

The Economic Thoughts of Gandhi: Relevance for the Progressive India

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Abstract

Truth and nonviolence are the binary pillars of the Gandhian philosophy in every sphere of life. The Gandhian philosophy in relation to religion, spiritual, social, political, education and economic have roots in the plains of the truth and nonviolence. It will be not possible to conceptualize and visualize the Gandhian thoughts and philosophy in the absence of truth and nonviolence. The fact is that the thoughts are do subjective to the surroundings and so it can be stated that the Gandhian economic thoughts do have the characteristics of the pre-independent India and his earlier life experience in South Africa and Britain. Like, in the pre-independence, the nature of the British colonial governance and the economic policies were framed on the principles to protect and to promote the growing British industries and to exploit India as to provide raw material for the British industries and the market for British finished products. In Gandhian thoughts, especially economic, the 'Swadeshi' is one of the greatest gift and which inherited robust characteristics against the British economic rule and promotion of the Indian economy.

Keywords: *British, governance, nonviolence, social Introduction*

Introduction

The spirit of truth and nonviolence in Gandhian economic thoughts are substantiated in his statements like, (i) I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between

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economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and, therefore, sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour (Young India 1921), (ii) True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice; it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life. (Harijan 1937), and (iii) According to me the economic constitution of India and, for the matter of that, the world should be such that no one under should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. This monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but other parts of the world too (Young India 1928).

Gandhi's economic thoughts were influenced by various factors like impact of family, impact of industrialization, teachings of 'Unto this last' of John Ruskin and 'What than must we do' of Leo Tolstoy and Swaraj. The concept of Swaraj was one of the major factor that shaped the economic thinking of Gandhi. While advocating Swaraj, Gandhi had in mind, apart from termination of British political control, economic self- sufficiency, dissolution of the firm grip of western civilization, culture and values. British control has taken the nation at the trail of economic and cultural subjugation. The growing attraction of Indian for material comforts, their loss of faith in time, honoured Indian values like simple living and high thinking and their burning zeal for the dazzling articles of mass consumption produced in the industrialized west brought to Indian shores ship loads

of foreign goods. The political domination of the country by Britain led to economic subjugation and provided an opportunity to the ruling power to indulge in the act of exploiting India. Gandhi realized that termination of British rule in India would free Indian economy from foreign control, put a halt of economic exploitation, prevent the draining out of resources from India to the metropolitan country, open the flood gate to India's economic prosperity and thus lead to economic Swaraj. Elaborating his notion of Puran Swaraj Gandhi wrote- "It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions". Gandhi

was painfully aware of the poverty, hunger, misery, wants, destitution and deprivation of the masses. Hence, when Gandhi thought of Swaraj, he had primarily in his mind these problems of the millions of people. Accordingly, he wrote in *Young India*, “The Swaraj of my dream is the poor man’s Swaraj”. The effect of contemporary ideologies can also be traced on the economic thoughts of Gandhi but he was not influenced by those ideologies and, he reacted to them or in a sense it can be called negative influence. The main ideologies of his time were, Capitalism, Communism, Socialism, Nazism and Fascism. For him the only yardstick of judging any economic system was human welfare. To him accumulation of property is immoral and always involves violence (Shukla 2015).

His ideas on economic issues were based on certain basic beliefs that gave a model regarding economic development and are still found relevant, based on which we can interpret what kind of economic arrangement is the need of the hour. Gandhi was inspired by the thought of the American activist and writer, Henry David Thoreau and above all, the Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy. From them, he developed his understanding not only of non-violence but also of his own chosen way of life: simplicity of needs, focus on the means and techniques used to achieve the ends, the fundamental requirement for a sharing of wealth among all people, and a focus on grassroots self-organization of decentralized and democratic communities. The Marxian policy of neutrality and its emphasis on the exploitation of labour also influenced Gandhi. He was infatuated to Ruskin’s heterodox doctrine that the wealth of a nation consisted, not in its production and consumption of goods, but in its people (Chavan 2013 and Singh 2016).

