

ABSTRACT

In the beginning of the 20th century, India was one of the least developed nations of the world. However, one man from this very territory established himself as the most influential personalities of the world. He was none other than Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi started his career as a lawyer and fought against racial discrimination in South Africa. In the year 1915, he returned back to India and led the Indian Freedom Struggle. It is pertinent to note that Mahatma Gandhi was a voracious reader and a writer. It is pertinent to mention that his thoughts and writings which were practiced and preached by him a century ago is still relevant for 21st century India and the world.

In the light of the above facts the authors in this research paper tend to study the writings and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and how it can guide the modern-day India and Indians.

Keywords- *India, Mahatma Gandhi, Freedom, Struggle.*

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Introduction

It's very rare that a person's life and his after-life get equally celebrated. Noted author Ramchandra Guha in his book "Gandhi Before India" contends that Gandhi, also called as "Bapu" enjoyed a long life and is also enjoying a vigorous after-life. His techniques of non-violence and "Satyagraha" which he thoroughly practiced and professed not only inspired the Indian nationalists but they crossed frontiers and inspired rebels and statesmen all over the world.¹

Jawaharlal Nehru in his autobiography marks his arrival in Indian Freedom Struggle as "*a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths, like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling conditions.*"²

But, while going through the introductory lines of our first prime minister, the authors were going through a paradox, and the paradox was that whether Gandhi really needs an introduction in post independent India? While seeking an answer the authors went through different variables, and finally came to a conclusion that yes. We need to introduce Gandhi in Post-Independent India. In the light of the contemporary political swings and communal epithets swirling around the virtual social space, Bapu needs a humble introduction in the minds of his million countrymen for whom he suffered all his life. He needs an introduction though not in person, but in thoughts and practice.

While seeking an appropriate introduction for one of the most cherished figures of Indian Independence our quench paused for a while upon the lines of an old Mahatma's associate in South Africa who described his identity in seventeen words. Without prejudice to any other introduction available his precise seventeen words comprehend most of the Mahatma's traits. He

¹ Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi Before India* 3 (1st edition, 2013).

² Jawahar Lal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* 392 (2004 edition).

described Gandhi as “*Diwan’s son, barrister, stretcher-bearer, pamphleteer, cultured thinker, courteous gentleman, manual laborer, nurse, teacher, agitator, propagandist, sterling friend, no man’s enemy, ex-convict, sadhu, chosen leader of his people, and arch passive-resister*”³

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the most influential personalities of the 20th century. But life and the surrounding myth has proposed a simple philosophy of man being a mortal creature of nature. Although, Mahatma didn’t die a natural death but was assassinated in his own nation by a religious fanatic on 30th January 1948.

In this, article the authors have tried to make a humble introduction of cherished Gandhian philosophy to the 21st century India in regard to freedom of speech, right to protest and repressive use of law of sedition. This article further tries to analyze the concept of welfare state in the light of increasing income disparity and Covid-19 experience. The authors have further dwelled into the plural religious Gandhian character with a thorough reference of secular constitution in the light of communal riots in post independent India. At this juncture, the authors also wish to leave the readers with a question, that whether we as a state have assimilated Gandhi in the national character? Whether Gandhi is enjoying a vigorous after life?

Gandhi Sedition Trial: A Moral Guide to Post-Independent Governments

India enjoys a pivotal place of being the world largest democracy in the list of world’s known democracies. But the latest edition of the democracy Index spelled gloom for India. India slipped 10 places in the 2019 global ranking list and just managed to secure 51st place. Survey marks the primary cause of this deterioration to be “the democratic regression” and “an erosion of civil liberties in the country.”⁴ Noted constitutional law author M.P. Jain in his book Indian Constitutional law observed that “*freedom of speech and expression is bulwark of democratic government. It is essential for human development and it is regarded as the first condition of*

³ Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi Before India* 9 (1st edition, 2013).

