

ECONOMICS OF NON-VIOLENCE : THEORY TO ACTION

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CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

Non-violence is a precious principle of Jainism. It is inter-related with Anekantvad to all lives. It teaches us reverence for all lives including our own soul. It may be either in our daily life, or in business or in behavior towards others with equal wave length of our mind, speech and body. It keeps our temperament cool and calm. It provides satisfaction in life, no jealousy, no anger, no passions, no greed etc. It keeps our requirements to minimize there by causing lesser natural destructions, no environmental problems, no global warming seminars, no excessive expenses, no unemployment problems and no terrorism.

Acharya Amritchandra in his Purushartha Sidhupaya has defined Non-violence and violence in these words; **“In fact the non-appearance of attachment and other passions is Non-violence and their appearance is violence. This is extract of Jain scriptures.”** Jain view of Non-violence enjoins not only compassion towards human or sub-human beings, but also abandoning even the thought of causing injury. If you have evil thoughts to cause harm to others, you are said to have committed the offence of violence spiritually, although the idea may not have been translated into action physically. Indian penal code shows that criminal offence rests upon the intention. Which is technically known as “mens rea.”

Those who believe that the world is created by God and kill their fellow creatures saying that if they do not kill, the world will be full of fishes and other animals are otherwise; because they find fault with their Lord and interfere with the Divine working for their selfish ends. According to the Universal law of cause and effect those who want happiness should not inflict pain upon others. How can we get a rose flower when we sow the seed of a futile shrub? Poet Arnold’s argument in “Light of Asia” appears very sound, “How is that man who prays for mercy, is himself not merciful towards other fellow beings?”

We are human beings and human life is really the most superior life on the earth. We, therefore, should follow the ways which is rational way, killing persons, destroying properties, forcing the individuals, these are not the ways which civilized human beings should follow. We should follow the way which harms none but helps all. And that way, is the Non-violent way. Violence is able to destroy faster, but it constructs slowly, while Non-violence constructs quickly.

A Jain Tirthankara Kunthunath while renouncing his royal pleasures and vast kingdom explained as to why he has giving up precious treasures and becoming a saint, he said, "I have enjoyed the best worldly pleasures but I could not get lasting peace and real satisfaction; the more I enjoyed, the more my desires increased like fire by means of fuel. Therefore, to obtain life of immortality and everlasting bliss, I am becoming a homeless hermit." The mission of Non-violence can become successful only when it is infused with consciousness of spirituality or consciousness of emotions. Stopping the relative violence is possible only when disease of consumerism that grows with the Economic development is treated and consciousness of self restraint reaches the higher level.

ECONOMICS OF NON VIOLENCE

A new concept of relative Economics should be developed so that people at large can be benefited by the Economic development and ultimately the chasm of disparity between the rich and poor, between the rural and urban areas, between different regions of countries and communities is reduced through a process of inclusive development of all. The principle that **"The minimum basic need of entire society should be fulfilled first."** can serve as a great fundamental principle of Economic system. It means that everyone would be able to get food, clothes, shelter, medicine and education. Let us not bother about other Economic equity. Let us accept that all individuals have their own way of earning and own professional skill. Some would earn more, some less. We cannot have mechanization of equity. It is difficult to conceive that all become millionaire. The only possibility is every one would at least have his basic and primary needs got fulfilled.

Violence and possessiveness are intimately interconnected. The policy of Economic development in modern Economics is not Non-violence related, that is, it is not Non-violence oriented, Hence, wealth is becoming instrumental in perpetuating violence. Modern Economics is more about violence activities than fulfilling basic human needs. Acharyashri Mahapragya pleaded for the view that modern Economics should change its emphasis from absolute Economics to relative Economics so that the disparities and devices between the rich and the poor, between the urban and the rural, between different religions of the country, between backward and forward communities, possible forms are reduced and finally removed all together.