The spirit and economic dimension of Swadeshi

Gandhi’s economic thoughts would not be understood and would be incomplete without referring to Swadeshi. In Gandhi’s word Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. That is, the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics, I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics, I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such Swadeshi, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millennium (Prabhu and Rao 1960).

The economic dimension of the Swadeshi was that Gandhi recognized that the economic suffering of the masses and prevalent poverty was due to distraction from the path Swadeshi in the economic and industrial life. If not an article of commerce had been brought from outside India, she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clearly upon an error.... If we follow the Swadeshi doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how to proceed, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit, exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages as are not locally producible (ibid).

The economic thoughts of Gandhi

The economic thoughts of Gandhi developed in three phases (i) the negative phase up to 1919 during which he criticized the western pattern of economic development and adopted a nonmaterialistic attitude which is embodied in his book *Hind Swaraj* (1909), (ii) the positive phase (1919-1934) during this phase, he presented an alternative to the western civilization in the ideal of Swadeshi and (iii) the constructive phase (1934-1948) in this phase, Gandhi became more practical. He gave a constructive programme for village regeneration and put forward the ideal of Sarvodaya (Savitha 2015).

Gandhi's economics thoughts were simple and straight forward which would make India economically self-sufficient, manufacturing and satisfying its own needs in domestic market, home-grown ways. This would not only improve the composition of the rural economy of India, it had also demoralized the British economic motives of the exploitation of Indian people. The ethics of economic self-sufficiency were spread all over India by Gandhi during the colonial period. Khadi and village industry were in the core of his economic thoughts. He presented a valuable model for economic development as he saw the importance of the rural economy and thought that poverty could be eased by stimulating village economies of agriculture and labour intensive production by using simple technologies on a ground level. Gandhi wanted to re-establish India from the lowest level. Therefore, he gave an idea to Indians to reconstruct the villages. He had imagined self-reliant villages, free from dependency on big cities which cure them from exploitation. He has also strongly advocated for decentralization of economy. According to him, if we want Swaraj to be built on nonviolence, we will have to give the villages their proper place. He said that development of the village is depended on their own self-sufficiency which

is only possible when there is no more exploitation. On the other hand, the use of large scale industries will create problem of competition and marketing in the economy. Gandhi felt that India's dependence on imports from other countries was the main reason of much adversity in India. His basic approach has always supposed about the intentional needs, the need for independent villager and very close to his philosophical and sociological thoughts. He was paying attention on the development of common person and more significantly the development of the depressed and needy group of people (Kaur and Dhapali 2015 and Mathur 2011).

The concept of Swadeshi by Gandhi was to promote and stimulate indigenous industries like small scale and cottage industry of Khadi, handloom spinning and weaving mills. He coined khadi as a sign of patriotism, equal opportunity and independence. In his thought by using Khadi India can defeat the British rule and which can also rebuild of the Indian society. Therefore, Gandhi has started his movement for khadi in 1918. He suggested that if we wear and produce such type of clothes then British cloth must be abolished from the Indian market and India become an independent economy. He advocated for the promotion of small scale and cottage industries which would beneficial to Indian economy because these industries are based on family labour and low investment. Raw material like cotton, indigo and other crops are easily available in villages from agricultural. So this would lead indigenous market. He was of the opinion that large-scale industries have capital intensive which would concentrate of wealth in the hands of few. With the promotion of small scale industries people would never face the problem of production and external market. And small scale industries to a great extent will boost the economy by generating employment opportunities for the masses as these industries are labour intensive. The small-scale industries also promotes equal distribution of income and wealth in the among labour which is mainly due to the fact that small scale industries are wide-ranging as compared to large scale industries and are having large employment potential. These industries have more capability to generate or attract innovation. Small scale industries provide abundant opportunities for the advance technology. The entrepreneurs of small industries play a deliberate role in expansion of new innovation and goods. It also makes easy to transfer the technology from one to the other. As a result, the economy collects the benefit from small units (Kaur and Dhapali 2015).

