upnishads has the earliest evidence for the use of the word Ahimsa in the sense familiar in Hinduism is a code of conduct. It bars violence against all creatures (Sarva Bhuto) and the practitioner of ahimsa is said to escape from the cycle of reincarnation. It also names ahimsa as one of the essential virtues.

According to some interpretations, *Ahimsa* as described in Hindu text, does not relates to pacifism. We can find such instances in Mahabharat where in Krishana preaches Arjuna to go for battle, but even then, he did so when all other means of justice were exhausted.

Non violence in modern context

Adolfo Perez squirrel, the Argentinean, noble peace prize winner has defined non-violence this way.

"Non violence is a respect for life and for the individual. That is to say, non violence is not a method of non aggressor (as it is often considered) but rather a way of life, and a way of understanding the relationship of human beings to their fellow beings and with nature." Based on the principles and grounds of action, non-violence can be classified into two types.

a) Religious or spiritual**: -** e.g. Buddhist, Jainist or Christian ('our religion demands we be non violent and do not harm others, or it is a basic tenet of our faith') and

b) Secular e.g.: **-** total respect for human life in all possible conditions. This is a way of life.

It is the second classification of non-violence with which we are more concerned, for it will help us to find the solution of our problems. But to find its roots we need not to go into the tenets of the different religion, but into the lives of the great men that have incorporated the principles of non-violence into their life and set a clear path before the world to follow, to live peacefully with the fellow beings. Such great men were, epitomes of non-violence like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Swami Vivekananda, Nelson Mandela etc. It is worthwhile to look into the importance of non-violence through the visions of these torchbearers.

Martin Luther King Jr. has propounded a very clear set of six principles of justice through non violence. These are as follows; He says the first principle is that the non-violence is a way of life for courageous people. It is aggressive spirituality both mentally and emotionally. It is always persuading the opponent of the righteousness of our cause. It is only passive in its non-aggression towards its enemy. It is active non-violent resistance to the evil. The second principle seeks to win friendship and understanding. It says the purpose of non-violence is the creation of the beloved community and the end result of which is redemption and reconciliation.

The third principle per se seeks to defeat injustice not people. Non-violence recognises that evildoers are also victims and are not evil people. The non-violent resister seeks to defeat evil not people.

Non-violence holds that suffering can educate and transform, suffering has the power to convert enemy when reasons fails. Non-violence accepts suffering without retaliation, it accepts violence if necessary but never inflicts it. Non-violence willingly accepts the consequences of its acts. This all comes under the fourth principle of non-violence.

The fifth principle says, that the non-violence chooses love instead of hate. It resists violence of the spirit as well as the body, and recognises the fact that all life is inter related. Non-violent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative it gives willingly knowing perfectly well that the return will be hostility. Non-violent love is active and not passive. It is unending in its ability to forgive in order to restore harmony. It never sinks to the level of hater. Love for the enemy is now we demonstrate love for ourselves. Love restores community and resists injustice.

In the sixth principle, king says the non-violence believes that the universe is on the side of justice. The non-violent believer had deep faith that justice will eventually win. Non-violence believes that God is a God of justice.

Gandhi and his mantra

Unlike Martin Luther King, the principles of non violence propounded by Mahatma Gandhi, who brought freedom to a million people from the imperial powers without even raising a finger, are much simpler in essence and much more easier to adhere to.

He says non-violence is when you vow to respect others and the inter connectedness of all life when you vow to understand the "why" (meaning behind behaviour) for your self and others out of respect and understanding, you vow to accept the differences of others. You seek to move beyond acceptance into appreciation and celebration of difference you commit to be truthful and authentic and to confront untruth wherever you find it. You take on without complaint any suffering that results from your confrontation with untruth.

You also accept that all forms of violence cannot be totally eliminated. You vow to help your adversary avoid all suffering, especially from your confrontation. Beyond personal necessities, you see yourself as god's trustee over your possessions and talents. You promise to use them to empower other and make things fair for all.

Mahatma Gandhi says that it takes a fairly strenuous course of training to attain to a mental state of non-violence. In daily life it has to be a course of discipline unless there is hearty cooperation of the mind, the mere outward observance will be simply a mask, harmful both to man himself and to others. The perfect state is reached only when mind, and body and speech are in proper coordination. But he says that it's always a case of immense mental struggle. "It is not that I am incapable of anger for instance, but I succeed on almost all accessions to keep any feelings under control"

He emphasizes non violence is the weapon for the strong, with the weak it might easily be hypocrisy. Fear and love are contradictory terms. Love is reckless in giving away oblivious as to what it gets in return. He adds that every problem ends itself to solution, if we are determined to make the law of truth and non-

violence the law of life. For him, the truth and non-violence were the faces of the same coin.

How conflicts originate?

Conflicts are usually the natural disagreement resulting from individual or groups or even countries that differ in beliefs, attitudes, values or needs. It can also originate from past rivalries and differences of ideologies. Other causes of conflict include trying to negotiate before the timing is right or before needed information is available. The most common causes of the conflicts continue to be communication failure, value and goal differences, methodological differences, substandard performance, lack of cooperation, differences regarding authority and those regarding responsibility, competition over resources, non compliance with the rules. Thus we can conclude that conflict per se is "when two or more parties with perceived incompatible goals, seek to undermine each other's goal seeking capability. In political terms conflict can refer to wars revolutions, and other struggles, which may involve force.

Unfortunately, when we look around we find that, the world is in a continuous state of conflicts, coercion and revolutions. No matter, how hard we try to trace the roots of the non-violence in history and mytheology; the traces of wars, battles and conflicts over shadow them. Thousands of people die, or become maimed, children became orphan, women turn into widows, crores of rupees of human property was destroyed, but the countries of the world have always found a reason or another to fight among themselves.

The number of cumulative fatalities in the Somalia civil war 300,000 to 400,000. The war in Afghanistan killed more than seventy thousand people even though US is yet not able to justify the reason for this war. Iraq war costed about 60,000 to 80,000 human casualties and the figures are still increasing. The war in north-western Pakistan took the lives of approximately thirteen thousand, nine hundred people. Nearly eleven thousand people lost their lives in the Mexican

drug war. Similar number of human beings succumbed to death in conflicts all over the world ranging from, Burma, Colombia, Islamic insurgency in Colombia, Turkey and Kurdistan, East Turkestan, Nigeria, Yemen, Chad, Senegal, Chechnya, Kossovo Georgia etc.

At the country level, we will find, India, is perhaps sitting on a volcano of conflicts, which may erupt any moment and devastate the country. The issue of Kashmir continues to be the most important and demanding conflict, the solution of which India is trying to find out since past sixty years, but the result is still illusionary.

If we look towards the northeast India, the situation is not much better; the landscape is torned between insurgency operations, continues armed incursions from China, regional disability and increasing Naxalism.

Naxalism had nearly devastated the whole red corridor of India and had turned it really red. Nearly 35% of India's states have been suffering from this problem and the number is ever increasing despite the efforts of the government.

The same story goes for the terrorism. Every year, there are major and minor terror attacks in almost entire country and thousands of innocent people lose their lives and properties. No matter how well the government tries, it fails to hit the root cause of the problem and therefore the problem continues.

But the list of countrywide conflicts is not exhausting yet. We fight for water, the case related to river water sharing among the states, have lasted more than past 50 years and even now there is no scope in the near future, to get a solution, that befits all the concerned states.

We fight for religion, Graham Stains was burnt alive along with his two sons in Orissa, we went on rioting, spilling blood of our fellow country men on trivial issues, we fight for temples, mosques and churches, though we never pay need to the sums and huts of the poors.

We fight for region; we fight for language, for our caste, creed and faith. We segregate on sex, on colour and in modern times, we discriminate on education level, income disparity and the living standards.

At a more micro level, we find that there are conflicts within individuals, within families and societies. Joint families are seriously reducing in numbers, because we have lost our ability to adjust, we have lost our compassion for our siblings rest alone for the society; The number of heinous crimes like rape and murder are increasing in the society, because we are turning increasingly cruel and the essence of empathy is dying from our conscience.

The way out?

The way out is a serious question; but the answer lies within some where deep inside, our body which is still intact and which can feel. As Martin Luther King has rightly said "Non-violence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him". In his opinion, the strength of the person lies not in his muscles but in his heart and it is this strength on which we can always fall back for the resolution of any kind of conflict. If we see at the world level, we will find that there are many instances, when, a non-violent saint is able to resolve a problem, without even raising a finger, thereby preventing the blood bath of hundreds and thousands of men and women.

Other than Martin Luther King himself, we find Mahatma Gandhi who not only brought freedom to Indians, but gave them a new way of life called ahinsa. His propounding on satygriha still guides the way of the fellow human beings.

We have Nelson Mandela, who fought for the rights of his people, who spent years in jail, but stood to his point and finally got what he and his people deserved.

We have world leaders like Dalai Lama, Ang San Suu Kyi and many more who followed the path of satyagraha and won their rights.

The instances of preachers of non-violence also occur at the national level where Sundar Lal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt who peacefully stood to their grounds to protect the trees and the larger environment. We have Baba Amte and his team who worked for the upliftment of the poor. We also have Rajendra Singh of Tarun Bharat Sangh who saved every drop of water in Rajasthan. These all were the followers of the non-violence and proved that Gandhi was no utopian, but the Gandhian principles were relevant earlier and will always be relevant for the country like yours.

To Conclude

With the discussion we can conclude, that whether it is a conflict between countries, regions, religions, caste, creed, society or individual, the answer to it lies in the essence of non-violence. But it so happens that we learn it the harder way. Ashoka learned it after the Kalinga war; United States learned it after devastating Afghanistan and Iraq.

We must try to understand first that why does a conflict arise and what went wrong right in the beginning. The problems like naxalism and terrorism, at their roots have human beings suffering from hunger, suffering from neglect, discrimination against fellow humans, criticized for being different either of religion or caste, wealth or standards of living, here is the place where non-violence come in. It lies in the equitable distribution of resources, it shines in inclusive growth, it lies in secularism in its entirety, it lies in dignity of labour, it lies in Bharat growing with India.

Even at the individual family and societal level, what we must understand, is that a pure conscience is the greatest strength a man can ever achieve, and so we must try and try hard to keep it so.

We must adhere to the principles of non-violence, not just to resolve conflicts, but to prevent the conflicts; non-violence is neither the only nor the

ultimate means to resolve the conflicts but the other option that is violence should only be used, when all other options have been exhausted.

Finally, to quote Gandhi:

"For a non-violent person, whole world is one family. He will thus fear none, nor will others fear him"

The struggle to overcome violence is important to end violence per se

Rahul V C

> "I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could."
>
> Mahatma Gandhi

Hatred and fighting cannot bring happiness to anyone, even to the winners of battles. Violence produces misery and is always counter-productive. It is, therefore, time for the entire world to learn to transcend the differences of race, culture, and ideology, and to regard one another through eyes that see the common human situation. The concept of non-violence is not new. Its origin can be traced back to olden days even before the Christ. When we look at the past we can see that in ancient days there was a non-violent method of conflict resolutions among humans, which is evident by the skill of food gathering as well as colonization. Entire life of Jesus can be given as one of the best examples of non-violence style of living in which, throughout he preaches the same. Jesus incarnates a non-violent God and spends his life teaching and practicing non-violence. Non-violence concept has been successfully carried in later periods by eminent personalities like Gandhi and Martin Luther King. They have proved that it's an efficient tool for protest which developed a non-violent ideology which leads to the evolution of many followers and thinkers for this method. In the present world it is considered as a good and efficient tool and worldwide spread of groups using non-violent direct action is been mushrooming.

We know that civilization on the earth cannot move forward with the principles of hatred and fighting any more. In a different angle we can say that man is not equipped with a strong claws, powerful vision, sharp teeth or such natural weapons, which an animal possess for fighting but blessed with communication skills for collective problem solving. So it's time to think about a different principle for the social well being of all. Although the concept of non-

Promoting Principles of Non-violence for Conflict Resolution

95

violence is increasingly accepted by people, non-violence remains mysterious, controversial, or both. Most people don't know the power of the non-violence and wonder at it. The reason for this doubt is that non-violence cannot be simply applied in any conflict because of the rarity of successful long-term non-violent protests. This could be probably because there are only old examples of non-violence mode of fighting and no new great examples to be cited. This confusion has to be cleared immediately in order for an efficient spreading of the message of non-violence as non-violent protest. The method of non-violence is influenced by various mechanisms and dynamics, most notably determined and shaped by the nature of the conflict and the culture of the protesters, which is very important.

It was Gandhi who gave the West the term "non-violence", as an English translation of the Sanskrit *ahimsa* which appears frequently in Hindu, Jain and Buddhist literature. "Ahimsa" is composed of the negative prefix a- and the noun *himsa,* which means the desire to harm or do violence to a living being. *Ahimsa* is therefore the recognition, the taming, the mastery and the transmutation of the desire for violence which is to be found in human beings and which leads them to want to push aside, shut out, eliminate and harm their fellows. Ahimsa is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential, can wage their conflict without violence. One should be clear that non-violent action is not an attempt to avoid or ignore conflict. It is one response to the problem of how to act effectively in all spheres of life, especially how to wield powers effectively. It is not a moral choice but it has evolved in the adaptive strategy of human beings. It is an alternative to either armed resistance or passive acceptance of the status quo. It is both a strategy and a philosophy, which rejects violence as a means to promote change, and instead aims to change power relations through assertive acts of refusal to do something or actively challenging the status quo.

A non-violent strategy allows for a broader and therefore larger participation among the citizenry than armed conflict does. Non-violent tactics including strikes, boycotts, marches, sit-ins and blockades have played a central role in movements for the rights of women, workers and indigenous people. Non-violence has a long association with the movements [or environmental protection, nuclear disarmament and international solidarity since it involves bravery, courage and personal strength. One of the advantages of non-violence is that, it doesn't depend on physical strength or weapons, it can be used by almost anyone: women and men, old people and young people. Its power doesn't come from access, to external resources, but from human qualities available to all people courage, creativity, self-discipline, co-operation, conviction, compassion. When these qualities are combined with a common understanding of the political dynamics that enable non-violence to succeed, dramatic social change occurs with surprising speed. Moreover it requires organization, discipline, persistence in the face of repression and strategic application where these skills can be learned and systematically applied. In a broader aspect non-violence is not primarily a method of action, but an attitude; essentially, a benevolent and generous way of looking on one's fellow humans.

Non-violence can be principled or pragmatic. Principled non-violence is often rooted in traditional or religious beliefs and customs, or in moral principles alone. It is based on a moral stand, an ethical code which disallows the practice of violence, often throughout all actions of life. Principled non-violent 'practitioners do not necessarily utilize non-violent actions and strategies, though they at times use. Principled non-violence includes such diverse beliefs as pacifism, a generally non-active form of resistance to violence. An example for this is Tibetan Buddhist followers. Whereas Pragmatic non-violence is best understood as the decision to use non-violence based upon practical strategic considerations. It does not rely on a fundamental commitment to non-violence, which extends to all situations; it may be limited only to the situation at hand.

Pragmatic non-violence is based upon the use of proactive, positive non-violent strategies and actions. It seeks to change the status quo, ranging in individual cases from specific policies, which affect a specific group to the overall dynamics of power in a society.

Coming to the concept of conflict, conflict is defined as a "real or perceived difference which may affect actions or outcomes that we believe are important". When dealing with the conflict matters the question which arises in common man's mind is that whether this method is efficient or not in conflict resolution. The traditional non violent groups like Tibetans which have non-violence concept penetrated in their mind prove that it is successful whereas the African anti apartheid groups where the non violence has not penetrated into their minds also has attained some goals with the principle of non-violence. In general we can say due to the presence of non-violent tradition in a community, will help in having a non-violent action, but success cannot be assured completely as it depends on various factors like organization, discipline, persistence in the face of repression and strategic application. Fear in minds arises as the non-violent actions are forcibly suppressed which leads to dropping of the tactic and leads to its failure. Some violent conflicts which began non-violently have continued for decades, costing lives and consuming resources, without addressing the root causes of the dispute. With non-violence there remains no clear and generally accepted measurement for effectiveness and judging efficiency remains a largely subjective undertaking. So the efficiency matters should be learned from the past non-violent movements and their achievements as a first step. In general we can generalize to some extent that the effectiveness of the non-violence struggle in conflict resolution can be attributed to various factors like:-

- Strong and responsible leadership
- Dedicated, educated and disciplined populace

- Cohesive organizational structure

- Resources and

- Strategies.

Strong and responsible leadership

It is difficult to obtain success for a movement without attributing it in large part to the ability of the leaders to organize their people and world opinion in favour of their cause and to have the strength and discipline to adhere strictly to non-violent means. Mahatma Gandhi and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. were exceptional individuals, without them these movements might never have been effective. Contemporary examples of such leaders include His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet, the late Ken Saro- Wiwa of the Ogoni, and Dr. Sulejman Ugljanin of Sanjak etc.