Conciliation between the present and future, which is, striking a balance between the available resources to be used by present generation and those to be used by the future generation. This makes the preservation of environment inevitable. Natural sources should not be exploited to such an extent that the

generations to follow are confronted with the problems of their scarcity. Economic progress is also a form of development. Development has many manifestations. We cannot impose any rule on any body. It is said that nobody should remain poor, but why should we become affluent like Kuber, the god of wealth? Basic needs of everybody should be satisfied. But when any Economic prosperity is at the cost of the interest of others, it is never desirable.

For the societal persons, Mahavira did not talk about Mahavrats (the supreme vows), he talked about Anuvrats (small vows). He did not talk about renunciation either, but about limiting consumption, limiting enjoyment. It is his generosity. From this prospective, it is consistent to talk about Economics of Mahavira. It can be affirmed that Economics of Non-violence helps the individuals, families, societies, cities, states, countries and the entire world to restrict ecological, environmental, financial etc. degradation. However, it certainly accelerates balance in Nature, removes stress and strain, no financial losses, no health problems, no disintegration of families and societies, no wars, if it is performed and put into practice in its real sense of perception. There is one more benefit of it, advancement in spiritualism.

Today we find that modern globalized world has given rise to more problems than it has solved. The society is always in a state of fundamental disequilibrium due to the pursuit of self-interest by some groups in society. Globalization of terrorism is increasing at a faster rate rather than the globalization of various Economics of the world. Resources of the world in terms of land, water, minerals, forests etc. are limited, they are getting depleted at a terrific rate.

Sustainable development represents social development, environmental development and Economic development. By integrated development on these three fronts, we can ensure peace and prosperity, safety and security of the entire world and achieve balanced development of all the countries. In more simple words, we can say that sustained growth is said to have been achieved when poverty is eradicated. When environment is preserved and economy goes on profitable lines in all the sectors.

TRAINING IN NON-VIOLENCE

The elements of Non-violence, compassion, sensitiveness etc. should be strongly cultivated in the consciousness of people so that violence, cruelty etc. in human relations and behavior may be curbed and consequently, new society should be infused with amity, cooperation and peace may be constructed. If restraint over desires and restraint over consumption had been a part and parcel of Economic development, then there would not have been created such a great disparity between the poor and rich, there could have existed a scope for the society to think

in new term and the problem of money and possession would not have become so dreadful as it is today.

On the other hand, what Mahavira said thousands of years ago is very useful even today and will continue to be so. He did not carry out his analysis based on machines, but did it on the basis of spiritual introspection, on the basis of inner perception. Machine is physical, inner perception is sublime. Inner perception is for all times, it is not momentary. Mahavira expressed the view that materialism is true and the soul is also true. Both are real.

It is said that once the President of America, Abraham Lincoln was going to Senate. In the way the benevolent heart was deeply moved by the pitiable plight of a pig who was immersed in mire. The President immediately rushed to the place and saved the dying creature. In this affair his clothes had become soiled. Upon enquiry Abraham Lincoln is reported to have said, "I was deeply moved by the misery of the animal and I had no time to ask my attendant to help me in this cause, for few minutes delay would have proved fatal to the precious life of the poor people. This is a great example of theory to action of Economics of Non-violence. We should have feeling of compassion towards our fellow persons in our heart.

Acharya Mahapragya says. "Non-violence, peace and food can go together only when intellectual consciousness, Economic consciousness and spiritual consciousness are developed in a balanced manner. The solution to this problem is training in Non-violence, mere intellectual deliberation would not be enough to provide the solution for human problems. If we really want peace, we should lessen our needs, curb our desires and limit our passions; we should also disarm ourselves of our bestial instincts. In this way the Economic problem will be solved automatically. A bird equipped with two feathers soars higher and higher in sky, so also a soul equipped with Non-violence and non-possessiveness will rise in spiritual sphere and attain divinity."

According to Acharya Mahapragya, "If we want to develop Non-violence we have to pay attention to the right Economics, morally and control over desires and emotions. Transformation of personality through meditational practices can alter the emotion of greed that would have the gateway for safe and peaceful Economic development." Acharya Mahapragya believes that unlimited personal wealth and unlimited consumption are the two great challenges of the present world. The two mantras of limited possession and limited consumption, are enunciated by Lord Mahavira, can prove to be extremely effective in creating an egalitarian society.

