

Pt. DeenDayal Upadhyaya: Democracy and Role of Political Parties

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Abstract

Democracy is a theory of society and not a theory of governance. A democratic government is the product of democratic society and not vice-versa. We may define democracy as the organization of society for liberty and equality, through the spirit of fellowship or fraternity, as well as the right to participate in political decision making. Participation and control of governance by people is the essence of democracy which is a constantly moving dynamic force and which impels us towards a social organisation in which every individual member shall have equal opportunity to develop holistically.

Pt. DeenDayalUpadhaya's views on democracy and the role of political party is relevant in contemporary India as it was in past. He wanted to decolonise Indian political thought which was largely as he said, "A western political picture in the Indian background". He strongly argued against the left-right division as being detrimental to the growth of the constructive, transformative pro-people democracy which is the part of his "Swayambhu philosophy" which contains the celebrated Integral Humanism. He argued that this left-right categorisation does not give a correct idea of politics in India because many programmes of these political parties defy any classification on this orthodox basis. He wanted to wash out this distinction from political parties which hamper the transformation of India into New India in a more democratic fashion. According to him, politics must be controlled by the masses and not by the wealthy. Neo liberalism has challenged democracies to ensure they do not become beholden to corporate interest. DeenDayal cautioned that "if steps are not taken to mend them, powerful lobbies will emerge in the country's

legislature and political decision will hardly be taken in an objective manner". Taking into consideration the welfare of people and promotion of national interest, this paper will focus on the feasibility of practising the concept of Integral Humanism in a democracy, highlighting the importance of it in contemporary issues of policy making and implementation through a more democratic, accountable and participative manner.

Keywords: Democracy, Integral Humanism, Policy making, Governance

Introduction

This research paper focuses on the views of Pandit DeenDayal Upadhyaya on various dimensions of the social, political, and economic life of India keeping in mind the role of political parties in a democracy which got freedom from the tyrannical rule of British empire in 1947. His views reflect a critique of colonial hangover and demand the absolute transformation in every aspect to forge a New India which can overcome the socio-economic injustice done in the past. His views are influenced by the Advait philosophy of Shankracharya and are in consonance with the Absolutist (maximum good for all) wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi¹.

His ideals recognise the theory of Purusharth that is *Dharma, Arth, Kaam, Moksha* (the four essentials in human life) central to the theory of integral humanism which is totally indigenous and ingenious, based on the ancient cultural foundation with a vision of creating a New India with Indian values and modern technology, a secular society with a flavour of multi religious-cultural-linguistic tastes.

Democracy is one of the best forms of government and is enhanced when complemented with conscious citizenry, awakened masses, responsive governance, transparent administration, accountable functionary, predictive and participatory procedure. The complete package of good governance was delivered by Pandit DeenDayal by forecasting his views in a systemic manner which had the potential of transforming India to realise its true potential. This paper, in a phased manner will focus on DeenDayal's views on democracy; its various components-socio-economic, politico-administrative, the impact of his philosophy on democracy, and will also highlight the areas of concern which need the ideological support of Pandit DeenDayal, like issues related to environment, decentralisation, ethics in politics and the recent steps taken by the government to realise the wisdom of Pandit DeenDayal.

Pandit DeenDayal - Integral Humanism

Pandit DeenDayal, the master practitioner of integral humanism focused on the holistic, overarching and all-encompassing approach for development of individual, society, nation and global peace thus recognising the ancient Indian philosophy of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam* and presented the integrated approach of body, mind, intellect and soul. His integral humanism has integrated not only *Advait* philosophy but also components of Buddhist and Jain philosophy like incorporation of right faith, right conduct, and right knowledge and is heavily inspired by Gandhi's village republic and decentralised conscious living. Thus integral humanism in this sense is also integral as it encompasses in it, the Indian value system derived from all religions, sects, cultures hence enables it to be a part of democratic discourse as it realises the very aspiration of the preamble to the constitution of India i.e.

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation. (Baruah, p. 3)

After having set the above discourse, it is appropriate to conclude that Dharma according to DeenDayal is not religion but Integral Humanism. He believes that Dharma is the guiding principle of the state. Dharma is distinct from religion; it is the moral compass of the government, it is the guiding norm of the State, it is the torch bearer of humanity, social justice, integrity, love and compassion. Dharma of DeenDayal acts as the bridge between the walls created by the fundamentalist and orthodox pathology of religion. Instead of borrowing from western philosophy, DeenDayal insisted that the Indian system is a testimony to the fact that doctored and dictated philosophy that do not share the cultural identity is bound to fail in India as witnessed in various programmes followed by the Indian government post-independence, for example, the Community Development plan, National Extension plan, Area Development plan etc.