Qualities identified for strong responsible leadership included dedication, the ability to think strategically, diplomacy, honesty, patience, incorruptibility, determination, and courage. Corrupt or disingenuous leadership can be detrimental to a movement, and power struggles within it can damage its credibility and ability to survive. Additionally, there is a danger in over-reliance on a particular leader or leaders, particularly if they are suddenly absent; either through assassination, imprisonment or exile then it results in the collapse of the whole system.

Dedicated, educated and disciplined populace

To be effective as a non-violent force, they must share common values and moral principles, and agree on the means to achieve their goals. The population should be prepared for struggle. Logistical concerns, such as internal communications, provision for the population's physical necessities, including medical assistance for injured resisters, and establishing communications should be there. Another important factor is building internal solidarity, education and training programs which are developed within movements can be also used.

Cohesive organizational structure

In a non-violent campaign, one segment can discredit an entire movement if it uses violence or otherwise acts in contravention to the policies of the larger group. Thus, cohesiveness is essential to an organization without which the non-violence method leads to utter failure. Democracy was also seen as one way to mitigate potential or actual damaging monopoly by leaders for maintaining it.

Resources

Financial resources, material resources, technical resources, human and time resources are very important, and should be included in strategic planning. But the question is that from what source these resources could be made available remains as a challenge. So it requires proper planning before leaping into the struggle.

Strategies

Strategies are an essence of non-violent conflict resolution. Strategies need to be developed on the macro as well as on the micro levels, with both long and short-term goals developed from clear objectives. They must be based on in-depth analyses of the situation. The strengths and weaknesses of opponent of the non-violent movement and other internal and external conditions must all be considered. Strategies should be reviewed frequently as the conflict unfolds. It is also important that one should remember that each strategy is relative to a 'particular context and cannot be duplicated from situation to situation. It is important to separate our feelings of desperation from our best thinking. Unrealistic hopes for a quick "victory" impede the development of any kind of effective strategy.

People have to realize that non-violence is a form of fighting in order for efficient use of the tool. The argument against the non-violence is that it's not successful, but neither a violent action too. Non-violence, the strategy of "waging good conflict", can be applied in all conflict situations should be imprinted into

the minds of people. It demands making a conscious decision to regard the opponents as human beings, same as we, and actively confront them with moral power without causing them physical or psychological damage. Non-violence is a means of resistance and therefore related to conflict instead of peace. Non-violence is necessarily a safer alternative to violence if the protesters do not renounce to violence. Admittedly, non-violence in the truest sense is not a strategy that one uses simply because it is expedient at the moment; non-violence is ultimately a way of life that men live by because of the sheer morality of its claim. But even granting this, the willingness to use non-violence as a technique is a step forward. For he who goes this far is more likely to adopt non-violence later as a way of life.

To sum up protesters can opt for non-violence because violence is not possible or out of a firm commitment for non-violence. Non-violent principles cannot be preached in any conflict regardless of the cultural environment which mayor may not alienate protesters from accepting its philosophy. Practically, a non-violent strategy allows for a broader and therefore larger participation among the citizenry than armed conflict does. What is required to resolve conflict is not more arms but a sensitive understanding of our common human condition? What Dalai Lama said on non-violence is true, that it leads to balanced attitude towards oneself and towards others, which will initiate, developed ways of thinking in a person.

It is quite natural for all of us to feel hostility toward those who harm us, and to feel attachment toward our loved ones. It is a natural human feeling, so we must make that transition from these inherently biased feelings toward a state of greater equanimity: After all we are human beings and not machines. Therefore, we must think seriously about our own inner abilities and deeper values. Human affection, honesty, discipline and human intelligence guided by good motivation are these basic human qualities which is necessary to understand and overcome the enemy within us which stands as an obstacle for adopting the non-violence

concept. In other words the struggle to overcome violence is important not only in order to achieve justice for the world but also to end violence per se. As a method of activism non-violence guarantees no automatic and unfailing success, no method of conflict resolution does. For those who are pessimistic about the ability of non-violence to resolve conflicts, I like to quote Gandhi's probable response with the words: 'Have you tried? I have, and it works. Ultimately, exponents of ideological non-violence argue, it works because it seeks to deal with the causes, rather than the symptoms, of conflict.
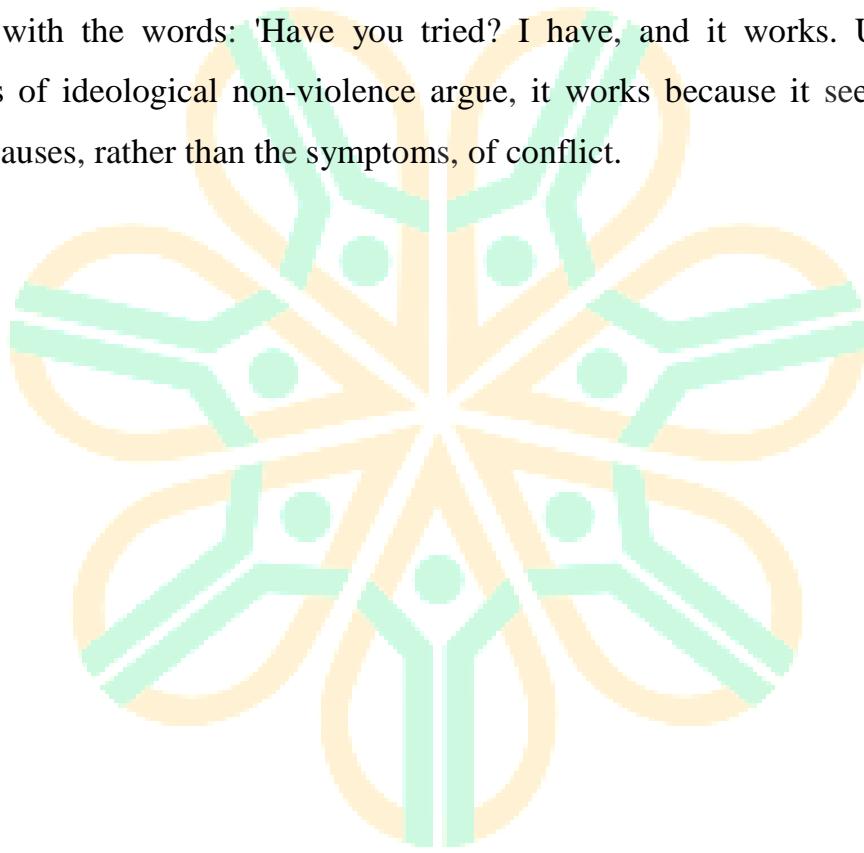
Non-violence is mightier than the mightiest

RUCHESH JAIVANSHI

"An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

In these few words Mahatma Gandhi has conveyed the whole import and meaning of a non-violent way of life. The term non-violence is perhaps the only negative phrase in the world, which has only positive connotations. The phrase in itself is so wide meaning that it may encompass every virtue of human civilization. It forms the bedrock of the values of cooperation, love, peace, harmony, empathy, and above all justice, freedom and democracy.

Though Gandhi was not the originator of the principles of non-violence, he certainly was the first one to apply it in the context of political action at a massive scale. His experiments with non-violence not only established it as a value of tremendous practical significance but also paved the way for rest of the world to follow suit. The most important example is Rev. Martin Luther King (Jr.). He once said, *"Christ gave us the goals and Mahatma Gandhi the tactics.* " His preaching based on Gandhian lines was the cornerstone of the struggle for equal rights for the people of color in USA.

Gandhi and non-violence are so deeply identified with each other, that any discussion on non-violence will critically hinge on the thoughts and actions of Mahatma Gandhi and his experiments with various facets of non-violence. The principle is not new to Indian philosophy. It has been a way a life for Indian people for over a couple of Millennia. The religions and ideologies of Jainism and Buddhism have non-violence as the central thread binding various teachings of the religion. Gandhi only helped Indian people regenerate their inner strengths by reminding them that *"Ahimsa Paramo Dharma"* i.e. non-violence is the greatest religion of all and in fact forms the

foundation of every true religion that humanity has seen since the dawn of civilization.

Non-violence as a strategy of resolving conflicts has proven its worth beyond any doubt. The most significant victory of non-violence came when a poor and weak country like India won its freedom from the hands of the mighty British without any significant violence, especially when compared to similar freedom struggles of other countries. It still remains a mystery for most of the uninitiated ones as how did a *'naked Fakir,* as British called Mahatma Gandhi, won India's freedom using the weapon of non violence and associated principle of *Satyagriha.* Later on the struggle for independence of the South African people was led from the front by Nelson Mandela, a self avowed disciple and ardent follower of Gandhi himself. The struggle of people with color in USA for their civil rights was like an independence movement in itself. They finally won their freedom and equal status in American society by basing their struggle mainly on the principle of non-violence under the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr.

Then in the 1960s Cesar Chavez organized a campaign of non-violence to protest the treatment of farm workers in California. As Chavez once explained, "Non-violence is not inaction. It is not for the timid or the weak. It is hard work; it is the patience to win." Another recent non-violent movement was the "Velvet Revolution", a non-violent revolution in Czechoslovakia that saw the overthrow of the Communist government in 1989. It is seen as one of the most important of the Revolutions of 1989. Most recently, as a result of non-violence, Leymah Gbowee and the women of Liberia were able to achieve peace after a 14-year civil war.

Many a time non-violence and pacifism are taken to be synonyms, but they are entirely different terms. While pacifism remains largely an individual renunciation of violence on moral or spiritual grounds, non violence has come to be firmly established as a strategy which presupposes

the attainment of some sort of socio political change as can be seen from the above examples. Non-violence is the virtue of persistent struggle and can only be sustained with great mental and moral strength.

According to Martin Luther King Jr. non-violence rests on following six principles-

- ➢ Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.
- ➢ Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.
- ➢ Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice not people.
- ➢ Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform.
- ➢ Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.
- ➢ Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.

Martin Luther believes that non-violent struggle is active non-violent resistance to evil. It requires practicing of aggressive spirituality, mentally and emotionally. The end result of non-violence is redemption and reconciliation. In fact when Nelson Mandela became the head of an independent South Africa, he constituted a Truth and Reconciliation Council to try the people guilty of racial discrimination. The purpose of the council was not to punish the guilty but to reconcile them with a progressive ideology. This was perfectly in line with the Gandhian thought which says that *"the science of non-violence alone can lead one* to *pure democracy ... Power based on love is thousand times more effective and permanent than power derived from fear of punishment".*

Non-violence knows that the evildoer is as much a victim as the victim of his act. It's suggested that we must not hate the evildoer but must strive to eliminate the evil. The suffering has a lot of educative value for a believer in non-violence. He believes that suffering has the power to convert the enemy when reason fails. Non-violence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body. Non-violent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative. It gives willingly knowing that the return might be hostility. It is un-ending in

its ability to forgive in order to restore community. It does not sink to the level of the hater. Love for the enemy is how we demonstrate love for ourselves. Non-violence is deeply rooted in the belief that God is on the side of justice and justice will eventually win.

Non-violence has various facets. In its philosophical form it rests on the cardinal principle of love for the enemy or the realization of the humanity of all people. The goal is not to defeat the enemy but to win them over and create love and harmony between all. It is this principle, which is most closely associated with spiritual or religious justifications of non-violence, the central tenets of which can be found in each of the major Abrahamic religious traditions (Islam, Judaism and Christianity) as well as in the major Dharmic religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism).

The pragmatic form of non-violence emphasizes to create a social dynamic or political movement that can effect social change without necessarily winning over those who wish to maintain the status quo. In modern industrial societies non-violence has been used extensively in various socio political movements like that of labour, peace, environment, and women's movements. One very recent example of success of Gandhian principles of non-violence has been in the success of the *'Chipko* Movement' to save trees in the hills of Uttarakhand. In 1989, thirteen nations in Eastern Europe comprising 1,695,000,000 people experienced non-violent revolutions that succeeded beyond anyone's wildest expectations. And if we combine all the countries touched by non-violent revolution in last century viz Korea, Philippines, South Africa, and India, the figure becomes a staggering 65 % of the humanity, which has experienced the force of non-violence as an instrument of struggle for a just and humane society! This must leave no doubt about the pragmatic significance of non-violence as a protest ideology

But how to put non-violence to work? The answer has actually been provided in the numerous writings of Mahatma Gandhi. He offered a very

powerful tool in the form of *'Satyagraha'* which formed the cornerstone of his non violent struggle. It is a form of non-violent non-cooperation with the oppressor in which the protestors must be ready to face highest form of violence including sacrificing their lives for the just cause. This, Gandhi maintains, is not the work of a coward. It is one of the highest examples of courage. The firmness of Gandhi's belief in the strategy of non violence can be deduced from the following assertion made by him in his book 'For Pacifists' which says, *"If the non-violent society is attacked from without, there are two ways open to non-violence. To yield possession, but non-cooperate with the aggressor ... prefer death to submission. The second way would be non-violent resistance by the people who have been trained in the non-violent way ... The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery ... A nation or group which has made non-violence its final policy cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb .... The level of non-violence in that nation, if that even happily comes to pass, will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect:"*

The virtue of Gandhian philosophy is that despite its extreme advocacy it offers practical solutions to most of the problems. Gandhi acknowledges the fact that this high capacity to sacrifice may not be found at all times, so he offers the moderate way of peaceful non cooperation. Martin Luther King Jr. has also offered a working philosophy of non-violence, which is more or less derived from Mahatma Gandhi's prescriptions only. From his writings we can actually deduce some concrete steps to practice non-violence to resolve conflicts and reconcile warring interests.

Firstly, one must concentrate on learning about various facets of the problem from all the sources possible. Talking directly to the affected people is the best way. Second step would be to educate others especially the friends neighbours, relatives, and as many people from the community as possible. A

team of community members, including at least few of the directly affected persons, must be formed for finding solutions. Thirdly, the team must resolve to stay committed in face of obstacles whatever their severity is. Fourthly, talking to both the sides in the conflict is important. On one hand there will be people who will be affected by the society's ill and on the other there will the perpetrators of those ills. If the negotiations fail, then it's time for action. It can include peaceful demonstrations, courting arrest, writing letters etc. And lastly the team must keep all actions and negotiations peaceful and constructive. The team must agree to disagree with some people and with some groups as the work is aimed at improving the society. All involved must be shown the benefits of changing, not what they will give up by changing.

In the area of conflict resolution Mary Parker Follet, an American Scholar made seminal contribution in the early Twentieth century. Talking way ahead of her times, she proposed that conflicts must not be avoided or feared; on the contrary they must be brought out it in open. The parties involved must give up the traditional approach of dominating and defeating the opponent. Domination sure gives the ego satisfaction to the winners in the game but the victory procured by it is temporary, as the loser will keep looking for the opportunities to strike back. Therefore instead of winning over opponents we must strive to winning with each other. This she calls as the 'Constructive Conflict'. Each party must give up a portion of its claim so that all the parties get something commensurate with their worth. This is a very unique application of non-violence. But M P Follet acknowledges that it is not possible for everyone to practice this method of conflict resolution. It requires immense inner strength as well as an open mind.

Whole world in general and India in particular is ridden with all sorts of conflicts, which have the potential to destroy the whole life on this planet. There are wars, proliferation of arms- both conventional as well as nuclear, severe imbalances in the environment, conflict over limited natural resources like oil, water and minerals, global terrorism, internal unrests in literally every nation, etc.

All these problems are still being dealt in the conventional way of either dominating the troublemakers or ignoring them. The problem with traditional approach is that it treats the symptoms rather than the cause of disease. Take for example the case of Naxalism in India. Though it is a very complicated problem, it has been reduced to being a law and order issue only and is being dealt on that premise.

There have been various sociological studies of the problems of Naxalism, which have unanimously declared Naxalism as the result of faulty and lopsided developmental policies and inability of the state to stop socio economic disparities from increasing in society. Even a casual look at the areas affected from the naxal menace is enough to tell us the reasons behind it.

- This problem has reared its head in the areas where
- Land reforms have failed.
- Tribals have been uprooted and dispossessed of their livelihoods, especially in the mineral rich states, in the name of development.
- Exploitation of poor at the hands of mighty and rich, in collusion with the governmental machinery is rampant.
- The education has made people aware of their situation and they have started demanding freedom from oppression and deprivation.

These are few of the broad characteristics of the naxal-affected areas. Governments have been trying to curb this problem by brute force. But the results have been contrary to expectation. Instead of getting over, this problem has spread to cover a very large portion of this country. In fact a long contiguous belt running through the forested and mineral rich portions of the country is severely infested with naxal menace and is resulting in severe loss of life and property of both the sides. Even Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has accepted Naxalism as the biggest internal threat to the country. Application of force has clearly failed in curbing this problem. So what can be the solution now?

Instead of cursing the naxalites, government must look inward. It must accept that the benefits of development have not reached the needy. It must accept that there has been a gross miscalculation in formulating the strategy to counter this problem. But all this requires immense political will power. Untill development planners do not accept their mistakes the problem cannot be solved. Next step will be stepping up the development efforts in these areas on a war footing. It's only by doing its legitimate duty, can government win back the turf from the naxal militants. But this campaign must be totally peaceful. Government must try to eliminate the problem not the human beings involved in it.

