

Gandhi's role in the Indian National Movement

Dr Isha Verma*

Abstract

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is called Mahatma Gandhi -as he is seen as opponent of British colonialism, as champion of civil rights for racial, religious and other minorities, as a critic of the industrial system of production, as a great pacifist. Truth [Satya] and Non-Violence [ahimsa] were the main tenets of Gandhian philosophy. These led to Satyagraha. During his protest against the British, he realised to make India self-reliant, Swadeshi and Charka [goods manufactured in India were required] was essential. The demand for Swaraj came with the Simon commission. While examining the Gandhian Philosophy I would be analysing the role played by Gandhi in the national movement.

Words: truth, non-violence, satyagraha, swadeshi, non-cooperation civil disobedience, quit India

Mahatma Gandhi is known as the father of the nation. Ram Manohar Lohia stated that 'tens of millions throughout the world saw in him their spokesman, the solace and the remedy for their sufferings and distress'. Time magazine selected Gandhi as a joint runner-up with Franklin Roosevelt to Albert Einstein as 'person of the twentieth century'. He was singled out as the century's foremost representative of the crusade for civil rights and individual liberties.

Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915. He started his protest from supporting indigo planters in Champaran in 1917, and the colonial tax bureaucracy in Kheda in 1918. He supported the Ahmedabad textile workers striking against the mill owners. In 1919, Gandhi started his first Satyagraha after Jallianwala Bagh massacre against the Rowlatt Act. This was followed by Non- Cooperation Movement by gaining control over the Indian National Congress. This was followed by the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-1934, and the Quit India Movement of 1942. Before we go into the details of the national movement, I will examine the Gandhian Philosophy.

To understand the philosophy of a person it is essential to examine every stage of his life, as man evolves during his lifetime. Mahatma Gandhi's life journey was in search of truth. His life is divided into four phases:

*Associate Professor PGDAV Evening College University of Delhi, isha1963@gmail.com