⁴ Saira Aslam, [India drops 10 ranks to 51st position in Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index](https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-falls-to-51st-position-in-eius-democracy-index/article30624354.ece), The Hindu, (April 15, 2022, 11:00 am) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-falls-to-51st-position-in-eius-democracy-index/article30624354.ece>

liberty. Furthermore, it occupies a preferred position in the hierarchy of liberties and it helps in protecting all other liberties.”⁵

Protest is one of the most celebrated democratic concepts across the all the existing democracies, and, right to stage a non-violent protest has also been protected under article 19. Since India is world’s largest democracy, it is certain that India will also be home to world’s greatest protest movements. Dawn of this new decade witnessed a nation-wide protest staged against the union government’s decision to enact the Citizenship Amendment Act 2019. Amid this pan India protest a news piece travelled from the southern part of the territory and sought the attention of the news makers sitting across the nation. This news concerned the filing of a case of sedition against the management and staff of a Karnataka's school in Bidar, for staging a drama on 21st January wherein it was alleged that the children insulted Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the context of CAA.⁶

Law of sedition and the surrounding debate has long been in the epicenter of the nation policy debates and has gained the attention of jurists, policy makers, and the academia. There are two school of thoughts, one arguing against the use of section 124-A as a repressive colonial tool to stifle the dissent and advises us to get rid of this blot on the civil liberties, while another seeks a non-perpetual stay and argues that it need to be judiciously used by the authorities.⁷

Section 124-A of Indian Penal Code, defines sedition as *“whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or*

⁵ M.P Jain, *Indian Constitutional Law* 1019 (7th edition, 2013).

⁶ Sedition Case Against Karnataka School: Cops Question Kids Over Anti-CAA Play, Outlook India, (April 15, 2022, 1:00 pm) <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/india-news-sedition-case-against-karnataka-school-cops-question-children-over-anti-cao-play/346760>

⁷ Arvind Datar, Section 124A should stay, The Indian Express, (April 16, 2022, 9:00 pm) <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/section-124a-should-stay-2/>

with fine.” Three explanations are also provided in section 124-A of which, first explanation says that “The expression “disaffection” includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity.”⁸

If we will trace the history of sedition law in India then we will find that the law was first mentioned in Section 113 of Thomas Babington Macaulay’s draft penal code. Section 113 of the draft penal code “*penalized any act which attempted to excite feelings of disaffection to the government though critical and respectful comments on government measures were exempted from the rigors of penalty.*”⁹ It is pertinent to note that section 113 of the Macaulay’s draft failed to get incorporated in the final version Indian Penal Code, but ten years after the enactment of IPC this law was introduced by Sir James Fitzames Stephen, by an amendment bill.¹⁰ Since the law has a British colonial origin hence pre-constitutional interpretation and post-constitutional interpretation to this rule will broaden our understanding over the subject.

Pre-Constitutional Interpretation & Mahatma’s sedition trial

Privy Council defined the meaning of word disaffection, “*as an utterance which excites or even attempts to excite a bad feeling towards the government is punishable under this section, irrespective of the intention of the speaker or the effect of the utterance upon the audience.*”¹¹

Gandhi Sedition’s Trial:

In the year 1922, Gandhi was tried under the repressive law of sedition and was sentenced to six years of imprisonment by the District and Sessions Court of Ahmedabad. Unlike his contemporaries, he pleaded guilty to the accusations and submitted his dissent in the favor of right to freedom of speech and expression.

Gandhi in his statement to the court submitted that, “*Section 124-A, under which I’m happily tried is the prince among the political sections of the IPC designed to suppress the liberty of citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long he*

⁸ Indian Penal Code, S. 124 A.

⁹ Abhinav Chandrachud, *Republic of Rhetoric* 23 (1st edition, 2017).

¹⁰ Abhinav Chandrachud, *Republic of Rhetoric* 25 (1st edition, 2017).

¹¹ *Sadashiv v Emperor* (1947) 74 IA 89.

does not contemplate promote or incite violence.” He further submitted that *“I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India’s patriots have been tried under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under that section.”*¹²

Although Mahatma was sentenced under section 124-A, but District and Sessions judge C.N. Broomfield while pronouncing the sentence generously remarked *“It will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category, from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that in the eyes of millions of your countrymen you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life.”*¹³

Post Constitutional Interpretation

The repressive colonial experiences provoked the constitutional framers to draft a liberal constitutional structure and in the aftermath of colonial oppressive lessons, constitution framers firstly secured right to freedom of speech and expression under article 19(1)(a) and deleted the word sedition from article 19(2). The omission of word sedition exempted the criticism of the government from the rigors of penalty. Now the speech can be penalized in conditions wherein *“if it was attended with violence or was calculated to bring anarchy so as to either undermine the security of the state, or tend to overthrow it.”*¹⁴ But the first constitutional amendment added the phrase “interest of public order” in article 19(2). The term, “interest of public order” is wide enough to cover incitement to violence¹⁵, and hence mere words would also amount to offence defined under section 124-A. Supreme Court in its land mark ruling of Kedar Nath Singh v. State of Bihar, interpreted section 124-A and held that *“an utterance would be punishable under this section only when it is intended or has reasonable tendency to create disorder or disturbance of public peace by resorting to violence.”*¹⁶