This brings us to a very important connection between truth and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi once said that, *"Non-violence and truth are inseparable and presuppose one another"*. A non-truthful person can never be non-violent. Violence is actually the most obvious trait of liars. They commit violence to take attention from their lies. The classic case in example is that of American aggression on Iraq in the name of the 'War on Terror'. A regime was overthrown simply because America wanted to control the oil fields of that country, something which America will *never* accept officially. Instead, they resorted to the false accusations of spreading terrorism to invade a country, which was already very weak. Even if Saddam Hussein really *deserved* his fate, USA *never* tried to follow the route of International Court as it would expose its lies. USA killed Saddam not because he was a tyrant; but because he had become useless or *even* an obstruction to the interests of the American interests in the West Asia. Thus we can see how lies and violence are also inseparable from each other.

So, in order for non violence to become accepted as the preferred way of resolving conflicts, truth must become the most revered and preferred value in practice in the society. This requires immense amount of faith- faith in man as well as faith in the God. Instead of force, persuasion must become the instrument

to win over the enemy. It remains a fact that if one believes in the justness of one's cause, there is no need for violence. Mahatma Gandhi made it to realize to millions and millions of Indians and made believers out of them. His philosophy has become one of the most respected philosophies of all time in the world. Even United Nations has acknowledged the paramount significance of non violence by declaring that 2nd of October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, be celebrated as the World Peace Day every year. The recent Nobel Prize Winner for Peace, Mr. Barak H Obama, also the President of USA says that Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest man of this century as he gave the message of non-violence to this world. He believes firmly in the philosophy of Gandhi and even keeps a photograph of Mahatma Gandhi in his office for inspiration.

This world needs deliverance from the curse of violence and destruction all around. And its desperation is obvious from the fact that a person in the capacity of the US president is awarded a Peace Nobel Prize, just because he promises to bring peace to the world. The path of non-violence is difficult to follow but is a sure path to lasting peace. In fact he has already starting showing some promise. It's after a very long time that, there has come a thaw in US- Iran relations. Let us hope that this year's surprise Peace Nobel laureate brings lasting peace to other troubled areas of the world as well.

Despite all the virtues of non-violence we must not let it become our weakness. Even Gandhi had said that the one who tolerates evil is a bigger sinner than its perpetrator. He believed that when the choice is between cowardice and violence, violence must be chosen over cowardice. Every responsible power has right to make provisions for its self-defence. Non-violence is the ideal towards which we must all strive for but not at the cost of making our nation mighty and strong. There is a saying in Hindi which goes as following:

"Kshama shobhti us bhujang ko, jiske paas gral ho;

Usko kya jo dant heen vish rahit, vineet, sara! ho!"

Which means that a snake which has no venom can't pretend to be forgiving, it's the King Cobra, for which, a forgiving nature can be considered as a virtue!

Ashoka the Great maintained a mighty army even after renouncing violence altogether. Same is the right of every country. But the nature of such army must always be of the self defense.

To sum up, non-violence is mightier than the mightiest of the forces. It is not the trait of a coward rather it is the virtue of the courageous. Non- violence succeeds in solving the most unsolvable of the conflicts because it's based on the respect for humanity of every individual. In a non-violent way of life, the society in particular learns to respect every form of life even the plants. This is the only way of ensuring a sustainable way of life because over exploitation of nature is one of gravest form of violence against the universe. Such a society gains the respect of everyone around and becomes a leading light in the comity of nations. Let us hope our nation regains its respect and fulfill its promise of spreading world peace made by of the directive principle of our constitution.

The only way to achieve a just and humanitarian social order for one and all is by promoting and practicing the principles of non-violence in solving various conflicts spread across the whole spectrum of the society. The whole media must strive to spread the message of peace and harmony. It is our responsibility for the future generations that they receive a world free from mindless strife and disrespect for life and non-violence is the only instrument to ensure that.

Non-violence is a strategy for social change

SHAVETA DHANKHAR

"Better than a thousand hollow words is one word that brings peace."

Lord Buddha

It s rightly said that rather than using harsh words, it is better to use non-violence which will bring peace in the world. For this, there is a need for change. Change is a great reality of life, but the greatest reality is that change also changes. Man being a social animal prefers to live in groups. His situation from one point to another point keeps on changing. Whenever the decisions are taken, they are taken as per the norms of the groups. A situation can arise when the decision taken is not liked by the people with in the group. There can be confrontation between the two or more than two ideologies of the group. It is a million dollar question, how to avoid conflicts within the group, community, state, country and the world. The degree of intensity may vary from one place to other, from one person to another and one time to the next time.

From the end of 20th century and the beginning of 21st century, we are still facing the same problem of more and more complex conflicts. Non-violence can be a better strategy for resolving conflicts. Infact, it is one of the important strategy nowadays which can bring fruitful results. It is rightly said that an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind. But non-violence will make a long-lasting impact over the ideologies in the conflict resolution. Conflicts are not the new phenomenon. They arise when the interest of two sides coincide. It is an unavoidable facet or human life. It is a century long concept. Right from the ancient period, for the purpose of take-over, victory and survival for existence, conflicts are going among the parties. In the medieval period, conflicts arose for the annexation of territories, loots and due to difference in thinking.

But with the advent of Britishers, conflicts between the societies like peasant class, depressed class, women, Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes grew up in a larger extent. Though India as a nation came out of these conflicts, but these conflicts are still growing up in the country in one manner or the other. Such conflicts are as much internal process of human mind when it evaluates the pros and cons of a decision, as it is a part of individual's daily interaction with others in a society.

In the last decade conflicts have arisen in India from multiple causes such as caste and tribal issues, religion, regional disparities, poverty, land and water, just to name a few. Some philosophers have attributed all progress to the continuous process of conflicts and conflict resolution. The absence of conflict may be an impossible condition to reach and it may often mean brutal repression or callous indifference by one section vis-à-vis the rest. The maturity of a society is thus measured not so much by the absence of conflict in it as the ability of its institutions and procedures for resolving it. Before resolving conflicts one must know why the conflicts have arisen and what are the different types of conflicts?

The conflicts can be constructive or destructive depending upon the situation. These can range from insurgency for secession to insurgency for autonomy, from 'sponsored terrorism' to ethnic clashes, to conflicts generated as a result of continuous inflow of migrants from across the borders as well from states. National conflicts involve the concept of a distinct 'homeland' as a separate nation and pursuit of the realisation of that goal by its votaries. Ethnic conflicts include assertion of numerically smaller and less dominant tribal groups against the political and cultural hold of he dominate tribal groups. In states like, Assam this also takes the form of tension between local and migrant communities. Sub-regional conflicts incorporates movements which ask for recognition of sub-regional aspirations and often come in direct conflict with the State Government or even the autonomous councils. Apart from this, there are

identical issues in India, as communities are based on language, religion, sect, caste and tribes.

Historically, the seeds of identity politics were planted in India during colonial rule. The British acted from a combination of motives. Some of them adopted paternalistic almost protective towards religious minorities and the backward communities and promoted there interests on humanitarian considerations. They were at the same time, not oblivious to the opportunities for maintaining their authority in India through the archetypal policy of divide and rule. The seeds thus planted came to bear fruits during partition and later in India as parliamentary democracy took roots. Democratic politics has played a crucial role in shoring up identity based on language, religion and caste because the primary concerns of democratic politics were centred on the distribution and redistribution of the benefits and burdens of society among its various constitutional parts.

It is good for the society to resolve the conflicts in order to avoid the negative repercussions. A conflict resolution is a range of methods for alleviating or eliminating sources of conflicts. The term "Conflict Resolution" is sometimes used interchangeably with the term dispute resolutions or alternative dispute resolution. Process of conflict resolution generally includes negotiation, mediation and diplomacy. For example, there are two girls sitting in a library. One girl needs air and wants to open the door. On the other hand, the second girl does not. If a single window is opened, then demands of both girls are fulfilled and both girls are happy. Conflict resolution aims to build capacity for conflict prevention and resolution in government and civil society agencies and promote a community of academic expertise in conflict prevention management and post-conflict peace building. It should be a voluntary process that accept differences, recognise mutual interests and improve persuasive skills and dissenting skills. It includes in it, learn to disagree without animosity, build confidence in recognising win-win solutions and recognize anger and other emotions to solve

problems. One way to peacefully resolve conflict is for each side is to come together voluntarily, to work cooperatively on the issues under the guidance of a trained facilitator. Bring your conflicted parties together in a private location and gather information, identify key issues without making accusations, focus on what the issues are, not who did what, do not accuse, find fault, call names. Each party state their position and how it has affected them, other listen alternatively and respectfully without interruption. Each party, intern repeat or describes as best as they can the other's position to the listeners satisfaction.

Seek first to understand, then to be understood. The parties should try to view the issue from other points of view besides the two conflicting ones. They brainstorm to find the middle ground, a point of balance, creative solutions etc. each side volunteers what he or she can do to resolve the conflict or solve the problem. A formal agreement is drawn with agreed upon actions for both parties. A procedure is identified, should disagreement arise and the process is monitored.

The peaceful alternatives to violence and war consist of negotiations, dialogues, compromise, conciliation and such other tools of conflict resolution. Those are all good and useful tools in many situations and they need to be explored and developed further. The important wider historical practice of non-violent struggle in social, economic, political and international conflicts give recognition to non-violence. Its important contribution is about how to deal with conflicts fit smoothly into established modern thought and practice. The assumption usually is that in serious conflicts on ultimately must choose between surrender to a force using violence, and refusal to participate on pacifist grounds. Gandhiji was no advocate of surrender to a force using violence, and was, nor has he a simple conscientious objector. He was crucial contributor to the continued development of "war without violence". The contributions of conflict resolutions and peace research are important for some conflicts, especially those with the issues of secondary significance. However those contributions are inadequate

when dealing with accurate conflicts. While opposing conflict and calling upon mutual cooperation, the centre point of view is non-violence.

What is non-violence? It is non and violence that is abstinence from violence when we analyse the word. In broad terms, it means not causing violence per thought, utterance or deed. Non-violence is eternal and natural. It calls upon all to mutually operate along with opposing conflicts; it is essential for us to know as to how we can make our lives free from conflicts through it. We should also know how to live a life of pleasure, prosperity and peace. Conflicts leads only to inhumanity, non-progress and destruction. Cooperation and non-violence is one if affection and fraternity in cooperation happen to be strong. Cooperation is permanent and natural as well. It is essential also. We can live our lives only through it. There is no sphere where it is not needed or happens to be insignificant. Let us take family that is first unit of human society. In case husband and wife and other members do not cooperate mutually in a family, there can be conflicts, it will true for a nation and also true for international context. The derivation is that cooperation is everywhere needed. In case it was not needed so, nice dictums like 'the universe is a family', 'human unity' or 'all offspring of a father' abolish the state of conflict when it appears. It either does not end immediately or it leaves a very bad impact.

Non-violence is a philosophy and strategy for social change that rejects the use of violence. It is an alternative to passive acceptance of oppression and armed struggle against it. Non-violence use diverse methods in their campaigns for social change, including critical form of education and persuasion, civil disobedience and non-violent direct action and targeted communication via mass media.

In modern times, non-violence has been a powerful tool for social protest. Mahatma Gandhi led a decades long non-violent struggle against British rule in India, which eventually helped India win its independence in 1947. About ten years later, Martin Luther King adopted Gandhi's non-violent methods in his

struggle to win civil rights for African Americans. Then in the 1960's Cesar Chavez organized a campaign of non-violence to protest the treatment of farm workers in California. Non-violence is not action. It is not for timid or the weak. It is hard work; it is the patience to win. Another recent non-violent movement was the "Velvet Revolution", a non-violent revolution in Czechoslovakia that saw the over throw of the Communist Government in 1989. As a result of non-violence, Leymal Gbowee and the women of Liberia were able to achieve peace after a 14 year civil war.

The term "non-violence is often linked with or even used as a synonym for pacifism; however, the two concepts are fundamentally different. Pacifism denotes the rejection of the use of violence as a personal decision on moral or spiritual grounds, but does not inherently imply any inclination towards change on a socio-political level. Non-violence on the other hand, presupposes the interest of social or political changes as a reason for rejection of violence. A person may advocate non-violence in a specific context while advocating violence in other contexts.

Non-violence has been a central concept in green political philosophy. It believes that current patterns of violence are in compatible with a sustainable society because it uses up limited resources and many forms of violence, especially nuclear weapons, are damaging for the environment. Due to its importance, it has significant place in United Nations charter and Panchsheel.

Non-violence is a powerful method to harmonize relationships among people for the establishment of justice and the ultimate well being of all parties. It draws its power from awareness of the profound truth to which the wisdom traditions of all cultures, science and common experience bear witness that life is one. Respect everyone is a cardinal principle in non-violence. Infact the more you can respect a person, the more effectively you can persuade him or her to change attitude or behaviour. Never use humiliation as a tool or accept humiliation from

others as that degrades everyone. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Non-violent means always lead to positive constructive results-through not always the ones we intended violent means never lead to constructive ends. We do not have, nor are we expected to have control over the final results of our actions. We have and must take responsibility for the means we use, including even the feelings and the state of mind as we use them. Non-violence sometimes "works" and always works. It will always produces good result at some point down the road, even though we may not quite see the connection. Give priority to building relationships over short-term "Victories'. Conflicts make us feel that in order for me to "win" you have to lose, that is a delusion. In non-violence we do not seek to be winners, or use over others, we seek to learn and make things better for all. Be prepared to take a suffering if there is no other way to awaken another's conscience.

It is good to petition for grievances, but non-violence really does its work when our petitions have been ignored and it is necessary, as Gandhiji said, to "not only speak to the heart". And we can do this by accepting rather than inflicting the suffering inherent in the system. In the real world there is not always time to, for example persuade a dictator to step-down. Coercion may be required by the simple economy of suffering. Nonetheless we aim for persuasion wherever possible because those changes are permanent.

Never sacrifice your principles, but be ready to change tactics or compromise on details. Do not cling to symbols. Be constructive whenever possible and obstructive when necessary. The power of 'constructive programme' by which the Indians took charge of their own destiny and showed themselves and the British that the latter were not needed episodes of *Satyagrah*, (in this case, active resistance), though much more dramatic, actually only punctuated the long, slow process of self-regeneration.

Along with non-violent means there is a need of developmental measures, so that conflict may not arise at all. Balanced regional development is an important objective in the country's planning and various measures including fiscal incentives, industrial policies and directly targeted measures have been used in the past to achieve this objective. Infact, adoption of planning as a strategy of state-led industrialisation with plans and policies designed to facilitate more investments in relatively backward areas, were intended to lead to a more balanced growth. The first target is to fortify the backward areas adequately and target them with additional resources and investments to help them overcome structural deficiencies that contribute to their backwardness. Many regional conflicts are an outcome of disparities in the development of particular region compared to the remaining parts of the country or state of which that particular region is a part. Such conflicts are not unique to India, no state can afford to ignore its region specific conflicts whether they arise on account of disparities or for other reasons. Per capita Income is measure of development and stand red of living communal used in inter-country comparisons to determine existence of disparities. Within a country, measurement and comparison of Net State Domestic Product of its constituent units offer on idea of prevailing imbalances.

Sometimes non-violence has negative implications on development. Recently in India, there were conflicts regarding the Special Economic Zones issue over land in West Bangal. Tata Motors bought the land worth a thousand crore rupees, but, after some time, the farmers started agitating against it. They were against the development of industries at the cost of agriculture. As a result of it, Tata Company had to shift its plant from West Bengal to Gujarat. Such kind of incidence gives a serious blow to the investment pattern. There is a need to strengthen and promote it further so that it will solve the conflicts priority wise by keeping in mind the past, for the betterment of the present and for the purpose of the future. There is a need to integrate the knowledge of non-violence into formal education and life-long learning.

Spirituality of non-violence applicable to all facets of life

V. KARIKALAN

The world is in crisis. War has devastated all corners of the globe. Conflict is an everyday occurrence. Violence has become our way of life. The world is in crisis, and yet, whenever there exist a crisis an opportunity may also be found. People who practice non-violence create pathways to peace by recognizing the duality of crisis, and war. They look at the horror of a situation and they turn it into an opportunity for goodness, for peace. To truly eliminate violence, however, they must examine the causes of it; explain why it happens and pinpoint the reason that hate dwells in our hearts. These non-violent practitioners have also pushed back against the true cause of war, the reason for the absence of peace and fear.

In a world torn asunder by battles for wealth, power, glory and revenge, a gentle voice was raised early this year, asking for the madness to stop. One should understand first whether the grown men, who run the affairs of the world really understand what they are doing, to each other, to their own humanity, and to the earth, air and water that nurture life. The word that best seemed to describe what we are doing was "violence", in its many forms. Violence for the domination and superiority of this or that group supposedly held together by essential ties of religion, or culture, over some other group. Violence to grab in greed what is everyman's need and could be shared in peace. Violence even for the control of what is unnecessary - what we could do without, at least until all in the human family are properly fed, clothed, sheltered and cared for.