The important principles of Gandhian economic thoughts

The economic thoughts of Gandhi were influenced by the factors mentioned earlier and (Shukla 2015) on the basis of these factors slated the important principles of his

economic thoughts which are relevant for progressive India and are:

Moral and spiritual approach to economics – Gandhi formulated his economic ideas and principles in the context of his design, of an ideal social order, a non-violent, non-exploitative humanistic and egalitarian society. He approached all facets of the social order – its economics, its politics from the philosophical premise – truth and nonviolence – that governed his entire life. It was therefore impossible for him to produce an economics that would be ethically neutral. When economics is related to this way of life it becomes “Meta – Economics”. True economics, according to him stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life.

The man at the center –The centre of Gandhi’s economic thought is man and not the material prosperity or scarcity. He aimed at the development, upliftment and enrichment of human life rather than a higher standard of living with scant respect for human and social values. He wanted to elevate modern economic philosophy from its materialistic base to a higher spiritual plan where human actions were motivated by social objective rather than individualistic and selfish consideration. He was of the confirmed view that economic development must precede the other developments. That is why he gave due importance to the economic activities of an individual. For him, the main purpose to study economics should be the whole happiness of Man. Material advancement is only one ingredient in this along with its other elements such as moral, spiritual, psychological, etc. should also be taken into consideration. Then and only then a man can be truly happy which can lead to a perfect development of his personality.

Emphasis on wantlessness –Gandhi advocated wantlessness. He was of the opinion that wants are the source of pain. Instead of adding to the sum total of human happiness wants subtract from it to a good deal. He was of the view that maximization of satisfaction is rather completely inconsistent with the maximization of human wants. Removal of want is removal of pain and procurement of pleasure. This pleasure is something as satisfaction or utility. Gandhi put utmost reliance on the individual and his moral awakening to bring radical changes in the distribution of income and wealth in the society through wantlessness.

Critique of industrial civilization: Gandhi said that Machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a-hundred snakes. But he did not advocate the destruction of machines and categorically derived that the machine could produce any good. Machines took away from the labourers the traditional means of subsistence and deprived them of the sources of livelihood. He was against the craze for machinery and not machines as such. For him, machinery merely helps a few to ride on the back of millions and the impetus in

not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed.

Bread labour – Bread labour was both philosophy and economics to Gandhi. It means ‘that to live man must work’. The work is to be done with physique not by mind. Gandhi would have restricted the meaning of bread labour only to agricultural labour but being conscious of the impracticability probably due to scarcity of primary factors of production – land he allowed for undertaking other works as well. According to Gandhi, in *Young India* (1927, 1925) Violation of the bread labour is the root cause of present economic disequilibrium. He considers it to be the natural law and therefore enjoins even with Rabindra and Raman to do same manual labour. “It is a tragedy of the first magnitude,” he remarks, “that million have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature is revenging herself upon us with terrible effect for this criminal waste of the gift she has bestowed upon us as human beings”.

Sarvodaya (Well Being of All)- is a paraphrased Gujarati name given to ‘Unto This Last’ by John Ruskin by Gandhi. Sarvodaya stands for the upliftment and elevation of all, and that all living beings are participants in or portions of a super- material reality. Hence the good of all living beings which necessarily implies the good of all humanity has to be positively fostered. Since all beings are reflections or manifestations of a supreme spiritual, ultimate, hence all have to be provided the opportunity for their greatest development and perfection. The fundamental notion in the Sarvodaya Philosophy is the primary and ultimateness of the spirit. In the economic field Sarvodaya pleads for (i) The repudiation of the proprietary possession of the non-producers, (ii) The establishment of proprietary possession of the producers and (iii) The neutralization or the negation of ownership.

