



International Day of Non-Violence: A Global Call for Peace and Understanding

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Abstract

The International Day of Non-violence, annually celebrated on 2 October, dedicated to the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, who is an epitome of non-violence from the entire world. The day tells of the philosophy and a strategy which opposes use of force in dealing with an issue, on ways of bringing change, politically or socially. With proliferation of conflicts in the global community, population shock, social injustice and climate upheavals ranging from wildfires across Australia to the Amazon rainforest and flooding across the mid-west in United States, non-violence has further become significant. The United Nations started this day in 2007 and asked individuals globally to refuse to use violence to resolve conflicts and to promote non-violence. Thus nonviolence which was used by such leaders as Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr and Nelson Mandela is more than just the lack of violence but positive force that fosters justice, human respect and reconciliation. This philosophy is premised on two main components whereby the only way to attain peace is by embracing non-violence, understanding and refraining from any form of harm whether physical or psychological. It supports human rights and urges the governments to find ways of eradicating the actual causes of violence including pre-eminently the social injustice. In the contemporary world where conflict and violence have not abated in different parts of the world the International Day of Non-Violence is a reminder that sustained peace is a process that people across the world and every individual, group and nation needs to foster in their daily lives. It is for the governments, civil society organizations and individuals to make use of this day as a time of the year for the reflection of how more can



be done to foster the culture of peace. Practical use of the principles based on the idea of non-violence, could be brought to use in people's education, with the help of awareness raising and community mobilization.

Key Words- Non-violence, United Nations, International Day of Non-Violence, community mobilization

Introduction

The International Day of Non-Violence is celebrated even on the October 2nd, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi the most prominent leader, with a message against violence, nonviolence. They commemorated this day so that the whole world acknowledges honour the non-violent protest and civil disobedience can be in the attainment of social, political and cultural justice. More than ever now, Gandhi's idea of nonviolent resistance or Ahimsa can be observed to be highly applicable in today's constantly troubled society. As violence reappears in modern societies, local and global, the International Day of Non-Violence encourages the idea of non-violent means as effective ways of achieving peace and progress.

Purposes of the International Day of Non-Violence

This international celebration is not only a tribute to Gandhi's work but also a reminder of an effective tool to fight today's oppressions and injustices. In the year 2007, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe 2nd of October every year as the International Day of Nonviolence to honor of Gandhi's passionate role in the fight against injustice and violence and his stream for peace throughout the world. The day is commemorated in order to remind the generations of the importance of non-violence and the increased mobilization towards world peace and togetherness. Peace, as a principle applies not only to the physical world, but to the mental and spoken realm as well. This is the reason the challenge is in creating a paradigm shift that calls for the settlement of disagreement without violence but rather understanding, at the international level. The International Day of Non-Violence is a reminder to individuals, societies and countries that, there exists need to ensure that conflicts are solved without violence or aggression towards any person or group.



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OCTOBER 2ND

The Philosophy of Non-Violence:

Ahimsa as a principle is never originated by Gandhi but it was inherited from the old Indian culture, specifically with Jainism and Buddhism. The thing was that Gandhi introduced a number of distinctly spiritual notions and plans into the sphere of political and social movements. This is the true figure of his leadership of India's struggle for political freedom from British colonization through nonviolent civil resistance. With regards to Gandhi it is also important to make a few important points about the nature and application of non-violent civil disobedience, namely that non-violence is not a method for him but a lifestyle. He conceived that genuine peace can be obtained when the people of the different nations respect human person and solve their conflict without bitterness and animosity. To Gandhi, Passive resistance was not the avoidance of war, but the way of engaging the conflict in search of a victory that was not paid for with more suffering. His non-violent protests such as the Salt March and the Quit India Movement garnered mass support and revealed moral decadence of tyrannical rulers, to underscore that nonviolent protests yielded the collapse of even the harshest violators.

Thus, the significance of the Non-violent simulated by Gandhi was not only granted to the Indian

territory alone. His methods sparked civil rights movements all over the world from the coloured struggle of Martin Luther King Junior of America to the apartheid struggle of South Africa's Nelson Mandela. These leaders believed in violence not persisting in civil disobedience and striving for justice as a form of fighting injustice.