The word that best seemed to describe what we are doing was "violence", himsa, in its many forms. Violence for the domination and superiority of this or that group, supposedly held together by essential ties of religion, or culture, over some other group. Violence to grab in greed what is everyman's need and could be shared in peace.

"Returning violence for violence multiplies violence; adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." An important and well written quote said by none other than Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King's method of non-violence and this quote still holds true today. Those who use non-violence are more likely to get through situations then those who prater to reason with their hands. Using non-violent approaches reduces conflict in many ways. When there is no violence used to solve a problem, people are more likely to sit down and talk. Violence cannot be used, as the tool to resolve conflicts for its not possible to have a civilized conversation through the punches and the screams. Since violence is never the key to any solution, why continue using it? Non-violence has and will always lead to peace and this method has been proven true. Dr. King, for example, used non-violence to stop segregation, and the result in the end was peace.

History of Non - Violence

Most of us are familiar with the terms like Non-violence and Ahimsa. In the recent past i.e. during India's freedom struggle, Mahatma Gandhi had forged non-violence into a political weapon to peacefully push out British imperialism. While, how far this attitude was effective in throwing off the colonial yoke would remain a matter of debate, it can indisputably be said that the technique of non-violent political agitation did obtain a mass base for India's freedom struggle without attracting extreme penalties from the British administration.

Non-violent agitation also enabled nationalist Indian leaders to keep alive the struggle for independence in the absence of an armed insurrection. The roots of our attitude of non-violence go deep into our history. It has been integrated with almost all religions originating in ancient times in the Indian sub-continent viz. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.

But contrary to popular belief it has not been part of Indian culture since time immemorial. Our Vedic literature is silent on this concept. The Rigveda

talks of wars, struggles, victories, etc., even animal sacrifices and meat eating was allowed.

The concept of ahimsa could have first developed in Jainism, which as we know split from the mainstream of Vedic beliefs very early in Indian history. Jainism disapproves Vedic rituals of animal sacrifice. The concept of Jivadaya i.e. equal respect for all life forms seems to have been first enunciated Jainism. But ahimsa is more popularly associated with Buddhism perhaps because this religion was more widespread. This concept was also absorbed into Hinduism where it took the form of worship of the cow and bull, ban on animal sacrifices and vegetarianism.

In ancient times, the values of non-violence and vegetarianism were transmitted outside India via Buddhism. This was so because unlike Hinduism, Buddhism had a tradition of diffusion of its beliefs though persistent missionary activity. Along with this, Buddhism received the unstinted support of powerful Indian kings like Samrat Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsha. These kings presided over large empires and apart from encouraging the spread of Buddhism all over their empires; they also encouraged missionaries to visit other countries to spread the message of the Buddha. Buddhism which itself is a significant contribution of India to world culture also acted as a vehicle for promoting the philosophy of non-violence.

Objectives of Non - Violence

Peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace building are complex and important responses to the proliferation of violent conflict. The root of these approaches lies in the basic knowledge and commitment to the practice of non-violence and critical thinking. When we eliminate violence as an option for resolving conflicts, we make room for creative alternatives. Co-operation, critical thinking, communication and problem solving become essential tools. Conflict itself can be viewed as an opportunity for growth and expanded communication

rather than a precursor to violence and a threat to dignity, security and life. Peace educators are developing tools to help transform the current "culture of violence" in which hurt and harm are advocated and glorified to a "culture of peace" in which the preservation of life and human dignity are the central guiding principles for living together in a secure world.

Principles of Non - Violence

Non-violence acknowledges, repairs, and transforms the infinite relatedness and unity of all life. Injustice depends on either active or passive support (resulting from silence, indifference or fear). Violence is a personal, interpersonal, institutional or systemic act, attitude or policy that dehumanizes, diminishes or destroys. It thrives by passive or active support. Non-violence is the process of transforming this support for injustice by mobilizing and unleashing non-violent people power. Each of us has a piece of the truth and the un-truth. It is a process of acknowledging and revealing the pieces of truth and untruth on both sides in a conflict as the basis for a just and constructive solution. It seeks the truth rather than the conquest of one side over another.

Non-violence is the process of transforming "Us vs. Them" thought and action. It unifies rather than threatens; integrates rather than fragments and destroys; draws us closer rather than excluding and separating; and challenges all double standards; and recognizes that each of us has tendencies toward both violence and love. The line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being." Each of us has only a piece of the truth, and therefore each of us possesses a piece of the un-truth. Non-violence fails when it is arrogant or self-righteous, especially when it claims to be free of violence, or when it asserts that only others are violent. Non-violence is stronger than the Power of Violence, which is a destructive force designed to defeat and dominate others and that often seeks to separate "us" from "them." It is for this reason, disputes the claim that violence establishes peace, justice and order in any just and lasting way and also

pursues its goal, not with passivity or retaliation, but with creative engagement and loving resistance. It willingly faces the consequences of its engagement and resistance.

Non-violence is nurtured and strengthened by community, relationship-building, ongoing education, and practice. It requires training and experience in love, courage, creativity, and relentless persistence. This includes examining and transforming the ways that violence and injustice has been consciously or unconsciously internalized.

Non-violence is not a path toward an idealistic utopia but a process for envisioning, weaving, mending, and honouring the web of personal, interpersonal, social, global and ecological relationships. The spirit and methods of Creative Non-violence are suited to this ongoing creation and re-creation of the world. Peace makers have gone through tremendous struggles to obtain rights and privileges that they felt were owed to them as a human being. A lot of times, someone fought for a larger group for change and a vision of peace and equality. There are two ways to gain something that you want and those are through either violent practices or non-violent practices. I see non-violent practices as being more subtle but more effective than violent ones. Throughout history we have had extraordinary peacemakers who all endured horrible situations but stayed persistent with their approach and ultimately were successful in their efforts.

There are few peacemakers who stand out to me and whom I believe to have had enormous influence on the world we have today. Due to each of their contributions, the world has become somewhat of a better place than it was before. Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi prolific peace makers of our time, Nelson Mandela, an incredible figure of our time, did many things to attain peace in South Africa. He was involved in programs of passive resistance against the laws that forced blacks to carry passes and kept them in a position of permanent servility. Because of this, he was jailed and sentenced to life imprisonment. He

was incarcerated for 27 years and once he was released from prison, he continued his life long work of attaining goals that he and others had set out decades before. Mandela was a dominant force in the ending of apartheid and was eventually elected the President of South Africa.

Another important contributor to peace was Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi worked non-stop to improve the rights of immigrant Indians in Southern Africa. It was here that he gained his creed of passive resistance. He continued to lead protests even after he was arrested time after time. Once he returned to India, he led the struggle for India's independence from Britain. Even with everything that was thrown at him, he never bent on his non-violent beliefs. He would fast when Muslim and Hindu compatriots fought or committed acts of violence. When the country was partitioned, Gandhi fasted to stop the fighting between Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan. Sadly, he was assassinated In January of 1948. Gandhi was a great man indeed and his efforts were not in vein.

Gandhi and Non-Violence

Gandhiji's genius lay in converting a religious ethic, ahimsa, into a non-violent political tool to fight not only colonialism but other social evils as well. Gandhi was the greatest exponent of the doctrine of ahimsa or non-violence in modern times, but he was not its author. Ahimsa has been part of the Indian religious tradition for centuries: Hindu, Jain and Buddhist. It was Gandhi's genius that transformed, what had been an individual ethic, into a tool of social and political action. This he did in the course of his twenty-year long struggle against racialism in South Africa. If the Indian National Congress had not accepted his basic tenet of non-violence in 1920, he would have had nothing to do with its struggle for liberation from British rule. "I would like to repeat to the world, times without number", Gandhi said in 1931, "that I will not purchase my country's freedom at the cost of non-violence ... "

We must remember that Gandhi applied his method of non-violent resistance not only against foreign rule, but against social evils such as racial discrimination and unsociability. Indeed, he claimed that non-violence lay at the root of every one of his activities, and his mission in life was not merely the freedom of India but the brotherhood of man. His satyagraha was designed not only for India, but for the whole world; it could transform relations between individuals, as well as between communities and nations. In the early 1920s, when he had just emerged as the stoutest champion of nationalism in Asia, Gandhi unequivocally subscribed to the ideal of a world federation. "The better mind of the world desires today", he told the Belgaum Congress in 1924, "not absolutely independent states warring against each other but a federation of friendly interdependent states."

In the 1930s, when the forces of violence were gathering momentum in Europe; he reaffirmed his faith in non-violence. Through the pages of his weekly paper, Harijan, he expounded his approach to political tyranny and military aggression. He advised weaker nations to defend themselves by offering non-violent resistance to the aggressor. A non-violent Abyssinian, he argued, needed no arms and so succour from the League of Nations; if every Abyssinian man, woman, and child refused cooperation with the Italians, willing or forced, the latter would have to walk to victory over the dead bodies of their victims and to occupy their country without the people. The motive power of Nazi and Fascist aggression was the desire to carve out new empires, and behind it all was a ruthless competition to annex new sources of raw materials and fresh markets. In Gandhi's opinion, wars were thus rooted in the overweening greed of men as also in the purblind tribalism that placed nationalism above humanity. In the ultimate analysis, to shake off militarism, it was necessary to end the competitive greed and fear and hatred which fed it.

Gandhi's ideas have fuelled not only struggles against foreign domination and tyrannical rule, but also crusades against the piling up of nuclear weapons and the havoc being wrought by developed countries through wanton and wasteful use of the resources of the planet. Petra Kelly, a leader of the Green Peace movement in Germany who was influenced by the ideas of Martin Luther King and Gandhi, denounced methods of production which depended upon a ceaseless supply of raw materials and were leading to the exhaustion of natural resources and threatening ecological devastation. Speaking almost in the Gandhian idiom, she said, "We cannot solve any political problem, without also addressing spiritual ones. "--Despite these examples of non-violent struggles over the past two decades, which have highlighted the power potential of the oppressed, it must be admitted that Gandhi's ideas and methods are still appreciated by only a small enlightened minority in the world. Gandhi himself had no illusions about their ready acceptance. He did not claim finality for his views, which he regarded within a broad ethical framework as aids for bettering the lives of his fellow men; they could be altered if they did not work. Though he expounded his philosophy of life in hundreds of articles and letters, he never tried to build it into a system. Nevertheless, the truth is that more than fifty years after his death, his deepest concerns have become the concerns of thinking men and institutions working for a peaceful and humane world.

The spirituality of non-violence

Actually, one can say that Gandhi's primary contribution to spirituality is non-violence. This is how he challenges people of faith to recognize their religious hypocrisies. Gandhi argued that a person who believes in Truth and God cannot go to mosque, synagogue, temple or church one day, and the next day foster hatred and violence. Therefore for Gandhi, the spirituality of non-violence had to be applied to all facets of life. It is interesting to see how much Gandhi was able to influence believers of other religions by unlocking the

spiritual dynamic in all of them. Through his "soft reading" of the Hindu scriptures, but also that of Christianity and Islam, Gandhi found a clarion call to active non-violence in all these religions. As such, he thought. Christians, Jews and Muslims that faith pushes us to promote peace and non-violent social change. For him the basic principles of religions were not just pious ideals, but actual laws of action in the world. Maybe this is why Gandhi challenged fervent believers of different religions to seek God through their own active pursuit of truth and non-violence instead of being literalist interpreters of the Hindu, Muslim or Christian scriptures. Gandhi had the good fortune to have as his colleague's people belonging to different religions.

Non - violent creates peace The path to peace starts at home. Children learn from the examples of their parents and leaders; if the examples they see are peaceful, they will learn the skills necessary to resolve conflicts without violence. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love." We have the responsibility of teaching our children this love. Non-violent conflict resolution is the only way to peace. As Nobel Peace Laureate, Mairead Corrigan Maquire stated, "One cannot drop a bomb on an ethnic conflict. The weapons we have developed as a means of solving our problems are no longer of any use to us." All the great wars have been fought; our choice now is either total destruction or peace. Two concepts are essential to teach children non-violent conflict resolution. First everyone has the same basic needs. Second, non-judgemental and empathic communication is essential.

Everyone, Muslim, Jew, and Atheist have the same basic needs: To have a safe place for their family, to have enough food to eat, to have a place to call home. Conflicts arise when these needs are not met and people lose hope. When hope is lost people turn to violence as a means of drawing attention to their plight. "People who are unaware of their needs often act in ineffective and even destructive ways. Understanding that all our needs can be met simultaneously is necessary to achieving peace. Simply because someone wants a piece of pie

doesn't mean your piece has to get smaller; the pie is infinitely big and can keep growing and expanding to accommodate everyone.

Non-violent communication does not attempt to change the other person's mind. It is focused on achieving an understanding of the other person's position. Marshall Rosenburg said it best, "The objective of non-violent communication is not to change people and their behaviour in order to get our way; it is to establish relationships based on honesty and empathy which will eventually fulfil everyone's needs." It is essential to understand why a person is who they are and that, in the end; we all want the same thing, namely, peace.

Conclusion

Moreover, non-violence is the only solution to every problem. Whether it's just a matter of family problems or a matter of war, non-violence will always lead to peace between the two sides. Sitting down and talking everything through always leads to a solution. If a matter of situation is going to lead to reducing conflict and increase peace, then why not use this method? Many more non-violent users opened doors for us and it's our duty to go through them and continue the walk for peace. Together the ideals of respect, understanding, and a culture of peace will serve to promote non-violent problem solving strategies and increasing the standard of living for all members of a community. A society that respects and understands all it's people will be less apt to commit violent acts against them. In addition, by instilling a culture of non-violence individuals will instinctively gravitate to non-violent means to create change and solve problems.

The world has reached at the crossroads of history. Innumerable issues have cropped up posing a grave challenge to humankind. These issues are global in their dimensions and nature. Hardly any of them is amenable to violent means. They need to be faced on a long-term basis with international cooperation. No nation, howsoever powerful, is in a position to grapple with them. Nations are tied together in an inter-dependent framework. We have to band together

otherwise each one will have to hang separately. There is no escape from the relentless logic of our commonality. This will be in tune with the humanistic and holistic approach that Gandhi so well espoused. The post- cold war period has offered a rare opportunity to the governments, especially of the North, to accept a multilateral approach to meet the global problems of the world. The time is opportune for them to have renounced nuclear weapons to start with and pursue the path of peace and international cooperation. The world has to follow the path shown by Gandhi and move from the culture of violence to the culture of peace.
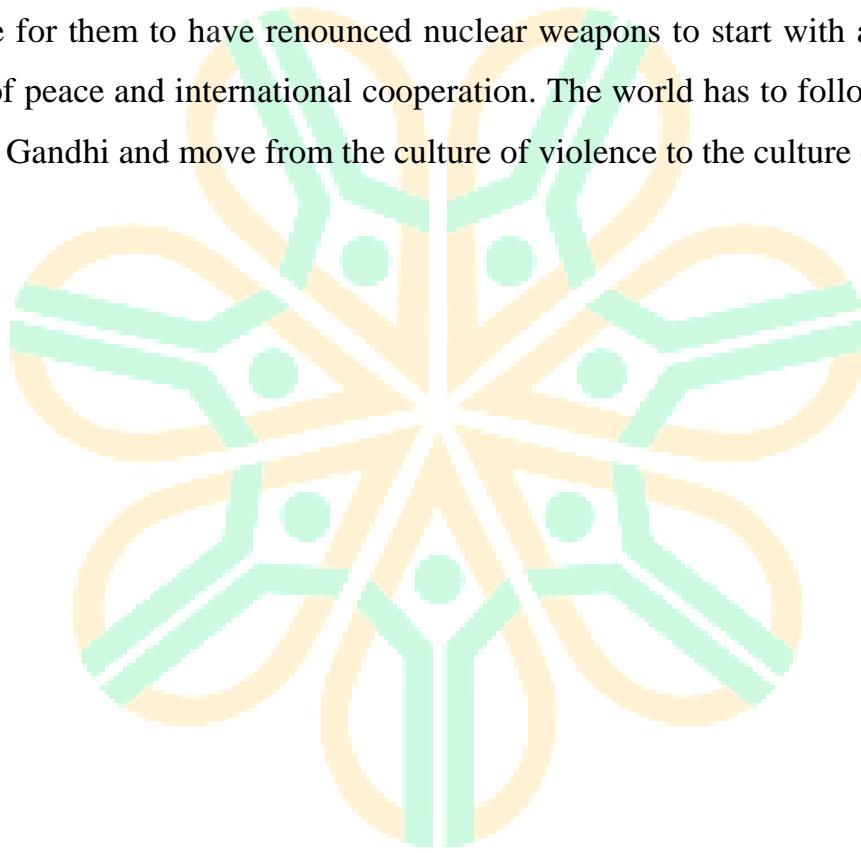
<center>अहिंसा परमो धर्मः</center>