Modern civilization – Gandhi diagnosed the real and deep malady of modern civilization, and by pointing out the remedy of that disease he was not behind but ahead of our times. The present western civilization attaches the greatest importance to material welfare and maintain that the goal of a progressive individual or nation should be the ever-increasing accumulation of physical comforts and luxuries. As Gandhi pointed out in *Hind Swaraj*, “The true test of modern civilization lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. But this has not been the Indian ideal “we notice”, says Gandhi, “that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied “the more we indulge our passion, the more unbridled they become Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy... observing all this

our ancestor dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery but our forefathers knew that if we set our minds after such needs, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre. They, therefore, after due deliberations, decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in proper use of our hands and feet.”

Ends and means- No economic reform, however intrinsically desirable, can lead to desirable changes in individuals and the society they constitute, unless it is carried through in a desirable content and by desirable methods. So as far as the State is concerned, the desirable content for reform is Decentralization and Self-government all round. The desirable methods for enacting reform are the methods of non-violence.

Sanctity of labour- Another important principle underlying Gandhian economic thought is the dignity and sanctity of manual labour. To Gandhi ‘work is worship’ and an idle mind is a devil’s workshop. Gandhi holds that intelligent manual labour is essential for the proper development of the mind and hand culture is indispensable for mind culture.

The lure of leisure- Gandhi, regards the cry for more leisure as dangerous and unnatural- “Leisure is good and necessary up to a point only, God created man to eat his bread in the sweat of his own, and I dread the prospect of our being able to produce all that we want, including our foodstuffs.” Gandhi did not underline the necessity and desirability of physical labour only on moral and psychological grounds. He was anxious to strike at the very root of economic exploitation by insisting on everyone becoming as self-sufficient as possible. The present economic disorder is due to the unjust exploitation of the labour of other, with the result that there is on the one hand, an ‘idle rich’ class with no physical work at all, and on the other, an overworked labour class crying for more leisure. But if we have almost self-sufficient village communities in which everyone works for his or her living on a co-operative basis, there will be no room for exploitation and the middle-men will be gradually eliminated. Explaining this point of view to Gurudev Tagore, Gandhi observed. “Why should I, who have no need to work for food. Spin?” may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the source of every coin that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write.”

Relevance of Gandhian Economic thoughts for the progressive India

The economy of India is the world’s fourth largest in terms of real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) after the USA, China and Japan. It has registered ninth position in

terms of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and fourth position in terms of PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) and recorded highest constant growth rates in the 21st century. As per the Economic Survey 2011-12, it has accounted for a remarkable 7.1 percent rate of growth in 2011-12. However, after independence, the Indian government did not incorporate the economic views of Gandhi in economic policies and planning process. The first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of Independent India had other ideas of rapid westernization and industrialization than promoting small scale and cottage industries (Baviskar, 1999). In this process of globalization, Indian government framed various policies aimed at the development of large-scale industries and multinational companies (Dodh, 2012). These growths in industries lead to a more consumption of natural resources, which were available in abundance. Industrialization with globalization leads to expansion of horizon of economic development. With time, many MNCs were established, which used highly advanced technology thus making the Indian economy more technologically advanced and hence the small-scale industry was neglected. Technology based large scale industries are using the capital-intensive technique, which is increasing unemployment (Singh 2016).

There are economic and social cost associated with economic growth. Like, increase in unemployment, inequalities in incomes and wealth, underdeveloped infrastructure, inflation, rising population, depleting natural resources and unsafe polluting environment. Large-scale industries and monopolistic pattern of ownership of means of production at the national and international levels have created glaring economic inequalities between those who live in the urban areas and rural areas. Such a system resulted in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and poverty and misery for the vast majority of people (Friedman, 2008). The analysis of the economic condition in India, it is found that three-tier economy is emerging, i.e., the urban, the rural and the underworld economy. Urban economy is flourishing because of the concentration of wealth and resources in the cities. Exploitation and oppression go unabated and the result is that the rich becoming richer and poor, the poorer. Underworld economy is the by-product of the exploitative and corrupt system that exists in cities. Thus, modern industrialization has created miseries in slums and villages, and black money has created islands of immoral and luxurious life in urban centers. There is a direct connection between underworld economy and the urban economy. The mushroom growth of urban and underworld economy has paralyzed the growth of rural economy. Rural economy, as a result, is unable to keep pace with the industrial economy. The farmers and agricultural labourers are marginalized and exploited. Growing population and mechanization have further aggravated their problems. Large-scale industries cannot sustain large populations and cannot provide employment for all (op cit).