The instances of labeling sedition charges against the school students for staging a protest against the government augurs ill for a democratic state. Without prejudice to the merits of the case, use

¹² Abhinav Chandrachud, *Republic of Rhetoric* 39 (1st edition, 2017).

¹³ A.G Noorani, *On Nationalism* 71 (1st edition, 20160).

¹⁴ *Romesh Thappar v State of Madras*, AIR 1950 SC 124.

¹⁵ *Debi Soren v State*, AIR 1954 Pat 254.

¹⁶ *Kedar Nath Singh v State of Bihar*, AIR 1962 SC 955.

of this repressive tool with all its potential will curb the dissenting voice which is the life blood of a healthy democracy.^{17 18} If we read Session's judge Broomfield's remarks then we'll realize that even he was also convinced that Gandhi was not perpetrating hate or inciting violence, but the rigor of the colonial law demanded the sentence. Hence, he was duty bound to pronounce the judgement. Gandhi's sedition trial should be taken as a moral guide by the present-day government, and such repressive laws should be judiciously invoked.

The Invisible Welfare State and Forgotten State Duty

India adopted its Constitution on 26th January 1950, but the preparations for this auspicious day started as early in 1946, when Lord Wavell gave his nod to the Congress demand for the framing its own constitution for the Independent India.¹⁹ Constituent Assembly witnessed participation of person from different spectrum, and in the words of Granville Austin, *"this exercise was nothing less than national and social revolution respectively, wherein national revolution focused on democracy and liberty which the colonial rule denied to all the Indians, whereas social revolution focused on emancipation and equality."*²⁰ Although Mahatma Gandhi was not a member of Constituent Assembly, and even he didn't breathe in the republic of India, but few of the Gandhian ideas got incorporated in the final text of Indian Constitution. Initially few of the Constituent Assembly members advocated the idea of adoption of "Gandhian Constitution" based on revived "Panchyati Raj" system. However, this system was vehemently opposed by Dr. B.R Ambedkar who opined that *"village republics would have been the ruination of India."*²¹ Though his "Panchyati Raj or village republic" system failed to make its place, but his ideas for economic and social justice secured its due place in the form of formation of a welfare state.

¹⁷ Praveen Swami, The compelling virtue of treason, The Indian Express, (April 20, 2022, 9:55pm), <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/the-compelling-virtue-of-treason-4559218/>

¹⁸ Ajit Prakash Shah J., Criticism is not sedition, The Hindu (April 20, 2022, 11:55pm), <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/criticism-is-not-sedition/article29611491.ece>.

¹⁹ Ramchandra Guha, *India after Gandhi* 103 (1st edition, 2007).

²⁰ Ramchandra Guha, *India after Gandhi* 106 (1st edition, 2007).

²¹ Ramchandra Guha, *India after Gandhi* 106 (1st edition, 2007).

Principle of Economic Justice enshrined in Article 38 & Covid-19 experience

Article 38 of the Indian Constitution enshrines the idea of welfare state. It says “*The state shall strive to promote the welfare the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice-social economic and political-shall pervade all institutions of national life.*” Ruling upon the object of article 38, Hon’ble Supreme Court held that “*the object in article 38 is to evolve a state which must constantly strive to promote welfare of the people by securing and making as effectively as it may be, a social order in which social, political and economic justice.*”²² Clause (2) in article 38 makes it obligatory on the part of the state to strive to minimize the inequalities in income and endeavor to eliminate inequalities.”²³

But post constitutional experience narrates an altogether different story, where welfare state seems invisible and absent from the lives of its countrymen. One of the classic examples of the absent welfare state was visible during the current Covid-19 outbreak. March 2020, started with a world-wide pandemic threat of Covid-19. In order to stop the spread and to equip the healthcare infrastructure to battle this novel Corona-Virus, Union Government decided to put a nationwide lockdown. From the second day of the lockdown, the plight of migrant workers traveling barefoot to their respective destinations gained the attention of the news readers as well as news makers and their suffering lamented the welfare state on its face which failed to provide not only a better life and livelihood, but also a decent safe escape from the suffering.