<center>भानू चंद्र गोस्वामी</center>

'मिले सुर मेरा तुम्हारा तो सुर बने हमारा..........' यह प्रथम पंक्ति है उस टेली फीचर फिल्म की, जो दूरदर्शन पर आज से लगभग चौदह–पन्द्रह वर्ष पहले प्रसारित की जाती थी और जिसमें भारत की विविधतापूर्ण संस्कृति को एक माले की तरह पिरोकर इस तरह प्रस्तुत किया जाता था कि हमारा मन–मस्तिष्क पूर्णतया झंकृत होकर इस भावना से एकाकार होने लगता था। आज भी इस फीचर फिल्म पर विचार करते समय जब भी यह प्रश्न हमारे मन में उठता है कि हजारों वर्ष पुरानी संस्कृति में कौन–सा एक ऐसा महत्वपूर्ण तत्त्व विद्यमान रहा है जिसने मानव–जीवन के प्रत्येक पक्ष को अनिवार्यतया स्पर्श किया है और संपूर्ण मानव जाति को ही न केवल प्रभावित किया है, अपितु स्वयं भी मानव हृदय का ही सर्वश्रेष्ठ प्रतिबिम्ब भी है तो एक ही उत्तर सामने होता है– 'अहिंसा'।

हाँ, मानव की श्रेष्ठ एवं निम्न– सभी प्रकार की आंतरिक दशाओं, जैसे– प्रेम, करुणा, मित्रता, वात्सल्य, दया, दुःख, रोष, क्रोध आदि का मिलन–बिन्दु यह अहिंसा का भाव ही है। यही कारण है कि मानव सभ्यता एवं संस्कृति के विकास के प्रत्येक चरण में अहिंसा के सिद्धांत को महत्वपूर्ण स्थान मिलता रहा है। भारतवर्ष में भी छठी शताब्दी ई0 पू0 महात्मा बुद्ध एवं महावीर स्वामी ने इस सिद्धांत को इतनी ऊँचाई प्रदान की कि अहिंसा ही बौद्ध एवं जैन धर्म का आधार स्तम्भ बन गयी। आगे चलकर सम्राट अशोक ने भी अपने धम्म के मूल में अहिंसा को ही प्रतिष्ठापित किया। इसके बाद आधुनिक युग में भी हम देखते हैं कि महात्मा गांधी ने पूरे भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम की नींव ही अहिंसा के सिद्धांत पर खड़ी कर दी। आगे चलकर उनके ही शिष्य आचार्य विनोवाभावे ने स्वतंत्र भारत में उठने वाली समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए 'भूदान आंदोलन' के रूप में अहिंसा के सिद्धांत का पुनः प्रभावशाली प्रयोग किया। अहिंसा के निरंतर प्रवाह की यह परम्परा आज भी अबाध रूप से जारी है।

एक ध्यातव्य बात यह है कि संस्कृति के प्रवाह के प्रत्येक बिन्दु पर ही अहिंसा की उपस्थिति अनिवार्यरूपेण रही है, परन्तु कभी कभी अहिंसा आधारित आंदोलन प्रबलतर स्थिति में दीख पड़ता है, जैसे– बौद्ध एवं जैन धर्म का उद्भव, भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम, विभिन्न रक्तविहीन क्रांतियां आदि। वस्तुतः अहिंसा का भाव तो मूलतया मानव–जाति के साथ अभिन्न रूप से जुड़ा हुआ है, लेकिन जब कभी भी सभ्यता एवं संस्कृतियों के संघर्ष की स्थिति जटिल एवं गहन होती है, तब–तब अहिंसा का भाव भी संतुलनकारी शक्ति के रूप में उतनी ही तेजी से उभरकर सामने आता है। 'महाभारत' की यह उक्ति भी इस बात का समर्थन करती है–

<center>"यदा–यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम्।"</center>

वस्तुतः यह 'अहम् अर्थात्' स्वत्व का सृजन मानव जाति की मूल भावना– प्रेम, करुणा, दया आदि के ही अभ्युत्थान–पुनरुत्थान की ओर संकेत करता है। यही कारण है कि अहिंसा का भी प्रबल अभ्युदय रक्तविहीन क्रांति के रूप में ही सामने आता हुआ दीख पड़ता है। परन्तु, इसका यह आशय कदापि नहीं है कि अहिंसा सदैव क्रांति के रूप में ही उपस्थित

होती है, अपितु यह भाव हमारे आंतरिक रूप में दैनिक व्यवहार में सदैव विद्यमान रहता है और विपरीत परिस्थितियों में इसे एक कारगर अस्त्र के रूप में भी विकसित करके इसके माध्यम से विवादों एवं समस्याओं का निपटारा किया जा सकता है।

आरम्भ में जब बौद्ध एवं जैन धर्मों ने अहिंसा को अपना मूलाधार बनाया था, तब इस सिद्धांत का स्वरुप आध्यात्मिक रुख लिये हुए था। वस्तुतः वेदाधारित हिन्दू धर्म में विद्यमान कर्मकाण्ड एवं जटिलता के विरोध में उभरे हुए इन धर्मों ने मानव के धार्मिक एवं आध्यात्मिक जीवन को हिंसा से परे करके, उसके सर्वाधिक सरल आन्तरिक भाव– अहिंसा पर आधारित करने का प्रयास किया है। इस समय भी अहिंसा का व्यापक प्रसार करते हुए इसका आशय लगाया गया– कायिक, वाचिक एवं मानसिक– किसी भी प्रकार की हिंसा न करना। अर्थात् केवल जीवों का वध न करना ही अहिंसा नहीं हैं, वरन् किसी के विषय में झूठ, अप्रिय वचन का प्रयोग न करना और किसी का अहित न सोचना भी अहिंसा है। इस प्रकार मानव के अन्तःकरण को पूर्णतया शुद्ध बनाना ही इस धार्मिक क्रांति के मूल में विद्यमान लक्ष्य था। ऐसा इसलिए क्योंकि धार्मिक, सामाजिक, राजनीतिक आदि सभी प्रकार की समस्याएं मानव के चित्त विकार से ही उत्पन्न होती है। अब यदि मानव किसी भी प्रकार के विकार के वशीभूत ही न हो और सभी दुर्भावनाओं से अलिप्त होकर जीवन–यापन करे तो उसके जीवन में कोई समस्या ही नहीं आएगी। इस अवस्था को इन धर्मों ने 'मोक्ष', 'निर्वाण', एवं 'कैवल्य' आदि विभिन्न नामों से पुकारा। इस प्रकार, अहिंसा मोक्ष प्राप्ति के साधन के रूप में मान ली गई। यह आध्यात्मिक रूप से अहिंसा को व्यवहार में लाने का प्रयास है। परन्तु यहाँ जीवन में आनेवाली राजनीतिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक आदि व्यवहारिक समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए एक अस्त्र के रूप में अहिंसा को विकसित नहीं किया गया। अहिंसा का इस रूप में विकास आधुनिक काल में ही हो सका है। एक स्वतंत्र अर्थक्रियावादी सिद्धांत ;च्तंहउंजपब जेमवतलद्ध के साथ–साथ अहिंसा के सफल प्रयोग का श्रेय महात्मा गांधी, मार्टिन लूथर किंग, जेम्स बेवेल आदि को जाता है। महात्मा गांधी द्वारा प्रवर्तित अहिंसा के सिद्धांत ही प्रायः सभी आधुनिक अहिंसा समर्थकों को मान्य है।

सर्वप्रथम यह प्रश्न उठता है कि विवादों के निपटारे के लिए अहिंसा को ही साधन क्यों बनाया जाये ? इसके उत्तर में विचारकों का मत है कि विवादों में सामान्यतया दो या अधिक पक्षों में मतभेद अवश्य विद्यमान होता है और ऐसे में यदि किसी हिंसात्मक साधन का प्रयोग किया जाये तो समस्या का समाधान होने के बजाय हिंसा का अंश उस मुद्दे के साथ सदैव विद्यमान रहे जाती है। हिंसा ही हिंसा होती है। अतः अहिंसात्मक साधन का प्रयोग करना ही श्रेयस्कर है। पुनः हिंसा को सभी लोग साधन नहीं बना सकते। महिलाएं एवं बच्चे इसका प्रयोग नहीं कर सकते। अतएव समस्या के निपटारे में समाज की व्यापक सहभागिता नहीं हो पाएगी। जबकि अहिंसा का प्रयोग शारीरिक रूप से कमजोर व्यक्ति भी कर सकता है। अहिंसा को अस्त्र बनाने के लिए आन्तरिक एवं आध्यात्मिक बल की आवश्यकता होती है।

यहाँ यह समझना आवश्यक है कि अहिंसा का अभिप्राय केवल हिंसा न करना ही नहीं है। यदि इतने संकीर्ण अर्थ में अहिंसा को देखा जाए तो यह एक निष्क्रिय भाव प्रतीत होगा। परन्तु, वस्तुतः अहिंसा में कहीं भी निष्क्रियता का अंश नहीं होता। अहिंसा सक्रिय प्रतिरोध है। अहिंसा के लिए व्यक्ति को अपना आध्यात्मिक उत्थान करते हुए निरन्तर प्रतिरोध करना

पड़ता है। वह कभी भी निष्क्रिय नहीं रह सकता। उसे सदैव सचेत एवं सशक्त रहना पड़ता है। यह सशक्तता शारीरिक नहीं होती, अपितु आत्मिक बल ही सदैव अभिव्यक्त होता रहता है। साथ ही, अहिंसा कायरों का काम नहीं है, अपितु साहसियों का ही धर्म है। यहाँ आध्यात्मिक, मानसिक एवं भावनात्मक बल की आवश्यकता होती है। ऐसा इसलिए होता है क्योंकि प्रतिपक्षी को अपने पक्ष की न्यायसंगतता का अहसास करवाने के लिए निरन्तर प्रयास करते रहना पड़ता है। यह केवल इसी अर्थ में निष्क्रिय है कि कभी भी अपने प्रतिपक्षी का अहित नहीं किया जाता अन्यथा सभी तरह से सक्रियता रखनी होती है।

अहिंसा को साधन तभी बनाया जा सकता है जब हमने न्याय का पक्ष लिया हो। अर्थात् सत्य के प्रति अनुरक्त व्यक्ति ही अहिंसा के पथ का अनुगमन कर सकता है। यही कारण है कि महात्मा गाँधी ने सत्याग्रह को अहिंसा का सबसे बड़ा रूप माना। यहाँ यही मूल मान्यता विद्यमान होती है कि सभी व्यक्तियों में सत्य या ईश्वर का अंश अवश्यमेव विद्यमान होता है और यही मानव का वास्तविक या मूल रूप है। इस रूप की पुष्टि एवं वर्धन सदैव अहिंसात्मक साधनों से ही हो सकता है। अतएव सभी मनुष्य अपने मूल रूप में अनिवार्यतया अच्छे होते हैं। परन्तु उनके इस रूप में कुछ विकार उत्पन्न हो जाने पर ही वे बुरे काम करने लगते हैं। अतएव कोई भी मनुष्य कभी भी बुरा नहीं होता, वरन् उसके कार्य कभी–कभी बुरे हो सकते हैं। अतः हमें भी यही प्रयास करना चाहिए कि व्यक्ति के अंदर की इस बुराई को दूर कर दिया जाए। अतः हमे व्यक्ति से नहीं, अपितु उसकी बुराई से घृणा करनी चाहिए। कोई व्यक्ति हमारा प्रतिपक्षी अवश्य हो सकता है, परन्तु शत्रु कदापि नहीं।

अहिंसा को अस्त्र बनाने का अभिप्राय है कि प्रतिपक्षी के हृदय को परिवर्तित करके उसे सही मार्ग पर अग्रसर करना। इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि हम प्रतिपक्षी के लिए किसी भी प्रकार का घृणाभाव न रखें। प्रतिपक्षी के प्रति हमारे मन में वैसा ही सम्मान एवं प्रेम होना चाहिए, जैसा अपने प्रति होता है। तभी हम उसका हृदय परिवर्तित करने में सफल हो सकते हैं। वस्तुतः प्रतिपक्षी को इस बात का अहसास दिलाना होता है कि वह सत्य के पथ पर नहीं चल रहा है। इसके लिए हमें स्वयं को कष्ट देना होता है। उपवास, व्रत, अनशन, मौन आदि साधनों से हम सत्य का समर्थन करते हैं। हमारे इन कष्टों को देखकर प्रतिपक्षी भी आखिरकार इस आत्मिक बल से प्रभावित होता ही है और यही उसका हृदय परिवर्तन है। यहाँ कभी भी प्रतिपक्षी को पराजित करने का भाव नहीं आता। केवल अपनी आत्मा के प्रकाश से उसकी आत्मा को प्रकाशित करने का भाव ही रहता है और आत्मा को प्रकाशित करने की इस प्रक्रिया में हमें कष्ट भी सहन करना पड़ता है।

अहिंसा का अनुगमन करने के लिए संयम की बड़ी आवश्यकता होती है क्योंकि प्रतिपक्षी का हृदय परिवर्तन होने में लम्बा समय भी लग सकता है। साथ ही, आत्मविश्वास भी एक महत्वपूर्ण घटक है क्योंकि कम–से–कम हमें अपने सत्यप्रयोजन से कभी भी विचलित नहीं होना है और निरन्तर इसे मजबूत करते रहना होता है। इस प्रकार यहाँ सक्रियता सदैव बनी रहती है। एक बात और स्पष्ट है कि इतने आत्मिक बल वाला व्यक्ति कभी भी अन्तर्द्वन्द्व में नहीं पड़ता। आज आधुनिक जीवन में मनुष्य जिन विविध प्रकार की मानसिक या मनोवैज्ञानिक समस्याओं से जूझता हुआ दीख पड़ता है, उनका भी समाधान अहिंसा का अनुमान करने से हो जाता है।

कभी–कभी यह आक्षेप किया जाता है कि अहिंसा का सिद्धांत भीरुता का सिद्धांत है और यह मनुष्य को कायर बनाता है। परन्तु, यह ध्यातव्य है कि अहिंसा के लिए अहिंसा का भाव होना आवश्यक है। यदि ध्यान में रखकर कायिक हिंसा की भी जाती है तो वह मान्य है। उदाहरण के लिए यदि कोई पशु किसी असाध्य बीमारी से पीड़ित होकर असह्य कष्ट उठा रहा है तो उसके जीवन को समाप्त करने के लिए उसे जहर देना हिंसा नहीं है। इसी प्रकार यदि कोई व्यक्ति अहिंसा का अनुगमन केवल इसलिए कर रहा है क्योंकि वह भीरू है, तो इससे श्रेष्ठ है कि वह हिंसा करे। अहिंसा कभी भी यह नहीं सिखाती कि हम अन्याय सहन करते रहें, अपितु यह हमेशा प्रतिरोध की बात करती है और वह भी सक्रिय प्रतिरोध। अन्याय को सहन करना अपराध है। हमें यह विश्वास रखना पड़ता है कि ईश्वर है और वह न्याय करता है।

अतएव अहिंसा को अन्याय से लड़ने के लिए एक अस्त्र बनाना चुनौतीपूर्ण कार्य है। महात्मा गांधी ने भी भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में इसका प्रयोग करने के लिए अपने पूरे जीवन एवं पूरे देश को ही प्रयोगशाला बनाया था। भारत को स्वतंत्रता दिलाने के लिए गांधीजी ने अहिंसात्मक आंदोलन को एक जन आंदोलन के रूप में विकसित किया। बीसवीं शताब्दी के आरंभ में भारत का आम आदमी राजनीतिक रूप से अजागरुक, गरीब, निरक्षर एवं अशाविहीन मनुष्य था और किसी भी प्रकार के आंदोलन में उसकी सक्रिय सहभागिता प्रश्नचिह्न के दायरे में थी। ऐसे भारतीय जनमानस को केवल उसके आत्मिक बल के आधार पर ही सहभागिता करने के लिए आंदोलन किया जा सकता था और महात्मा गांधी ने यही किया। असहयोग आंदोलन में आंदोलनकर्त्ताओं को केवल सरकार से असहयोग करते हुए अपना उत्थान करते रहना था। यह ऐसा कार्यक्रम था जिसके लिए गांधीजी ने असहयोगात्मक कार्यक्रम के साथ एक रचनात्मक कार्यक्रम भी लोगों के सामने रखा और व्यापक पैमाने पर एक जन आंदोलन खड़ा कर दिया। आगे चलकर सविनय अवज्ञा आंदोलन में अहिंसा के आत्मिक बल को और भी अधिक केंद्रीय महत्त्व प्रदान करते हुए सरकार की गलत नीतियों की शांतिपूर्ण अवज्ञा को ही मुख्य कार्यक्रम बनाया गया अैर इसमें ब्रिटिश सरकार के ऊपर पड़नेवाले व्यापक दबाब से ही इसकी सफलता का अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है। भारत छोड़ो आंदोलन में गांधीजी ने 'करो या मरो' का नारा देकर यह स्पष्ट कर दिया कि अन्याय को सहन करना मनुष्य द्वारा अपनी आत्मा को मारने के तुल्य है, इसलिए सक्रिय प्रतिरोध के आंदोलन को अपने प्रबलतम रूप में चलाने की आवश्यकता है। साथ ही गांधीजी के मौनव्रत एवं उपवासों ने भी कई बार ब्रिटिश सरकार को अपनी नीतियां बदलने पर विवश किया। ऐसा इसलिए क्योंकि गांधीजी को ही अपने इन आंदोलन के अस्त्रों का रूप दे दिया था, परंतु यह जनसमर्थन भी रातोंरत उत्पन्न नहीं हुआ था वरन् स्वयं गांधीजी ने अपने समर्थकों के साथ मिलकर लोगों में अहिंसा के प्रति प्रबल विश्वास का भाव उत्पन्न करने के लिए अनवरत प्रयास किया था।

