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## RELEVANCE OF GANDHIAN VILLAGE SWARAJ IN THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION OF ASSAM

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### ABSTRACT:

The first and foremost point for us whether Gandhiji's ideas i.e. village Swaraj will be relevant for enhancement of rural development like the region Assam at present? When the whole world is crying for the mercy to get rid of current state of environmental degradation in the form of depletion ozone layer, global warming and climate change, Gandhiji's very notion of development appears as a saviour to the world community. Sustainability is the core to his developmental process which appears to be a best viable alternative model of development in the recent years. Long before the "World Commission on Environment and Development", coined and defined the concept sustainable development. Gandhi talked about the philosophy of the concept but in a different term. Today from United Nation to Government of India, everybody is talking about a form of development which will balance the fulfilment of human needs with the protection of the natural environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future.



Gandhiji advocated village Swaraj for development of our entire country. In his intention the main fact was that most of the people of this country were living in the villages. Besides, India is country where the possibilities of the big industries and possibilities of employment of enough working population are very limited which is proven in present Indian situation. This situation is more vital in Assam economy at present too. So, the people of this nation are compelled to rely rural on development following Gandhian philosophy of Swaraj.

But the importance of the Panchayati Raj System through Gram Swaraj which advocated by Gandhi is downfall day by day in the recent time. The conception of Gram Swaraj is still not properly touch the poor people of Assam. Practice of cottage industries in the villages of Assam is very poor. It is realised, less knowledge about the schemes which provided by the Govt. of India is prime cause. In this case, a research work is prepared and the researcher is going to launching an investigation about the relevance of Gram Swaraj in this region.

**KEYWORDS:** whether Gandhiji's ideas , Gandhiji advocated , Panchayati Raj System.

### INTRODUCTION :

Mahatma Gandhi, "The Father of the nation" one of the prominent socio-political

thinker of the 20th century. He had greatly emphasis the village swaraj. During the British period the colonial and imperial policy

of Britain resulted in the exploitation of the Indian economy. During that time India became the market for

manufactured goods of Britain. At the same time they got many raw materials from India at cheap rates. In short, the British were in India not for our good but for our goods. Therefore, some of the Indian leaders thought in terms of freedom from colonial rules as the remedy, so some the leaders formulated some economic ideas to solve the unemployment and poverty problem. Among of them Gandhi is highly emphasized for village swaraj. He was interested in developing the villages as self sufficient units. In order to village swaraj Gandhi said, "The village of my dreams is still in my hand. After all every man lives in the world of his dreams. My ideal village will contain intelligent human beings. They will not live in dirt and darkness as against anyone in the world. There will be neither plague, nor cholera, nor small pox, no one will be idle and no one will wallow in luxury. Everyone will have to contribute his quota of manual labour.

Gandhi advocated some points regarding village swaraj as follows:

- Every village first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth.
- The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall.
- Education will be compulsory upto the final basic course.
- There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village.
- An ideal Indian village will be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation.
- It will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation, built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it.

### THE CONCEPT SWARAJ:

The word swaraj came from two Sanskrit words "swa" and "raj". "Swa" means self and "raj" means rule. Literally swaraj means the rule of the self. Gandhis idea on village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet Independent for many others in which dependence is necessary. According to Gandhi real India was to be found in villages and not in towns and cities. He thought that it was impossible to develop the country without development of the village area. He said, "When our villages are fully developed, there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and having will not be had in the villages."

### INTERDISCIPLINARY RELEVANCE:

The importance of Gandhian philosophy cannot be neglected though it was criticized by some social thinkers. As to the relevance of this present topic, Gandhi emphasized state, functions of state, police, justice, religion regarding the politics, democracy, rights and duties of citizens and so on. Besides this, he also emphasize on the small scale industries prevailing in different villages over the country, village sanitation, food crops and cotton for its cloths. Gandhi also wanted to apply equal distribution of power and privileged among the people inhabiting in different villages of the country. So, the present topic regarding village swaraj deals with the problems facing every knock and corner of the country. As to interdisciplinary relevance of the present topic, the researcher will try to find out the terms and conditions of research problem.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Research provides some sort of the advantage of knowledge that has been accumulated in the past as a result of constant human Endeavour. It can never be undertaken in isolation of the work that has already been done on the problems which are directly or indirectly related to a study proposed by an investigator.

Since inception of our topic, no previous scholars have been discussed earlier on this topic, especially in Dhakuakhana Sub-division of Lakhimpur district, Assam. No other prior study on investigation has been yet conducted about this topic of this region. So, this topic is needed more studies and investigation further.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:**

To examine the influence of Gandhi's view in recent India, we have seen that his ideas are more valuable in modern India. Because the plight of the village has not much developed till now. After sixty seven years of independence the rural people are unable to release from this hardship for they have been suffering from age old diseases of mismanagement of the rural areas mainly in planning and its execution. So his ideas are more importance in recent time. Besides, the concept and ideal of Gandhiji's Swaraj could able to gather respect from foreign country too.