The Government can develop small scale industries and agriculture without being violent. But the Non-violence way requires a change in the thinking of

people. For that, basic education, which we lack today, should be provided to all. The brains and ideas of rich are no doubt needed. If we snatch away wealth from rich, we will lose their co-operation in the working of industries and in producing wealth. But if we are able to convince them, make them understand to be trustees, we will get their help in monetary terms as well as in administration. In order to keep social, political and Economic aspects of life free from problems, it is necessary to connect development with the element of “transformation of consciousness” So that greed, selfishness, impatience etc. can be curbed and minimized.

THEORY TO ACTION

We should emphasis on self-restraint, Non-violence, truth and other virtues which should be followed in actions so that there may be lasting peace in society. If people fall prey to self-indulgence, violence and falsehood in their actions, they will reap only the harvest of conflicts and concords and threats, trials and tribulations in life. We should bring in action emotional integration and mental change towards all human beings. One must develop positive attitude rather than negative attitude in life to promote emotional integration in society.

As Gandhiji said correctly. “there will not be one single day that would elapse without violence in India, as long as such large disparities between the rich and the poor exist. That is what is going on in India today. In all walks of life, disorder prevails. So as Gandhiji said if the rich would not share their riches with the poor, bloody revolution would be ignited to overthrow the oppressor. **One Christian philosopher said, necessity knows no law. It can be said in other way, necessity makes law, necessity amends law, necessity rejects law.** Change is not possible only through violence or through non- violence. Change is possible if possibility and necessity must go hand in hand.

Mahavira said that while earning wealth, every body should keep five rules in mind :

- Nobody should be kept in bondage.
- Nobody should be killed.
- Nobody’s limbs should be last.
- Nobody should be overloaded with work.
- Nobody’s livelihood should be disturbed.

Newton’s third law of motion state that “for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.” If there is no reciprocal reaction to an action, then the very existence of the universe is not possible; we all are aware that there is a universe, according to this physical law. This is also applicable to society. The very

humanity exists because of this law. We must practice Non-violence in daily life through mind, speech and body. It is possible that we cannot behave like Mahavira but certainly, we can minimize violence in daily life in the following way :

- (1) Keep awareness (Jayna) all the times.
- (2) Know your capacity and knowledge.
- (3) Be satisfied with what we have received.
- (4) Always avoid Non-Vegetarian foods.
- (5) Do not use furs and leather clothes.
- (6) Try to avoid frequent traveling for pleasures.
- (7) Perform possible and suitable penances.
- (8) As far as possible avoid taking foods after sunset.
- (9) Do not invest in shares of company which practically produce materials of Violence.
- (10) Do not take bath under showers.
- (11) Try to avoid seeing TV, Pictures etc.

Human emotions like greed, fear, enmity, antagonism, Vanity, Cruelty, intolerance, absolutism in thought and action, desire for excessive consumption, abuse of environment, aggression between people, absence of a feeling of holism of the universe and planet are responsible for Violence and War. In order to bring about a change of heart, individual must first gain an insightful understanding of the factors that lead to the rise of these tendencies in him and the means with which they can be curbed, controlled, refined and sublimated. The human mind needs to be thoroughly researched as the seeds of both Non-violence and Violence take their roots in it. The training of the mind precedes all other things in a course meant for the training of people in Violence.

If we want to see Non-violence, peace and development together, we have to understand that Economics, social stability, personal well being-all of these must develop together and be developed in a constant consciousness of peace. Importantly, the answers to these questions can be found out primarily through dialogue and self-examination. There has to be a dialogue between those from different disciplines and professionals, between people from different countries and regions, between the rich and the poor and between the oppressed and oppressors. A gathering of this kind provides an appropriate form.

We should try to reduce gap between rich and poor, between SC, ST, OBCs and other communities in the society, between men and woman. Because these gaps are not only irritants in society, but they give rise to conflicts, which at times create law and order problems in the smooth functioning of the democratic policy and beyond a point become quite unmanageable also.

CONCLUSION

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