भारत द्वारा ब्रिटिश अधीनता से मुक्ति पाना अहिंसा के सफल प्रयोग की कहानी है। अहिंसात्मक आंदोलन द्वारा एक बड़े राजनीतिक विवाद का समाधान ढूंढ़ निकाला गया। परन्तु आंधीजी का यह आंदोलन केवल राजनीतिक ही नहीं, वरन् सामाजिक आंदोलन भी था। उन्होंने नारी उत्थान, हरिजनोत्थान, मदिरा–निषेध आदि कई सामाजिक महत्व के बड़े कार्यक्रमों पर बहुत जोर दिया और इन्हें सफल भी बनाया। परन्तु यह कार्यक्रम ऐसे हैं कि इनका कोई एक निश्चित लक्ष्य–बिन्दु नहीं है और यह भी गतिशील समाज में एक प्रक्रिया

के रूप में शामिल है। साथ ही अहिंसात्मक आंदोलन केवल सिद्धांत के रूप में ही प्रसृत नहीं हो सकता, अपितु इस व्यवहारिक कार्यक्रम की अपेक्षा होती है, यह बात भी सर्वथा स्पष्ट है।

केवल भारत ही नहीं, बल्कि वैश्विक स्तर पर भी हमने यह देखा है कि अहिंसात्मक समाधान समस्याओं को मूलसहित उखाड़ने में रूचि रखते हैं। विश्व ने बीसवीं सदी में ही दो विश्वयुद्धों की त्रासदी झेली है, परन्तु इस हिंसात्मक कदम से कोई समाधान नहीं निकला और न ही तो इसका कोई अंत ही दीखता है। ऐसे कठिन समय में विभिन्न राष्ट्रों की यह आस्था और भी दृढ़ हो गई कि देशों के बीच आपसी मतभेद का समाधान शांतिपूर्ण विचार–विमर्श एवं संधियों व घोषणापत्रों के परस्पर सहभागितापूर्ण पालन में निहित है। इसी के परिणामस्वरूप संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघ का उद्भव हुआ और विश्वयुद्धों के युग का भी अंत हो गया। यह कहा जा सकता है कि आज युद्ध अस्त्र–शस्त्रों से भले ही न हो रहे हों, परन्तु छद्म युद्धों का तीखापन और भी बढ़ गया है और राष्ट्रों के बीच मनमुटाव कम नहीं है। परन्तु हमें यह नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि इन विवादों के समाधान के कई सफल प्रयास भी हो चुके हैं। आज विभिन्न राष्ट्र भिन्न–भिन्न मंचों पर बैठक करते हैं, अपने मत को प्रस्तुत करते हैं और अपने पक्ष के पोषण के लिए गुटबंदी भी करते हैं। यह तो अपनी बातों को सक्रिय ढंग से प्रतिपक्षी के समक्ष रखने का ही एक व्यावहारिक रूप है। हम समस्याओं को वार्ता के माध्यम से सुलझाने का प्रयास करते हैं जिससे सभी विवादित पक्षों को अपनी बात रखने का मौका मिलता है। यूनेस्को, यूनीसेफ, फाओ, आई.एल.ओ. आदि संयुक्त राष्ट्र के ही अनुषंगी संगठनों ने मानव–कल्याण के कई महत्वपूर्ण कार्य किये हैं और अहिंसा के सिद्धांतों को सबल बनाया है। भूटान में प्रजातांत्रिक सरकार की स्थापना, बर्मा में आंग–सान–सूकी का आंदोलन और तिब्बत आंदोलन के परिप्रेक्ष्य में दलाईलामा के विचारों ने आज भी अहिंसा की विश्वव्यापी प्रासंगिकता को निरंतर सिद्ध किया है। यही कारण है कि अभी हाल में ही गांधीजी के जन्मदिन 2 अक्टूबर को संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा 'अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अहिंसा दिवस' घोषित किया जाना एक प्रकार से अहिंसा के सिद्धांतों की वैश्विक स्तर पर मान्यता को ही इंगित करता है।

प्रश्न यह उठता है कि वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में समस्याओं एवं विवादों के समाधान में अहिंसा की क्या भूमिका हो सकती है? यद्यपि गांधीजी ने हरिजनोत्थान के लिए बहुत प्रयास किये, परन्तु आज भी हमारे समाज में जातिगत भेद प्रबल रूप में दीख पड़ता है। इसी प्रकार साम्प्रदायिकता, क्षेत्रवाद, आतंकवाद, नक्सलवाद आदि विभिन्न समस्याएं भी जटिल रूप में विद्यमान है। इन समस्याओं के वर्तमान रूप को देखते हुए इनके समाधान के लिए अहिंसा को भी परिष्कृत रूप में प्रयोग करने की आवश्यकता है।

आधुनिक समय में सभी विवाद एवं समस्याएं भी सापेक्ष है, एक–दूसरे से परस्पर किसी न किसी रूप में सम्बद्ध है। अतः अहिंसा को भी जीवन में इस तरह से शामिल करने की आवश्यकता है कि यह जीवन के सभी पक्षों को एकसाथ स्पर्श एवं प्रभावित कर सके। आज अहिंसात्मक आंदोलन का अभिप्राय यह लिया जा सकता है कि नैतिक रूप से प्रत्येक मनुष्य जहां 'वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्' के सिद्धांत में पूर्ण आस्था रखते हुए व्यवहार करे; वहीं राजनैतिक रूप से लोकतांत्रिक परम्परा एवं मूल्यों का पूर्णतया अनुपालन करे। आर्थिक जीवन में उदारीकरण एवं वैश्वीकरण के सिद्धांतों को चरितार्थ करते हुए 'विश्वग्राम' की संकल्पना को मूर्त रूप देने की दिशा में प्रयत्न करता रहे।

आर्थिक क्षेत्र में अहिंसा का अभिप्राय यह भी है कि सभी को अवसर की समानता होनी चाहिए और कोई भी व्यक्ति अन्य के अधिकारों का अतिक्रमण न करे। साथ ही श्रम की गरिमा भी स्थापित की जानी चाहिए। घरेलू एवं हथकरघा उद्योग को बढ़ावा देकर प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को स्वावलम्बी बनाना चाहिए। साथ ही स्थानीय स्तर के उत्पादों में रूचि बढ़ाकर प्रतिस्पर्द्धा का काम किया जा सकता है। यह ऐसी स्थिति की संकल्पना है जब प्रत्येक ग्राम स्वयं में स्वावलम्बी होगा और आर्थिक प्रतिस्पर्द्धा के कारण विवादों का जन्म नहीं होगा। नैतिक रूप से ट्रस्टिशिप के सिद्धांत का व्यावहारिक प्रयोग भी बहुत कारगर सिद्ध हो सकता है। आचार्य विनावाभावे ने ट्रस्टिशिप के सिद्धांत का व्यापक प्रचार–प्रसार करके भूदान आंदोलन एवं ग्रामदान आंदोलन चलाया था। यह स्वात्रंत्योत्तर भारत में विद्यमान भूमि–संबंधी विवादों के समाधान की दिशा में एक बड़ा कदम था। हम आज देख सकते हैं कि आज हमारे समक्ष नक्सलवाद एक बड़े दानव के रूप में खड़ा है जो कि मूलतः एक आर्थिक, सामाजिक, राजनीतिक समस्या है। आज प्रशासनिक मकहमे में भी यह बात महसूस की जाने लगी है कि नक्सलवाद का समाधान हिंसा या सैन्य बल का प्रयोग करके कदापि नहीं किया जा सकता है। भूमि समस्या का समाधान भी अहिंसात्मक उपायों से ही होना चाहिए। साथ ही वार्ता एक कारगर तरीका हो सकता है, लेकिन उससे पहले सभी को अवसर की समानता सुनिश्चित करनी होगी। सामाजिक समानता भी अपेक्षित है।

समाज में व्याप्त अनेक कुरीतियों का भी समूल उन्मूलन अहिंसात्मक उपायों से ही संभव है। दहेज–प्रथा, भ्रूण–हत्या, बाल–विवाह, जाति–प्रथा, साम्प्रदायिकता आदि का समाधान स्वयंमेव हो जाएगा जब प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अन्य के प्रति प्रेम के भाव से प्रेरित होकर अपने कार्य करेगा।

अतएव यद्यपि आज सर्वत्र अनाचार एवं अव्यवस्था का भी कभी–कभी साक्षात्कार भले ही होता रहता है, परन्तु इसका यह आशय कदापि नहीं है कि अहिंसात्मक मूल्यों एवं उपायों ने अपनी प्रासंगिकता खो दी है। वस्तुतः ऐसी परिस्थिति में तो अहिंसा का महत्व एवं प्रासंगिकता और भी बढ़ जाती है। बुराई पर अच्छाई की जीत सदैव होती है। अतः जब भी मानव सभ्यता के विकास क दौरान समस्याएं बड़ी होती रहेंगी, तब–तब मानव अपने आत्मिक बल का अहिंसा के रूप में प्रयोग करके उनका समाधान भी करता रहेगा। अहिंसा का मार्ग ही श्रेयस्कर एवं अनुकरणीय है–

"अहिंसा परमो धर्मः।"

सामाजिक पदानुक्रम का पैमाना अहिंसा हो न कि पैसा ताकत या कोई अन्य चीज़

मनोज कुमार सिंह

विवाद सामाजिक जीवन का एक अंग है। वर्तमान में इसने एक खतरनाक रूप धारण कर लिया है। जब विभिन्न समुदायों में वयैक्तिक या सामुदायिक स्तर पर आवश्यकताओं, मूल्यों व हितों में अंतर्विरोध उत्पन्न हो जाता है तो विवाद की स्थिति उत्पन्न हो जाती है। यदि समय रहते विवादों को सुलझाया नहीं जाता तो स्थिति नियंत्रण से बाहर जा सकती है, यहाँ तक कि मानव अस्मिता भी संकट में पड़ जाती है।

विवाद कई तरह के होते हैं तथा उन्हीं के अनुरूप विवादों का समाधान भी किया जाता है। विवादों को खत्म करने के लिए समायोजन, विवादित चीजों व तथ्यों की उपेक्षा, समझौता, युद्ध, हिंसा आदि साधन उपनाये जाते हैं। परन्तु हम पाते हैं कि ये सभी अतिम रूप से विवाद को खत्म करने में असफल रहते रहे हैं। विवाद के समाधान उनके कारणों को स्पष्ट रूप से जानकर ही किये जा सकते हैं। ये मूलतः मानव स्वभाव की क्रियाएं हैं जो मानवों के मध्य विवादों को जन्म देती है। अहिंसात्मक साधनों के माध्यम से ही मानव स्वभाव में परिवर्तन संभव है।

विवाद दो तरह के होते हैं। एक व्यक्ति का आंतरिक विवाद है जो मूल्यों के टकराहट के कारण उत्पन्न होता है। दूसरा बाह्य विवाद होता है जो आवश्यकताओं, मूल्यों, संस्कृतियों, हितों में वास्तविक टकराव या टकराव की संभावना के कारण उत्पन्न होता है। विवाद का स्वरूप सामाजिक असहमति, हितों के टकराव यहाँ तक कि राजनीतिक संदर्भ में युद्ध तक पहुँच जाता है।

साम्प्रदायिक, वैयक्तिक, आर्थिक, राष्ट्रीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय, राजनैतिक आदि अनेक विवाद वर्तमान में कायम है।

विवादों के कई कारण हैं। संवादहीनता व्यक्तित्त्वों में टकराहट, मूल्यों में भिन्नता, लक्ष्यों की भिन्नता, पद्धतियाँ अलग–अलग होना, अपने हितों या अपने समुदाय के हितों को दूसरे के या दूसरे समुदाय के हितों का विरोधी समझना, भय, असुरक्षा की भावना, अस्मिता का संकट आदि कुछ प्रमुख कारण हैं जो विवादों को जन्म देते हैं। इनकी परिणति दंगों, आतंकवाद, हत्या, हथियारों की होड़, गुटबंदी आदि में होती है।

विवादों का स्थायी समाधान उनके कारणों के खात्मे में निहित है। कोई भी समाधान जिसमें हिंसा शामिल हो, विवादों के इन कारणों को खत्म नहीं कर सकता। केवल अहिंसा ही इन कारणों को खत्म कर सकती है क्योंकि इसमें प्रेम, संवाद, आत्मत्याग, हृदय परिवर्तन और जरूरत पड़ने पर असहयोग, सविनय अवज्ञा, अहिंसक निष्क्रिय प्रतिरोध शामिल होता है जो उपर्युक्त कारणों को खत्म कर सकता है। अहिंसा एक संस्कृत शब्द है जिसका अर्थ है– कोई नुकसान न पहुँचाना। यह प्राचीन भारत में उपजे सभी प्रमुख धर्मों का एक महत्वपूर्ण लक्षण है। वास्तव में अहिंसा चरित्र का एक नियम है जिसके तहत किसी भी प्राणी को मारने अथवा चोट पहुँचाने की मनाही होती है। सभी प्रकार की हिंसा नकारात्मक 'कार्मिक' प्रक्रमों का परिणाम होती है।

हिंसा एक प्राकृतिक प्रक्रिया है। अतः अहिंसा एक शाश्वत मूल्य न होकर एक उद्भूत मूल्य है। हालांकि अहिंसा के सिद्धांत के उद्भव बिन्दु अज्ञात हैं किंतु इसके उद्धरण ऋग्वेद में मिलते हैं। 'सभी जीवों पर दया करना' प्राचीनतम् भारतीय साहित्य जगत में सर्वत्र वर्णित है। ऐतिहासिक स्रोतों में अहिंसा का एक सिद्धांत के रूप में क्रियान्वयन हमें छठी शताब्दी ई0पू0 के धर्मों अर्थात बौद्ध एवं जैन धर्म में दिखाई देता है। आरंभ में अहिंसा एक नियम था किन्तु बाद में अहिंसा को मानव और फिर समस्त जीवों के प्रति अहिंसा से जोड़ दिया गया। अहिंसा के सिद्धांत की चरम परिणति जैनों के व्यवहार में मिलती है जो मुँह पर कपड़ा बाँधकर बातचीत करते हैं ताकि मुँह खोलने पर कोई सूक्ष्म प्राणी भी उनके द्वारा चोटग्रस्त या मृत न हो। बाद में महाभारत व मनुस्मृति में अहिंसा को सत्कर्मों में रखा गया। धीरे धीरे अहिंसा हिन्दू धर्म का एक अभिन्न अंग बनती गई। चाहे प्राचीन भारत के महान संत रहे हों या फिर मध्यकाल के शंकर, रामानुज, कबीर, तुलसी सभी ने अहिंसा पर पूरा जोर दिया। यहाँ तक कि 19वीं सदी के स्वामी विवेकानंद, महर्षि शिवानंद, स्वामी दयानंद आदि सभी ने अहिंसा की महत्ता पर जोर दिया। विवेकानंद ने इसी प्रेरणा वश 'वैश्विक भ्रातृत्व' की अवधारणा रखी।

भारतीय परंपरा में अहिंसा एक तरह चारित्रक 'कोड' रहा है। छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् में अहिंसा को सभी प्राणियों के संदर्भ में लिया गया है (सर्वभूतैः) और कहा गया है कि अहिंसा का पालन करने वाला जन्म–मरण चक्र से मुक्ति पा जाता है। यह अहिंसा को एक आवश्यक सद्गुण मानता है।

हालांकि अहिंसा अपने स्वरूप में मूलतः एक सकारात्मक अवधारणा है किन्तु अहिंसा व्यक्ति को निष्क्रिय होने की शिक्षा कतई नहीं देती। इसका सबसे सटीक उदाहरण हमें महाभारत में मिलता है जहाँ कृष्ण स्वयं ही अर्जुन को युद्ध में जाने के लिए प्रेरित करते हैं। लेकिन तभी जब सारे उपाय विफल हो जाते हैं।

अहिंसा जीवन और व्यक्ति के प्रति सम्मान है। अहिंसा को अनाक्रामकता न कहकर जीवन का एक ऐसा ढंग कहना उचित होगा जिसमें मनुष्य अपनी तरह अन्य मनुष्यों और प्रकृति के साथ अपने संबंध को सम्मानजनक तरीके से समझने का प्रयास करता है।