Non-Violence in Modern Times:

Non-violence is an important topic today like it was in the past. The violent phenomenon in the 21st century can manifest itself through different forms such as wars, acts of terrorism, examples of domestic violence, hate crimes, and systemic injustice. In Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine, among other countries, wars have erupted resulting in high victim tolls. Concurrently, protests in different countries against police violence, sexism, climate apathy, and racism have been suppressed by force and escalated into violence. The theme of the International Day of Non-Violence allows for addressing these concerns by drawing attention the importance of nonviolent action. Non-violent movements remain relevant in demanding change by different societies and governments. Arab Spring started off as non-violent protests and yet proved that it could usher in change. For the climate activist at large, whether actively protesting or providing informed opinion as a policy influencer, meaningful change entails combatting the power structures that have put our planet on this dangerous path, but this does not necessarily mean violence. Nonetheless, a campaign of non-violence comes with its set of challenges. Calm protests in the era of the internet and social media become appropriated, distorted, or silenced altogether. Furthermore, strong reactions to passive actions may make people hope that their movements will not be violent. People around the world are still struggling to raise awareness on advocating for peaceful means and advocating for the power in nonviolence.

Promoting a Culture of Peace: Education and Awareness

In its widest, meaningful understanding, the International Day of Non-Violence is not only about raising awareness about non-violent movements but educating others about the importance of having a culture of peace. Non-violence has to be fostered right from the grassroots level, beginning with the school going children. Schools and colleges have a major role to ensure that empathy and tolerance levels of the students are developed along with conflict solving skills.



There have been calls for peace education from many organizations including the United Nations. They also support integration of non-violence in school curricula, saying that it allows children to develop knowledge that violent attitudes are not the only viable option. Explaining Gandhi, King and Mandela's leadership show the younger generation that peace is not simply the lack of conflict, but something that must be sought by people. All in all, non-violent conflict solution entails eradicating causes of rivalry at larger perspective. Violence proves to be rooted in poverty, inequality, discrimination and limited or no access to education. There has been a call for individuals to help support both the economic and social aspects in order to minimize the development of factors or situations that facilitate violence. The prevention of violence depends not only on peace strategies but is a call for systemic issues and raised awareness of unequal distribution of resources in the society.

Non-Violence in Daily Life

While mass mobilizations are required, the Gandhian idea of Satyagraha also has to work at the level of the person. The International Day of Non-Violence therefore challenges each person to think about how the individual can make a positive change for the world in their day to day life. This could include conflict resolved with personal reasons other than violence, avoid using Alienation in speaking against injustice, or spreading togetherness in the society. Non-violence is about acknowledging the worth, the sanctity of life of every person on this planet. It demands tolerance, proper attitude, and the ability to fight for justice with no negative impact on other people. On the one hand, there has never been such high stakes where the global community is divided and conflict is almost commonplace, especially when we need it most.

Where and How the Commitment of Nonviolent Cultures Made by Governments and Institutions

On one hand, it is necessary to emphasize the actions of ordinary people and local communities; on the other, there are states and global organizations. National policies and commitments must be aligned in support of, and committed to, the principles of peace, human rights, and justice. This includes the administration of conflict by diplomacy, eradicating social injustices by social reforms, and establishing law enforcement agencies that do not gain the public order by the use



of violence. It is crucial for necessary international organizations, including the United Nation, keep on advocating for peaceful conflict solving methods such as mediation, maintaining international peace by conducting peace keeping missions, strengthening of human rights. Joint actions are required to guarantee that law reigns but people do not kill each other, and activists are not prosecuted but protected instead.

Conclusion:

Rather than just being an observance, the International Day of Non-Violence is an invitation for more than just a few hours of reflection. It challenges each of us as individuals, members of various communities, governments, social organizations, and international systems to affirm the possibility of a world without violence. Thus promoting the policy of non-violence we follow the greatest leader of all times, Mahatma Gandhi and all other freedom fighters that have never resorted to violence in their struggle for freedom and justice for all. Even more, we are ready to create a tomorrow, where people dedicate their lives to listening and respecting each other rather than killing our fellow humans. At a time when violent conflicts are all too common, this day is a call to recognize that the world of non-violence is not out of reach, if not today.

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