The present study deals with present economic situation of Assam. Out of the total population majority of them are poor and depend on poor cultivation. Most of the people of this region lived remote areas. So, they have less knowledge about the scheme which advocated by the government. They have a lack of knowledge about the Panchayati Raj system, village sanitation etc. Most of them are falls in plague, cholera, small pox and so on. In recent time, yet India will be a developed country, education does not touch them properly. So it is necessary to teach them about the conception of Gandhian Village Swaraj.

**METHODOLOGY:**

For any kind of social research and carry out investigation for gathering data, methodology plays an important role which should give the various aspects of the problem that had to be studied for valid generalization about the phenomena. To carry out the present study, the investigator may basically use primary data on the basis of case study method for gathering information by conducting field survey.

To carry out the present study the investigator also used the secondary data from related books, website, govt. Offices, other NGO etc. Collected data are analysed in to such a manner that they could be easily access and prepared for final report writing.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The main objectives of the proposed research work are as follows:

- To highlight the Gandhian philosophy prevailing in village swaraj regarding the present topic.
- To know whether they are aware regarding principles advocated by Gandhi for rural development.
- To try to find out the conditions of village sanitation in Assam.
- To know from the respondents whether they are aware about decentralization of power.
- To know from the Respondent's view on the steps taken by GP for removing unemployment.
- To try to find out the use of cottage industries by the people in the state Assam.
- To try to find out whether the people of Assam can achieve equal status and equal rights from the nation.
- It is tried to know the views of respondents whether they think that by implementing Gandhian economic principle through Gaon Panchayat the rural development is possible.

**OUTLOOKS:**

I tried to know from the respondents whether they are aware about Gandhian principles of rural development. Collected information shows that majority of the respondents are partially aware about Gandhian principles of rural development.

- Small scale and cottage industries can provide better scope for removing rural unemployment. In this matter Gram Panchayat of the state has not given much more importance.
- Gram Panchayats are the product of decentralization of power. Through decentralization of political and economic power Gandhiji wanted to develop the condition of rural Indian. In my study it is being found that majority of the respondents have partial knowledge regarding decentralization power for administration.
- Gram Panchayat of the state has not been able to develop the socio-economic condition of the rural people to the expected level.

- The government of India has taken remarkable steps by taking primary education compulsory and free, and now it becomes fundamental rights for the children. During my field visit and from information's of respondents it becomes clear that under every panchayat there are some children who are deprived of the right to education. It happens partially due to negligence of parents and partially due to poverty. The poor parents engaged their children to do some work for earning money.
- So far rural unemployment is concerned, Central and State governments have started many programmes through GP including MGNREGA. All the respondents view is that their GP has taken steps for removing unemployment but in this matter there is much more to do, because the problem is more severe.
- I tried to know from the respondents whether there is corruption in the implementation of MGNREGA and other scheme through GP. Majority of the respondents thinks that due to corruption rural development has not been able to reach the estimated target in the district.
- The Central government and the State government have taken many steps for developing the conditions of the people living below poverty line in rural area. The collected information of my study reveals that all the GP have been taking steps for improving the conditions of rural people living below poverty line.
- Participation of people in decision making in the grass root level is highly essential for rural development. Gandhi's view was that the rural people should take the decision of their administration and development skill. But it is being found in the study that majority of the rural people don't take part in the meeting of Gram Sabha.

The people of our country particularly the rural common people know Gandhiji as the political leader of freedom movement. Though Gandhiji was not an economist yet his model of rural economy is practical and suitable for Indian rural condition and its prosperity.

### CONCLUSION:

During the field study the researcher have to know clearly that the Panchayats of the state generally implemented the schemes which are directly or indirectly related with Gandhian principles and sponsored by Central or State Governments but they do not implemented any schemes prepared by themselves relating to Gandhian principles for rural development. The schemes which have already been implemented by the Panchayats for rural development which are related to Gandhian principles are as follows- **(a) Indira Awas Yojana (b) Gram Swarojgar Yojana (c) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (d) National Old Age Pension Scheme (e) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (f) National Family Benefit Scheme (g) Mid-day Meal Scheme (h) Kannya Surakhya Achari (i) Janani Surakhya Achari (j) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (k) Chief Minister's Jeevan Jyoti Swarojgar Yojana (l) Integrated Child Development Services Scheme** etc.

Some of the schemes are not directly implemented by the GPs rather they are implemented by some government departments though the beneficiaries belong to the Panchayat area. Moreover these schemes are directly or indirectly related to Gandhian principles of rural development.

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