सिद्धांतों और व्यवहार के आधार पर अहिंसा को दो प्रकार से वर्गीकृत कर सकते हैं–
अ) धार्मिक अहिंसा जिसके उदाहरण हैं– बौद्ध, जैन, ईसाई आदि धर्मों में वर्णित अहिंसा। यहाँ धर्म की यह माँग है कि हम अहिंसक हों।
ब) धर्म–निरपेक्ष अहिंसा। इसमें सभी संभव परिस्थितियों में मानव जीवन का सम्मान किया जाता है। यह अहिंसा एक जीवन पद्धति है।

वर्तमान समय में हमें धर्म निरपेक्ष अहिंसा के सिद्धांत पर ज्यादा जोर देने की जरूरत है। इसका यह मतलब नहीं कि धार्मिक अहिंसा में कोई खोट है। बल्कि इसका कारण यह कि धर्म के सिद्धांतों को सही–सही समझने में लोगों से कई बार गलतियाँ हो जाती है तथा साम्प्रदायिक तनाव उत्पन्न होने लगते हैं। आज जबकि मानववाद के प्रसार की सबसे ज्यादा जरूरत है, हमें धर्मनिरपेक्ष सिद्धांतों का सहारा लेने की जरूरत है। धार्मिकता को केवल व्यक्ति विशेष तक सीमित कर देना चाहिए। धर्म एक व्यक्तिगत स्तर का मामला होना

चाहिए। अतः हमें केवल धर्मनिरपेक्ष सिद्धांतों को वैश्विक स्तर पर व्यवहार के धरातल पर लाने की कोशिश करनी चाहिए। धर्मनिरपेक्षता ही वैश्विक स्वरूप धारण कर सकती है क्योंकि धर्म तो विश्व के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अलग–अलग हैं।

अतः धर्मनिरपेक्ष अहिंसा के द्वारा ही वैश्विक विवादों को सुलझाया जाना चाहिए। वास्तव में इसी के माध्यम से ही यह संभव भी है। इस अहिंसा की जड़ों की तलाश हम महान व्यक्तियों के जीवन में कर सकते हैं जिन्होंने अपने जीवन में अहिंसा के सिद्धांत को अपनाया तथा समस्त जगत के समक्ष एक स्पष्ट मार्ग रखा जिसका वह पालन कर सके एवं अपने सह मानवों के साथ शांतिपूर्ण एवं सुखपूर्वक जीवन बिता सके। महात्मा गाँध, मार्टिन लूथर किंग, मदर टेरेसा, स्वामी विवेकानंद, नेल्सन मंडेला आदि वे पथ–प्रदर्शक हैं जिनके दृष्टिकोण से हमें अहिंसा को देखना चाहिए।

अहिंसा के सिद्धांत एवं व्यवहारिक स्तर पर उसके क्रियान्चयन के कुछ लक्षण हैं जो निम्नलिखित हैं–

1. अहिंसा साहसी लोगों के जीवन का एक ढंग है। यह मानसिक और आध्यात्मिक दोनों तरह से आक्रामक है।

2. यह हमेशा विपक्षी को हमारे कारण के औचित्य को समझाने का प्रयास करती है। यह केवल विपक्षी के प्रति अनाक्रामकता के संदर्भ में ही निष्क्रिय है। यह हृदय परिवर्तन में विश्वास करती है। अहिंसा का उद्देश्य सौहार्दपूर्ण मानव समुदाय की रचना करना है। यहाँ बदले की भावना उनुपस्थित होती है।

3. अहिंसा का तीसरा सिद्धांत अन्याय को पराजित करने की बात करता है न कि व्यक्ति को। इसका मानना है कि बुरा कर्म करने वाला भी एक पीड़ित है और वह एक बुरा मानव नहीं है। हमें उसके अंदर की बुराई को मारना है।

4. अहिंसा का एक महत्वपूर्ण अंग आत्मनिग्रह है। यह गाँधीजी का सत्याग्रह भी है। आत्मकष्ट एक ऐसा हथियार है जो शत्रु को तब भी बदल सकता है जब तर्क असफल हो जाते हैं। अहिंसक व्यक्ति स्वेच्छा से अपने कर्मों के फल को स्वीकार करता है। बार–बार असफल होने पर भी वह अपना प्रयास जारी रखता है।

5. अहिंसा का पाँचवा सिद्धांत घृणा की जगह प्रेम का चुनाव करता है। इसका मानना है कि सभी जीव आपस में अन्तर्सबंधित हैं। प्रेम का सिद्धांत अहिंसा को एक नकारात्मक अवधारणा से हटाकर सकारात्मक स्वरूप प्रदान करता है। इस संदर्भ में गाँधी जी का योगदान अमूल्य है। उन्होंने ही अहिंसा को सकारात्मक बनाया है। सबसे प्रेम भाव रखकर ही समस्त समस्याओं का समाधान पाया जा सकता है।

6. अहिंसा का क्रियान्चयन दो स्तरों पर होता है– अ) व्यक्तिगत स्तर ब) सामूहिक स्तर। व्यक्तिगत स्तर पर प्रेम, सत्य, निवेदन, तर्क, निडरता एवं व्यक्ति त्याग के माध्यम से इसका क्रियान्चयन होता है। सामूहिक स्तर पर सविनय अवज्ञा, असहयोग, वार्त्तालाप, भूख हड़ताल, सामूहिक हस्ताक्षर अभियान, गाँधीगिरी आदि अहिंसक साधन है। साथ ही व्यक्तिगत स्तर की अहिंसा के साधन भी इसमें शामिल होते रहते हैं।

7. अहिंसक व्यक्ति यह दृढ़ विश्वास के साथ मानता है कि ब्रह्मांड न्याय के साथ है तथा अंतिम रूप से न्याय ही विजयी होता है।

अहिंसा का सिद्धांत देखने में केवल कोरा आदर्शवाद लगता है लेकिन अगर हम अहिंसक साधनों द्वारा प्राप्त की गई उपलब्धियों को देखें तो पाएंगे कि हिंसक उपलब्धियाँ उसके सामने नगण्य हैं। भारत की स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति में गाँधी का योगदान, अमेरिका में अश्वेतों के अधिकारों हेतु मार्टिन लूथर किंग के प्रयास, दक्षिण में अस्पृश्यता खत्म करने में नेल्सन मंडेला की भूमिका, विश्व को मानव सेवा का पाठ पढ़ाने वाली मदर टेरेसा, विशाल मगध साम्राज्य को अहिंसा के सिद्धांत पर मजबूती प्रदान करने वाले सम्राट अशोक के शिलालेख आदि ऐसे अनेक उदाहरण हैं जिसका दूसरा कोई सानी नहीं मिलता।

वर्तमान संदर्भ में देखने पर ऐसा लगता है कि अहिंसा के आधार पर समस्याओं का समाधान असंभव है। इसके लिए ज़ोरदार तर्क भी दिये जाते हैं। कहा जाता है कि अहिंसा का सिद्धांत तभी सफल हो सकता है जब 'सामने वाला' तो कोई हो ? वे आतंकवादी जो चुपके से आते हैं और नरसंहार करके फरार हो जाते हैं। वे बात ही नहीं करना चाहते तो फिर उन्हें आप अपनी बात कैसे समझाएगें ? जब समस्त विश्व हिंसक व विध्वंसक नाभिकीय हथियारों से लैस हो रहा हो तो अपनी सुरक्षा व अस्मिता को दांव पर लगाकर ही आप अहिंसा का खतरा मोल ले सकते हैं। हिंसक होना अगर नहीं तो हिंसक ताकत होना आज की जरूरत बन चुकी है। जो बिना किसी विचारधारा के दूसरों की जान लेना अपना पेशा बना चुके हैं। उनका आप किस प्रकार हृदय परिवर्तन करेंगे ? जब हर आदमी, हर समाज, हर देश आर्थिक, राजनीतिक व रणनीतिक स्वार्थों को वरीयता दे रहा है तो आपका अहिंसा का नारा नक्कारखाने में तूती की आवाज से ज्यादा कुछ नहीं होगा। ताकत चाहे वह युद्ध की हो, धन की हो या फिर रणनीतिक, आज की जरूरत है।

वास्तव में ये सारे सवाल हमारी *सोशल कन्डीशनिंग* के परिणाम हैं। हमारा सामाजिक समायोजन ऐसा हुआ ही नहीं कि हम यह सोच पायें कि हिंसा के बिना विवादों का समाधान संभव है। हमें यह ध्यान रखना चाहिए कि अहिंसा एक स्वाभाविक प्रक्रिया है। अगर हम हिंसा के बदले हिंसा अपनायेंगे तो हिंसा की एक अटूट श्रृंखला कायम हो जाएगा। हिंसा का उद्दीपन हिंसा को जन्म देता है। इस श्रृंखला को तोड़ने की एकमात्र रास्ता अहिंसा ही है। परिवार के संस्कारों में अहिंसा को प्रमुखता दी जाय तो लोग आतंकवाद की तरफ प्रेरित होने के बजाय लोकतांत्रिक तरीका अपनायेंगे। हिंसा भय का परिणाम होती है। भय को दूर करने के लिए सामाजिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक एवं राजनीतिक सुरक्षा को सुनिश्चित किया जाय।

ऐसे में जबकि मानव विनाश के हथियार सर्वत्र मौजूद हैं, अहिंसा का सिद्धांत सभी राष्ट्रों की सुरक्षा व विदेश नीति का मूलमंत्र होना चाहिए वरना मानव अस्मिता कभी भी खत्म हो सकती है। आप कितने ही ताकतवार क्यों न हो, हिंसक माहौल में सुरक्षित नहीं रह सकते।

स्वार्थपरता का निदान भी अहिंसा ही है। जब लोग एक दूसरे से प्रेम करने लगेंगे तो स्वार्थ के लिए कोई जगह नहीं बचेगी। कोई भी विवाद या तो स्वार्थ के कारण से उठता है या फिर भय से। प्रेम दोनों का ही समाधान करता है।

आज जरूरत है कि हमारी सोशल कन्डीशनिंग अहिंसा के सिद्धांत के अनुरूप हो। परिवार, विद्यालय, सामाजिक संस्थायें, बौद्धिक वर्ग व ऐसी सभी संस्थायें जिनके माध्यम से सामाजिक समायोजन की प्रक्रिया का क्रियान्वयन होता है। उन्हें अहिंसा के सिद्धांत को आगे बढ़ाना होगा। सामाजिक पदानुक्रम का पैमाना अहिंसा हो न कि पैसा, ताकत या अन्य कोई चीज। सबसे ज्यादा अहिंसक व्यक्ति समाज में सबसे ज्यादा ऊपर हो और उसके बाद उससे कम और फिर एक नया सामाजिक पदानुक्रम बने। यह बात आदर्शवादी लग सकती है लेकिन आज हमें इस दिशा में पहल करने की जरूरत है। अशोक के युग में, गाँधी के समय में, अफ्रीका में, श्वेतों के बीच किसने यह सोचा था कि उनके प्रयास सफल होंगे। किन्तु वे सफल हुए। समस्याओं का, विवादों का स्थायी समाधान अहिंसा में ही संभव है न कि बदले की भावना या हिंसा में। ज़िम्बाब्वे, पाकिस्तान, इराक, सूडान आदि अनेक ऐसे उदाहरण हैं जहाँ विवादों को सुलझाने में हिंसा को स्थान दिया गया है और उनकी स्थिति आज क्या है इसका वर्णन करने की जरूरत नहीं है।

अतः आज जरूरत है कि हम समाज में अहिंसा के मूल्यों को बढ़ावा दें। हमे सकारात्मक सोच रखने की जरूरत है तथा उन उदाहरणों से प्रेरणा लेने की जरूरत है जिन्होंने इस मार्ग पर चलकर सफलता पायी है। आज के इस युग में जबकि प्रेस, पत्रिकायें, इंटरनेट, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया और सबसे बढ़कर वैश्वीकरण पूरे विश्व को एक बनाने में जुटे हैं, हमारे लिए किसी भी विषय में वैश्विक मतैक्य कायम करना काफी सुविधाजनक हो गया है, अगर हम अपने युग की तुलना अशोक, गाँधी, किंग, मंडेला आदि के युग साधनों से करें। कौन जानता है कि कल अहिंसा भी एक अनिवार्य जीवन शैली बन जाये। मंजिल तक तभी पहुँच सकते हैं जब पहला कदम बढ़ायेंगे। अंत में—

> "कौन कहता है कि आसमां में सुराग नहीं होता,
> एक पत्थर तो जरा तबियत से उछालो यारो।।"

सोच को बदलिए सितारे बदल जाएँगे

राज कुमार यादव

भारतीय राष्ट्र राज्य और भारतीयों के लिए आज साम्प्रदायिकता से विकट और कोई समस्या नहीं है। साम्प्रदायिकता हमारी उस एकजुटता और एकता को खंडित करने की हालत में आती जा रही है जो हमने बहुत धीरज और मेहनत से अर्जित की है। इसके उदाहरण हम हाल में गुजरात, मुम्बई, बंगलौर, जबलपुर, भागलपुर, मेरठ मुरादाबाद, पंजाब और दिल्ली में देखते रहे हैं।

सीधे–सीधे कहें तो साम्प्रदायिकता का आधार ही यह धारणा है कि भारतीय समाज कई ऐसे सम्प्रदायों में बँटा हुआ है जिनके हित न सिर्फ अलग है बल्कि एक–दूसरे के विरोधी भी हैं। इसके तहत एक सम्प्रदाय विशेष के लोग अपने सम्प्रदाय के हितों को साझा बताते हैं। ऐसे में अनेक सम्प्रदायों से युक्त समाज में साम्प्रदायिक हितों का प्रतिनिधित्व करने वाली अनेक धाराएं उभर कर आती है। ये सब एक दूसरे को उत्तेजित करती है। ऐसा इसलिए है कि साधन सीमित है। व इन्हीं साधनों पर ये सभी लोग अपना नियंत्रण चाहते हैं इस नियंत्रण के लिए एक–दूसरे में आपाधापी होती है जिससे प्रतिस्पर्द्धा बढ़ती है। प्रतिस्पर्द्धा आक्रामक चरण में पहुँचने पर एक वर्ग का अस्तित्व दूसरे वर्ग के विरुद्ध हो जाता है। अंत में जाकर अस्तित्व की लड़ाई उभरती है व इस तरह से साम्प्रदायिकता आक्रामक होती चली जाती है।

साम्प्रदायिकता के विकास क्रम को देखें तो 1920 तक साम्प्रदायिकता का पहला चरण दिखाई पड़ता है, जिसमें मुस्लिम लीग का गठन होता है, जो अपनी मांगों को साम्प्रदायिक रंग देकर सामने रखती है। इसी चरण में 'साम्प्रदायिक प्रतिनिधित्व' का सिद्धांत उभर कर सामने आता है।

इसके बाद "साम्प्रदायिकता क्या है" की अगली कड़ी सामने आती है। साम्प्रदायिकता पूरे समुदाय के उन हितों के एक समान होने का दावा करती है, जो कभी एक है ही नहीं। सम्प्रदाय विशेष किसी भी धर्म भाषा जाति का हो सकता है लेकिन उनका सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक हित एक समान हो ही नहीं सकता। तब भी साम्प्रदायिकता कहती है कि हम एक धर्म को मनने वाले हैं और हमारा आर्थिक हित एक हैं। इस कारण साम्प्रदायिकता उन हितों के एक होने का दावा करती है जो एक है ही नहीं। अतः यह बेबुनियाद है। यह आस्था से जुड़ा मुद्दा है और अगर इसे बुद्धि के सामानान्तर खड़ा कर दिया जाए तो सारे तर्क ही खंडित हो जाएंगे। इस तरह साम्प्रदायिकता आस्था की पोषक व बुद्धि की विरोधी है। इस तरह देखा जाए तो यह बुद्धि का रास्ता बंद कर देती है।

साम्प्रदायिकता लोकतंत्र की विरोधी है क्योंकि साम्प्रदायिकता व्यक्ति को बौद्धिक स्तर पर स्वतंत्र नहीं छोड़ती है जिसके कारण व्यक्ति लोकतांत्रिक नहीं हो सकता और इस आधार पर वह लोकतंत्र के विरुद्ध है। भारतीय इतिहास में जमींदारों व पूँजीपतियों के हितों का पोषण तभी संभव था जब सरकार के साथ सहयोग हो लेकिन 1909 के बाद सत्ता निकलकर जनता के हाथ में आई। 1920 तक आते–आते यह बात रह गई कि संवैधानिक

स्तर पर ही सुधार किया जा सकता है; जनता के सहयोग से नहीं। 1930 तक भारत का राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन सशक्त हो गया और समाजवाद की धारा मजबूत हुई, जो कृषकों व श्रमिकों के सुधार की बात करती है। पूँजीपतियों के पास विकल्प था कि वह सरकार के साथ हो जाए या अलग राजनीतिक संगठन बना लें। लेकिन इस धारा व प्रक्रिया में मुस्लिम पूँजीपति शामिल नहीं थे। और इसने साम्प्रदायिकता के चरण को आगे बढ़ाया। और साम्प्रदायिकता तब और उन्नत होती गई जब–जब लोकतंत्र की धारा मजबूत होती गई।