The plight of these migrant workers was quite similar to that of the Bengal famine affected homeless men. US Army Guidebook provided to the American Army Officials during the Second World-War featured a new word for the migrants of the great Bengal famine "The Homeless Man". It described the term homeless man as “*crowd of men, women and children huddled together shouting and jabbering-they are new arrivals in the city, driven here by famine, flood, drought or other causes, they come from Bengal itself, from Bihar or Assam.*” Similar was the case during Covid-19 crisis.²⁴ The only departure from the guidebook definition was that these migrants were not new to the city, but these were either evicted tenants, or the one who has

²² *State of Bihar v. Kameshwar Singh*, AIR 1952 SC 252.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War* 214-215 (1st edition, 2015).

abandoned his/her tenancy rights in the anticipation of future unemployment in the wake of this pandemic. Their sufferings mirrored the differential development in a welfare state, wherein the income insecurities dragged them to the high ways.

Forgotten State Duty Under Article 39

Gandhi was the forerunner for formation of egalitarian society. His egalitarian traits can be witnessed all through his public life and his teachings. Gandhi advocated the idea of trusteeship. His trusteeship traits can be sensed in this quote wherein he says that “*supposing I have come by a fair amount of wealth, either by way of legacy, or by means of trade and industry, I must know that all that wealth does not belong to me; what belongs to me is the right to an honorable livelihood, no better than that enjoyed by millions of others. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community*”.²⁵

Gandhi always advocated against the excess of wealth and his teachings influenced the Constituent Assembly members. Article 38 which followed by Article 39 lays emphasis upon economic justice.²⁶ Article 39 of the Constitution states that “*the state with the responsibility of directing the policy towards securing that the operation of economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.*” Hon’ble Supreme Court in its landmark *Kesavananda Bharti v Union of India* judgment outlined the significance of Article 39(c). Apex court explaining the significance observed that, “*the expression economic system used in article 39(c), the article has not the object of changing the economic system generally, but is confined to only preventing concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. What this clause envisages is that the state should secure the operation of economic system in such a way as not to result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. Where there is already concentration of wealth and means of production which is to the common detriment, the law under Article 39(c) would be only to*

²⁵ Azim Premji, Mahatma Gandhi’s idea of the rich as trustees can make an effective, sustainable difference, The Indian Express, (April 25, 2022, 01:00 pm) <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/mahatma-gandhi-wealth-6063201/>.

²⁶ Durga Das Basu, *Commentary on Constitution of India*, Vol-7, at. 6538.

break up or regulate as may be necessary to concentration of wealth and means of production.”²⁷

But the post-independence reality fails to comply with the constitutional mandate which tasks the state with the responsibility of minimizing the income inequalities by proactive government policies. Without prejudice to the merits of post-independence proactive state policies, the broadening gulf in the recent Oxfam income inequalities survey tells the story of absent welfare state. If we analyze the principle of economic justice laid down in Articles 38 and 39 then the principle will fail to hold water on its face, and equality seems more Orwellian in nature, where everyone was supposed to be equal, but someone was more equal than other. The recent experiences should be taken as a clarion call, and policy makers should re-think their poverty elevation and income equality policies with a through reference of Gandhian egalitarianism. They should fashion a policy which should not only be based upon the principles of equality, but should work upon the principle of equality.

The Subtle Co-Existence of Secular State and Communal Riots

Nation witnessed a series of communal riots in its post-independence history but the latest memory of the communal riot’s dates back to February 2020 in the national capital itself. Riots broke out in Northeast Delhi which resulted in 53 casualties.²⁸ In the wake of upcoming Delhi assembly elections accusations concerning the registration of FIR against the few went on and it was finally settled by the Solicitor General’s submission in Hon’ble Delhi High Court wherein learned Solicitor General appearing on behalf of Delhi Police submitted that, “the condition is not conducive at this moment. FIRs will be registered at an appropriate time”.²⁹ Leaving the issue of conducive condition, and the appropriate time to file the FIR, upon the wisdom of the High Court and the learned Solicitor General, it’s also pertinent to understand the origin of this communal divide having a horrid blood shady past which is nothing less than a blot upon the secular nature of our constitutional framework.