The 'Man at the center' concept of Gandhian economic thought is side tracked as in the present time of liberalization and globalization, societies are based on the profit motive, competition and the cash nexus. The motto 'the ends justify the means' is acceptable. In the present system, man may be able to satisfy his physical wants but may yet be mentally and spiritually starved and sick. He may become a victim of loneliness in the midst of a crowd. To incorporate this concept in the progressing India, efforts should be made for his all-round development – physical, mental, social and spiritual. For this purpose, an integrated approach is necessary. There should be integration of society and nature and ecological balance needs to be maintained. Agriculture, industry, livestock, forests, plants etc. should grow in harmony. An isolated approach, as adopted in contemporary civilization, would have disruptive effects. Decentralized production and distribution alone can checkmate the tendency to disparities in income, status and wealth and these disparities are the root cause of friction and discontent. Gandhi was of the view that rapid economic development and social justice can go hand in hand only in decentralized economic system. The aim should be to build a classless society which would ensure the welfare of all. In any economic activity there should be complete harmony between the ends and means (Shukla 2015).

The Gandhian ideology and economic thoughts, whose main focus is on welfare and dignity of the individual, provides us a broad framework into the new philosophy of economic development that is needed today. Gandhi was against India copying the West and its urban-centric civilisation and pleaded for gram-swarajya. He believed in Village Swaraj and criticised the capitalist system because it is based on ownership of the means of production and other property. He argued that unlimited wants, greed, fear etc. arise from capitalist property relations. Gandhi advanced a theory of trusteeship as an organisational structure under which production could be organised, instead of large industrial houses where economic power was concentrated in the hands of a few and were inherently exploitative. He declared himself to be a socialist and repudiated the concept of private ownership of property. He wanted to do it by moral force and persuasion. The objective is to create a non-violent non-exploitative property relationship. He equated private property in excess of basic needs of human existence with exploitation and held that private property was not a natural right but a man-made privilege, so it could be modified and altered by social action. Gandhi simultaneously proclaimed his profound belief in the rightness of economic equality. He did not visualise a world where there will be no property but he would restrict the right of private property to what was necessary to yield an honourable livelihood, while for the excess he prescribed the principle of trusteeship. He asked those who own money to behave like trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor (Mathur 2011).

There is great relevance of the Gandhian economic thoughts to resolve the economic problems as his economic philosophy was mainly concerned with individual dignity and the welfare of the poor people. The country has to have categories of industries: (i) Cottage Industries, (ii) Small-scale industries, (iii) Medium-scale industries, and (iv) Large-scale industries. The other should not produce what is produced by one industry. This will help to provide employment to those who live in villages so that they need not migrate to urban areas to be exploited (Singh 2016). This would also curb the unchecked concentration of wealth and resources in cities. Janata Party under the influence of the great Gandhian leader, Jayaprakash Narayan in 1977 recognized the need of the Gandhian Economic Policy (Sethi, 1979). E.F. Schumacher, who perceived the importance of Gandhian remedies to solve unemployment, suggested his own remedies on the Gandhian model:

- (i) Agro-based industries should be established in rural areas and small towns,
- (ii) The means of such production should be simple and cheap and should be within the reach of an average individual,
- (iii) Raw materials must be locally available for production and consumption, and
- (iv) Quantum of production per man is not important, but the main consideration is maximum employment potentialities for the unemployed and the underemployed (op cit).