The limited success of these plans are the fruit of colonial mind-set and its

hangover not only on the then government but also on the bureaucracy which treated citizens merely as the user of service and had not recognised the

is itself equivalent to the worship of God so, in any duties performed to fulfil Swadharma, the question of high and low, dignified or undignified does not arise at all. If the duty is done without selfishness, no blame attaches itself to the doer (Bhishikar, p. 166)

Pandit DeenDayal on Tolerance

Tolerance was one of the foundation stones of Panditji's philosophy that also conforms to the ideals of democracy as he mentioned in his speeches, that Vedic Sabha and Samities were organised on the basis of democracy; the free, frank and fair discussion held, consensus arrived and collective implementation of policies, plans and programmes and conflict resolution occurred. His famous statement, "I disapprove of what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it" is often presented as a summary of Voltaire's political views, the cognisance of such a level of freedom of expression and speech that it guaranteed under Article 19 of the Indian Constitution bears testimony to the fact that rising centrality in union government, curbing political spaces for masses, concentration of power, autocracy, public neglect and civic apathy had become the narrative of that time and runs antithetical to both the principle of Democracy and Pandit DeenDayal.

According to him, Indian culture goes beyond this and he views democratic discussion, discourse, deliberation as a key for resolution of any conflict in an integrated manner rather than domination by powerful segments or compromise that leaves the element of resurrection in it. Tolerance to him is an integrated approach of Mind, Body, Heart and Soul that can't be legislated. Tolerance comes from a strong internal locus of control that prevents a person from going astray in society, tolerance which bears to constitutional values like right against untouchability, right to educational minority, that is respecting the overall diversity as Gandhiji said, "If you cannot cherish the diversity you can't wish to have unity".

For Panditji, tolerance is the essential force that is necessary for performing the fundamental duties which is in turn important to cherish fundamental rights for all around development of society, realising the notion of "*Bahujan Sukhaya-Bahujan Hitaaye*". According to him, lack of government intervention and inept handling of situation are the reasons for public disorder which not only incur the loss of valuable human life and property but also have the institutional cost of conflict, which can have debilitating consequences for long term growth of society. Physical infrastructure can be rebuilt but the

breakdown of institution breeds cynicism and mistrust and makes it likely that conflict will recur hence leading to unremitting cycle of violence.

a union i.e. it is a uniting force which upholds the virtue of the highest order, any value of paramount importance, subordination of self-interest over national interest as the basic tenets of Dharma. His conceptualization of Dharma is not an undertaking of any particular religion but an integral approach comprising of Mind, Body, Heart and Soul together. Dharma of DeenDayal is the guiding principle of politics and personal life that begins with the right thought, which furthers the right action of a person, repeated right action becomes the behaviour, the behaviour observed over a long period of time becomes the attitude and seeps deep down into the subconscious of a person which he takes into the society. So the collective right thought will produce collective right action and hence it will create an ethical society with strong value premises as its base providing no reason what so ever for conflict. Such an ethically upright and active society was the wisdom of Pandit DeenDayal. According to him capacity building without value premises will only create ignorance and the person will often follow the path of *matsya-nyay* i.e. when the self '*jeev*' becomes more important than *para-jeev*. This *matsya-nyay* was quite evident to him in the western philosophy of capitalism and socialism which were less practical for integral humanism and runs antithetical to it. Capitalism was attacked by Pandit DeenDayal as it creates unconscious consumerism and over exploitation of resources. Such irresponsible philosophy which does not recognise sustainability and runs on profit motive only was unacceptable to him. Capitalism was disliked also because it do not recognise the legitimate and collective right of the citizens. It was viewed as an alien philosophy with the potential of arresting democracy.

Socialism which emerged as an alternative to capitalism also do not strike positively to DeenDayal as he marked that socialism failed to ensure human dignity and is antithetical to integral humanism and dharma. Since socialism recognises the individual which is accorded least preference by Dharma of DeenDayal which considers the national interest (*Janhit*) as supreme. DeenDayal differentiated monism from democracy in this respect, he differentiated socialism from dharma. Dharma is attained by conscious and awakened citizenry and for Gandhi, an awakened anarchy is the constituting force of Dharma, not just submission unto state for the sake of equity but a conscious contribution without breeding a sense of disgust and tyranny against state.

Summing up the discourse, there is space for nothing else to exist in Dharma, there is only a sense of contribution towards the state and no sense of

achievement that breeds ego. Dharma is in communion to love and compassion and in this sense Dharma is also an integral approach of DeenDayal which

Kaam, Moksha brings us closer to the Indian culture as against adopting any doctored and dictated philosophy of the West, once again proving the self-sufficiency and completeness of India in every dimension what so ever.

Endnotes

1. Parel, Anthony J (Ed.), 1997, *Hind swaraj and other writings*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi.
2. Rivka Witenberg (2000) *Do Unto Others: Toward Understanding Racial Tolerance and Acceptance*, *Journal of College and Character*, 1:5, DOI: 10.2202/1940-1639.1283

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