साम्प्रदायिकता कहती है कि एक विशेष धर्म मानने वालों का हित एक है और अन्य धर्मावलम्बियों का हित उससे भिन्न है। अतः साम्प्रदायिकता धर्म को संकुचित अर्थों में विश्लेषित करती है। क्योंकि धर्म का विषय मानव है, और यह व्यक्तियों के बीच कलह नहीं प्रेम उत्पन्न करता है। इस प्रकार साम्प्रदायिकता एक धर्म को दूसरे धर्म से अलग करती है। और फिर धर्म विशेष की हार मानव को उसकी व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता से वंचित करती है।

यह किसी सम्प्रदाय विशेष के लोगों की धार्मिक एकता की पक्षधर है। और इस आधार पर यह सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक हितों के एक होने का दावा करती है। और इसकी पूर्ति के लिए एक अलग राजनीतिक मोर्चा बनाने की पक्षधर है ताकि अन्य सम्प्रदायों के साथ प्रतिस्पर्द्धा करते हुए कम से कम साधनों की अधिक से अधिक अंश प्राप्त किया जा सके। हितों का वैमनस्य जब अपनी पराकाष्ठा पर पहुँचता है, तो अस्तित्व विरोधी मुद्दा बन जाता है तथा साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा का रूप ले लेता है।

कुल मिलाकर साम्प्रदायिकता कहती है कि 'मानों न कि जानों।' इस आधार पर यह मध्यकालीनता की पक्षधर तथा आधुनिकता की विरोधी है। यह मानव को मध्य काल की ओर खींचने वाली प्रवृत्ति है। जिसमें धर्म का बोलबाला था तथा वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति का कोई स्थान नहीं था।

साम्प्रदायिकता सभ्यता के वैश्वीकरण की ओर मुड़ने के विरूद्ध एक प्रतिगामी लड़ाई लड़ रही है। यह मानव को पश्चिगामी धारा की ओर मोड़कर उसे पाश्विक हिंसा का रास्ता दिखाती है व धर्म को आतंकवाद का स्रोत बनाती है। साम्प्रदायिकता इस प्रकार आतंकवाद को बढ़ावा देने वाला स्रोत बनकर उभरती है।

इस प्रकार साम्प्रदायिकता समाजवाद, लोकतंत्र, धर्मनिरपेक्षता, बुद्धि, वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति की विरोधी है। तथा अपने स्वार्थ की लड़ाई लड़ती है।

साम्प्रदायिकता के कारणों में शिक्षा का अभाव, गरीबी, बेरोजगारी, मूल्यों का अभाव, बहुलवादी समाज का होना, आदि मुख्य है। बहुलवादी समाज होने के कारण भारत में साम्प्रदायिकता अपने चरम स्तर पर है, क्योंकि बहुलवाद में एक को लाभ तथा दूसरे को हानि होने की संभावना ज्यादा रहती है। जिसके कारण बहुलवाद अपने आप में कलह व विवाद का विषय बन जाता है क्योंकि कोई भी अपने हितों का बलिदान नहीं चाहता।

साम्प्रदायिकता एवं साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा के बीच फर्क है। साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा साम्प्रदायिक विचारधारा की अगली कड़ी है। साम्प्रदायिक विचारधारा बिना हिंसा के भी पनप

सकती है लेकिन साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा बगैर साम्प्रदायिक विचारधारा के प्रचार प्रसार के घटित नहीं हो सकती। अतः हमें इसे जड़ से खत्म करने हेतु विचार के स्तर पर कार्य करना होगा।

साम्प्रदायिकता के लक्षण निम्न प्रकार हैं–
– साम्प्रदयिकता के संकीर्ण लक्ष्य प्राप्ति हेतु हिंसा का प्रयोग करती है।
– इसमें किसी समुदाय विशेष को अपना शिकार बनाया जाता है।
– यह उन्मादी धार्मिक भावनाओं से सरोबार है।
– धार्मिक आधारों एवं शर्तों के आधार पर जन लामबंदी का समर्थन करता है।
– धार्मिक भावनाओं को उभारकर दबावपूर्वक अपने हितों की पूर्ति का प्रयास करता है।
– सहअस्तित्व एवं सहजीवन की अवधारणा के विपरीत प्रयास है।

इस प्रकार साम्प्रदायिकता समाज के लिए घातक है। यह देश के सामाजिक, आर्थिक, राजनीतिक एवं लोकतांत्रिक विकास में बाधक है। इस कारण इसका निदान खोजा जाना आवश्यक है। ताकि अहिंसात्मक समाज का विकास एवं निर्माण हो सके। इसके लिए निम्न सुझाव दिए जा सकते हैं–

धर्म से संबंधित सुझाव– साम्प्रदायिकता का मूल कारण धर्म की गलत व्याख्या है और यह व्याख्या धर्म–पुरोहितों पर निर्भर करती है। कुछ स्वार्थी तत्व अपना महत्व कायम रखने हेतु धर्म की गलत व्याख्या कर व्यक्तियों को भ्रमित करते हैं तथा साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा, साम्प्रदायिक विचारधारा को बढ़ावा देते हैं। अतः इसका निदान खोजना आवश्यक है। सरकार को निम्न सुझावों पर गंभीरता से ध्यान देना चाहिए–

1.   अनिवार्य धार्मिक शिक्षा– धर्म प्रधान देश भारत में धार्मिक शिक्षा को अनिवार्य कर देना चाहिए क्योंकि व्यक्तियों को सभी धर्मों की अच्छाइयों तथा उनकी कमियों आदि का ध्यान नहीं रहता, जिसके कारण कोई भी व्यक्ति धर्म की गलत व्याख्या करने में सफल हो जाता है। अगर धर्मदर्शन की शिक्षा सभी व्यक्तियों को निष्पक्ष तौर पर दी जाए तो सभी व्यक्ति धर्म की मूल भावना को समझ सकेंगे, जो भाईचारे तथा सद्भाव का संदेश देती है।

बचपन से ही बच्चों में धर्म के बारे में सम्मान की भावना पैदा करनी चाहिए ताकि बड़े होकर वे स्वच्छ छवि के व्यक्ति बन सकें। इसमें शिक्षा तथा माता पिता की बड़ी भूमिका हो सकती है।

2.   पाठ्यक्रम में आमूलचूल परिवर्तन– आज भी हम बच्चों को स्कूलों में अंग्रेजों द्वारा निर्धारित की गई पाठ्य सामग्री का अध्ययन करवाते हैं। अंग्रेजों ने अपने स्वार्थ हेतु इतिहास की गलत व्याख्या की तथा उसी के आधार पर हमारी पाठ्य सामग्री बनी हुई है। जिसके कारण हम न चाहते हुए भी साम्प्रदायिकता के बीज बच्चों के मस्तिष्क में डाल रहे हैं। अतः पाठ्य सामग्री में बदलाव इस तरह होना चाहिए कि समाज में सौहार्द बढ़े। देश के भावी नागरिक अपने पूर्वजों की गरिमा से गौरवान्वित बनें। धर्म की शिक्षा के दौरान पाठ्य–सामग्री में सभी धर्मों के सद्गुणों का समावेश किया जाए।

पाठ्य सामग्री में यहाँ महापुरुषों की जीवनी दी जाए जिन्होंने राष्ट्र के लिए तथा सद्भाव के लिए काम किया हो।

3. कर्णधारों की नियुक्ति– धर्म सम्प्रदायों के पुरोहितों के संबंध में ऐसा माहौल उत्पन्न किया जाय कि इनकी नियुक्ति वंश–परम्परा के आधार पर न हो बल्कि वे अपने धर्म के तो प्रकाण्ड विद्वान हो तथा उन्हें अन्य धर्म सम्प्रदायों का भी ज्ञान हो। अर्थात् उनकी नियुक्ति योग्यता के आधार पर हो। ताकि धर्म के बारे में भ्रांतियां उत्पन्न न हो तथा कर्णधार सम्प्रदाय को सही दिशा दे सकें।

4. अपराधी तत्त्वों का पूजास्थलों में प्रवेश निषेध्द– समाज में ऐसा माहौल उत्पन्न किया जाय कि किसी भी धर्म स्थल में अपराधी प्रवृत्ति के लोगों को आश्रय न दिया जाय।

5. समन्वयात्मक साहित्य– ऐसे साहित्य के प्रकाशन को प्रोत्साहन देना चाहिए जो विविध धर्म सम्प्रदायों के परस्पर समन्वय स्थापित करने में सक्षम हो। सभी धर्म ग्रन्थों के सिद्धांतों को फैलाने के लिए समन्वयपूर्ण साहित्य का सर्जन किया जाये जो लोगों को उचित मूल्य में उपलब्ध हो सके।

देश के समाचार माध्यम– लोकतंत्र में समाचार माध्यमों का महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है। कहीं भी घटना घटती है तो हम उस घटना के प्रति अपना दृष्टिकोण सूचना प्राप्त करने के बाद ही बनाते हैं। अतः समाचार पत्र जो सूचना प्रदान करते हैं उसकी बहुत बड़ी भूमिका सिद्ध होती है। इस संदर्भ में निम्न सुझाव हैं–

1. पत्रकार की समान दृष्टि– पत्रकारों को किसी सम्प्रदाय विशेष के प्रति पक्षपात रखकर गलत सूचना नहीं देनी चाहिए। उसे सभी सम्प्रदायों के प्रति समान दृष्टि रखनी चाहिए। गलत सूचना देने पर समस्या विकट हो सकती है।

2. घटना का यथार्थ चित्रण– समाचार माध्यमों को किसी घटना को तोड़ मरोड़कर पेश नहीं करना चाहिए। उन्हें घटना का यथार्थ चित्र प्रस्तुत करना चाहिए। ताकि जनता को सही सूचना मिले तथा कानून को भी दोषियों को सजा देने में सहायता मिले।

3. सभी सम्प्रदायों का ज्ञान– पत्र–पत्रिकाओं में सभी सम्प्रदायों से संबंधित पुरुषों के लेखकों को स्थान मिलना चाहिए। ताकि इनके माध्यम से जनता सभी धर्मों के बारे में जान सके।

4. एक सम्प्रदाय को लक्ष्य बनाना अनुचित– दंगों के दौरान किसी एक सम्प्रदाय विशेष को ही निशाना नहीं बनाना चाहिए। क्योंकि इससे उस सम्प्रदाय विशेष में और रोष उत्पन्न होने की संभावना बढ़ जाती है। अतः संतुलनात्मक रवैया अपनाना चाहिए।

अन्य सुझाव–
1. सभी व्यक्तियों में वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति का विकास करना चाहिए। वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति किसी भी चीज की व्याख्या धर्म के आधार पर न करके तर्क के आधार पर करने का समर्थन

करती है। अगर तर्क के आधार पर सभी व्यक्ति सोचने लगे तो धार्मिक उन्माद, अंध विश्वास तथा धार्मिक कट्टरता खत्म हो सकती है। इस प्रकार वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति तर्क के माध्यम से तार्किक सोच विकसित करने में सहायक है।

इसके साथ–साथ सभी समुदायों के लिए शिक्षा की समान रूप से व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। आधुनिक एवं मूल्ययुक्त शिक्षा से व्यक्तियों की मानसिकता में बदलाव आसानी से लाया जा सकता है।

2. देश में सौहार्दपूर्ण वातावरण पैदा करने हेतु समान नागरिक संहिता को लागू करना चाहिए। हमारे संविधान के नीति निर्देशक तत्वों के अनुच्छेद 44 में समान नागरिक संहिता का विकास करने का दायित्व राज्य को दिया गया है लेकिन आज भी ऐसा नहीं हो पाया है। अतः भाईचारे का वातावरण स्थापित करने हेतु समान नागरिक संहिता को लागू करना आवश्यक है।

3. देश में मानवतावादी धर्म को प्रोत्साहन दिया जाना चाहिए। मानवतावादी धर्म मानव को मुख्य मानता है तथा उसके कल्याण को प्रोत्साहित करता है। इसके लिए यह वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति, आधुनिक सोच, अहिंसा आदि पर बल देता है। अतः सभी व्यक्तियों को मानवतावादी धर्म का पाठ पढ़ाना चाहिए।

4. परम्परावादी धर्मों में पारलौकिक पक्ष को कम करके मानववादी व लौकिकपक्ष को बढ़ाने का प्रयास करना चाहिए। पारलौकिकता के कारण व्यक्ति पारलोक मुखी हो जाता है तथा समाज तथा शाश्वत सत्य से कटने लगता है। अतः लौकिक पक्ष पर ध्यान देने हुए मानव मात्र का कल्याण का प्रयास करने की आवश्यकता है।

5. सभी शिक्षा संस्थाओं में धर्म दर्शन की पढ़ाई अनिवार्य कर देनी चाहिए। क्योंकि धर्म दर्शन धर्म की तार्किक, निष्पक्ष व्याख्या करता है जिससे सभी धर्मों की कमियां एवं अच्छाइयों का पता चल पाता है और धार्मिक कट्टरता कम होती है।

6. धर्म प्रचार की स्वतंत्रता खत्म करनी चाहिए। स्वतंत्रतापूर्वक धर्म का आचरण करने की छूट को ही पर्याप्त माना जाना चाहिए।

7. सामाजिक जीवन में साम्प्रदायिक रंग देने वालों को कठोर दंड दिया जाना चाहिए।

8. समाज में नैतिक मूल्यों का विकास करना चाहिए। इसके लिए सभी शिक्षण संस्थाओं में नैतिक शिक्षा अनिवार्य करनी चाहिए।

इस प्रकार साम्प्रदायिकता को खत्म करने के लिए अनेक सुझाव हो सकते हैं लेकिन सबसे मुख्य बात मानव की सोच बदलने की है। जब तक मानव की सोच नहीं बदलेगी तब तक न तो साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा रूक सकती है, और नहीं पर्याप्त विकास हो सकता है। इसलिए किसी ने ठीक ही कहा है–

सोच को बदलिए, सितारे बदल जाएँगे ।

नजर को बदलिए, नजारे बदल जाएँगे।
कश्तियों को बदलने की आवश्यकता नहीं,
दिशाओं को बदलिए, किनारे बदल जाएँगे।

अतः तार्किक सोच के साथ ही सभी प्रकार की हिंसा खत्म हो सकती है। समाज में बढ़ती शिक्षा, नैतिक मूल्यों का विकास, वैज्ञानिक मनोवृत्ति आदि के आधार पर उम्मीद की जा सकती है कि आने वाला भविष्य नया सवेरा लेकर आएगा।
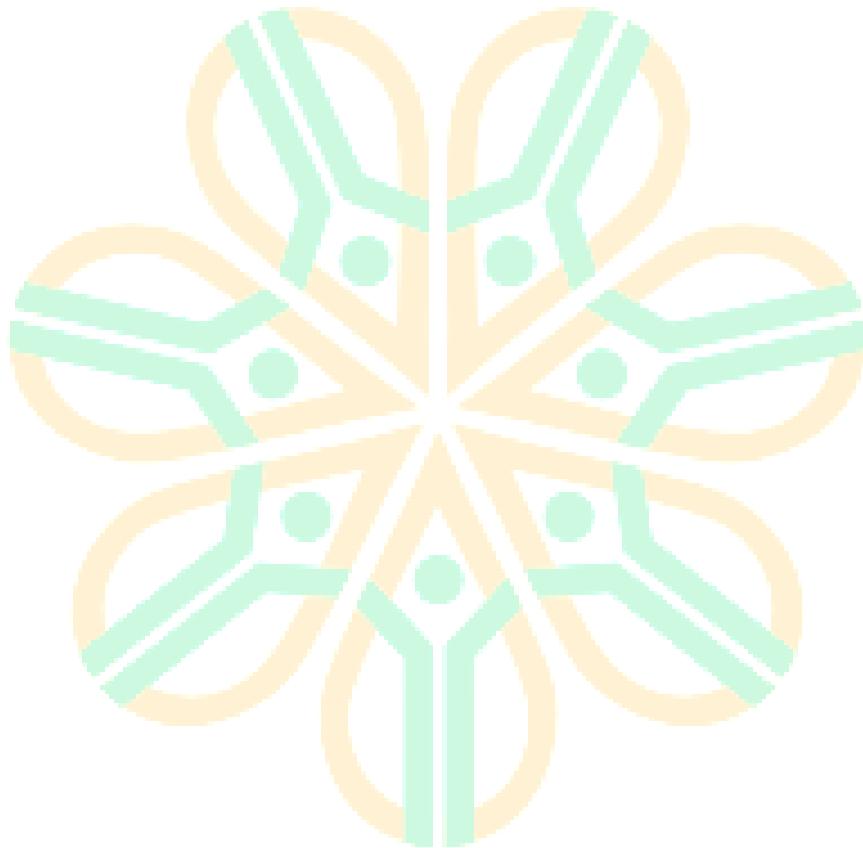
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