V.K.R.V Rao, a leading economist of India, reiterated the relevance of Gandhian economic policy for more employment opportunities and better-living conditions. He opined that the Indian economy is based on class market rather than on the mass market. Further, he pleaded for the production of goods for mass consumption, which alone could lead to more employment opportunities, and better-living conditions for the masses (Radhakrishnan, 1992). “Swadeshi” finds its revival today in Indian polity especially after the entry of multinationals and monopolisation of industrial products. Of course, the modern term for Swadeshi would be ‘self-reliance’. The new spirit of Swadeshi is to fight against increasing grip over Indian economy and cultural erosion as a weapon of economic independence and then for political independence. His emphasis on the small-scale industry has become a source of employment generation and decentralisation of the economy leading to self-reliant villages. Nowadays the villages get utmost priority in Government plans and programmes. This is nothing but the other name for Gandhian Sarvodaya. His concept of Swaraj and social equality quite agree with the modern liberal ideas that are the call of today. Every one of us is striving today to reach that Gandhian goal. The successful struggle of Nelson

Mandela in South Africa bears testimony to the Gandhian doctrine (Lala 2006 and Singh 2016).

In the path of post-independence economic development, the relevance and importance of Gandhian economic thoughts were off late recognized in the 21st century when India enacted The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005. The Act aims at providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. In 2018-19, 5.27 crore rural households were provided employment and 267.91 crore person-day of employment has been generated. Self-targeting in nature, the programme had high work participation from the marginalized groups of SC/ST (38%) and women (55%). Nearly 99 percent of the MGNREGA wages are being credited directly to the beneficiaries' accounts through e-payment of Ne-FMS/DBT (Government of India 2019).

Similarly, Mission Antyodaya adopted by the Union Government in 2017-18 is to an extent to fulfill the Gandhian economic thought of rural/ village development in a way Mission strives to realise the vision of Poverty-free India by 2022 and the objectives of the Mission are:

- Ensuring effective use of resources through convergence of various Government Schemes with Gram Panchayats as the basic unit of planning.
- Work with a focused micro plan for sustainable livelihood for every deprived household.
- Conduct an annual survey on measurable outcomes at Gram Panchayat level to monitor the progress in the development process across rural areas.
- Supporting the process of participatory planning for Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), which will improve service delivery, enhance citizenship, create pace for an alliance of people's institutions and groups and improve governance at the local level.
- Encourages partnerships with network of professionals, institutions and enterprises to further accelerate the transformation of rural livelihoods.

The Convergence of Resources and Information under the Mission are:

- There is a need to bring in synergies between different government programmes
-

and schemes in terms of planning, processes and implementation to achieve the goals under Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

- The Planning should consider the household and the villages as the basic unit of planning that facilitates household level micro-plan and Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).
- Harmonising selection criteria, implementation processes and guidelines, and availability of funds at the same time is thus critical for implementation. This would need pooling of financial and human resources in different schemes of government and their rationalisation in implementing the plans at household level and GPDP.
- “Mission Antyodaya” encourages addressing all identified deprivations in a time-bound manner through intensifying coverage of government schemes to address individual, household and community-level deprivations in saturation mode.
- Provisions of public services and improving access are necessary but not sufficient to address multiple deprivations. In this endeavour, over 25 Departments/Ministries of the Government are expected to provide resources to the Antyodaya GPs/Clusters on a priority basis through their programmes with a thrust on pooling of resources and delivery in saturation mode.
- Mission Antyodaya is an accountability and convergence framework for transforming lives and livelihoods on measurable outcomes.

The village wise report on economic development and livelihoods under the Mission shows that for All India there are 58,154 soil testing centres, 79,892 government seed centres, and 1,17,751 fertilizer shops (Mission Antyodaya 2018).

The Khadi and village industries commission (KVIC) was set-up by the Act of Parliament (No. 61 of 1956, as amended by act no. 12 of 1987 and Act No.10 of 2006) on the principles of the Gandhian economic thoughts. The social objective of the KVIC is to provide employment, economic objective is of producing saleable articles and the wider objective of creating self-reliance amongst the poor and building up of a strong rural community spirit. KVIC programmes are implemented through field offices of KVIC, 34 States and union territories Khadi and Village Industries Boards, 4744 registered Khadi and Village Industries Institutions, Banks, Financial Institutions, State District Industries Centers of State Government. During 2017-18 the KVI sector has recorded 12.78% growth in production and 13.51% growth in sales and generated employment opportunity 104.36

lakh persons The rural industries under KVIC are broadly classified under seven groups namely Agro Based and Food Processing Industry (ABFPI), Forest Based Industry (FBI), Handmade Paper and Fibre Industry (HMPFI), Mineral Based Industry (MBI), Polymer and Chemical Based Industry (PCBI), Rural Engineering and Bio-Technology Industry (REBTI) and Service and Textile Industry (KVIC 2018).

Conclusion

The economic thoughts of Gandhi are relevant for India and other countries of the world for sustainable economic development and for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Even the Government of India's Second Administrative Reforms Commission in its Fourth Report on Ethics in Governance (2007), debut the Preface with Gandhi's quote "As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world - that is the myth of the atomic age - as in being able to remake ourselves." And 'The Mahatma's vision of a strong and prosperous India - Purna Swaraj - can never become a reality if we do not address the issue of the stranglehold of corruption on our polity, economy and society in general.' Business Today (2018) writes about the economic thoughts of Gandhi that are relevant for progressing India. These are:

Swadeshi- Gandhi envisaged villages as self-sufficient republics. He knew that India lived in its villages which is why he stressed on the growth of the rural economy such as khadi, handloom, handicraft and sericulture. Rural industries were based on family labour and required less capital. Goods were sold in the local markets. In this way, production and market were both taken care of. This is why he advocated the establishment of cottage industries and recommended the use of rural products. According to him, the village economy would satisfy two important objectives. First, it would provide maximum employment and income to inhabitants, and second, it would generate equality, freedom and justice.

Gainful employment for each individual- His advocacy of the charkha was a way to promote gainful employment for an able-bodied individual. The charkha symbolised this view about how each person could earn their own livelihood and become self-reliant. The spinning wheel or 'charkha' soon became a symbol of Indian nationalism. It unified a diverse nation in various ways. He was a prominent advocate of dignity of labour and wanted to break down the boundaries between manual and mental work, rooted in the caste system.

Limitation of wants- Gandhi talked of the containment of wants and famously

said, "Nature produces enough to meet the needs of all the people, but not enough to satisfy the greed of any man." His idea of limitation of wants was contrary to classical and contemporary theories of economics which focused on expanding the goods space and satisfying unlimited human wants. He suggested two measures. First, that everyone should get sufficient work to make ends meet and second, that means of production of necessities should be under the control of the masses.

Well-being of the poorest in society- "Recall the face of the poorest and weakest man you have seen, and ask yourself if this step you contemplate is going to be any use to him." This encapsulated Gandhi's compassion for and views about the poorest of the poor of society. He believed that nobody would be left wanting if everyone used just as much as was needed by him.

Decentralization of economy- According to him, large-scale production was meant to be profit-oriented and therefore, harmful for society as it could lead to concentration of wealth and power in a few hands. Gandhi advocated decentralization because it could avoid violence. He suggested delocalization of production as against concentration in particular areas. His beliefs on decentralization were aimed at correcting all evils of a centralized economy.

Appropriate technology- In 1946, Gandhi wrote: "I am not opposed to machinery as such. I am opposed to machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle." He was not against machinery and welcomed such instruments and machinery that saved individual labour. But he was wary of technology-induced unemployment. Mechanisation was good till it did not render people idle and unemployed.

Finally, the relevance of the Gandhian economic thought for progressive India is justified with his statement in (Young India 1931), "When India becomes self-supporting, self-reliant, and proof against temptations and exploitation, she will cease to be the object of greedy attraction for any power in the west or the east and will then feel secure without having to carry the burden of expensive armaments. Her internal economy will be the strongest bulwark against aggression."

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