²⁷ *Kesavananda Bharti v Union of India*, AIR 1973 SC 1461.

²⁸ What are Delhi Riots 2020, Business Standard, (April 27, 2022, 10:am) <https://www.business-standard.com/about/what-is-delhi-riots-2020>.

²⁹ Centre, police get three weeks to submit report on hate speeches that 'triggered' Delhi riots, The New Indian Express, (April 27, 2022, 11:am) <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/delhi/2020/feb/28/centre-police-get-three-weeks-to-submit-report-on-hate-speeches-that-triggered-delhi-riots-2109573.html>

Gandhi's Plural Approach & Pre-Independence Communal Divide

The history of Hindu-Muslim divide dates back to the starting of the British regime wherein the sight of communal harmony during the 1857 rebellion alarmed the British Empire. In early 1859, Lord Elphinstone who was serving as the Governor of Bombay advised the British Government in the U.K. that in order to rule the colony in perpetuity “Divide et impera” an old Roman maxim should be our policy, and later on this idea was furthered by Sir John Strachey, in his opinion to London that “existence of hostile creeds among the Indian people was essential for our position in India”.³⁰

There have been various instances of communal clash in the Indian freedom struggle. Amid all the communal tensions Gandhi seemed to be a unifying force who tried his soul to keep the nationalists threaded in the auspicious independence goal. One of the classic memories of threading the communal divide dates back to September 17, 1924, when Gandhi saddened by the rising Hindu-Muslim tension in the town of Kohat, in the (North-West Frontier Province), started a twenty-one day fast in the house of Mohammad Ali in Delhi. Gandhi wanted to visit Kohat but the government denied the permission.³¹ After few months, in December 1924, Shaukat Ali and Gandhi visited Rawalpindi, wherein the refugees from Kohat were stationed. Gandhi in his statement to Tribune newspaper appealed “*the Mussalmans of Kohat will see their way to meet the refugees and invite them to return to Kohat, under a promise of friendship and full security*”.³²

Gandhi seemed to be a precursor of plural religious thoughts. In January 1928, Gandhi addressing the gathering of International Fellowship of Religion remarked that “*all religions were true and also all had some error in them, therefore we can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become Hindu, or if we are Mussalmans, not that a Hindu or a Christian should become a Mussalman, nor should we even secretly pray that anyone should be converted,*

³⁰ Shashi Tharoor, *An Era of Darkness* 120 (1st edition, 2016).

³¹ Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi: The Years That Changed the World* 220 (1st edition, 2018).

³² Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi: The Years That Changed the World* 224 (1st edition, 2018).

*but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu becomes a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Christian a better Christian. That is the fundamental truth of fellowship”.*³³

With the formation of Muslim League, and Britain’s amorality and cynicism, Muslims were persuaded to think of themselves, and by 1944 a large number of Muslims rallied to the call of “Islam in Danger” fearing any further prospect in Brahman-Baniya Raj.³⁴ This fear psyche and Jinnah’s political will found its way in the Cripps mission note authored by Penderel Moon. In his note, Moon opined that “*there is more likelihood of obtaining Hindu consent to division than Muslim consent to union. To divide India against Hindu wishes would not necessarily involve force; and at worst the force required is likely to less*”, and finally a failed settlement between the league and congress led towards formation of two separate nations, one of which become theocratic state, ie. Islamic republic of Pakistan, while other retained its secular credo.

India: A secular state with communal riots

Nehru in his 13th December, 1946 Constituent Assembly speech moved the objective resolution outlining “*the idea of secular India guaranteeing its citizens justice, social and economic, equality of status; of opportunity, freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship.*”³⁵ The Constitution enshrined plural religious order, but secular word was omitted in the original text of the preamble. The word secular was added by 42nd Constitutional Amendment. One of the reasons behind the omission of can be traced in the B.R. Ambedkar’s Constituent Assembly debates. Dr. Ambedkar opined that the term ‘secular’ need not be specifically mentioned in preamble because he believed that “*the entire Constitution embodied the concept of secular state, which meant non-discrimination on grounds of religion and equal rights and status to all citizens.*”³⁶

But, if we analyze the secular credentials of our democratic republic in the light of communal riots then we will come to a conclusion that either we were not suited to the secular credo, or, there has been a continuous absence of Gandhi’s morality in the national character since 30th

³³ Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi: The Years That Changed the World* 267 (1st edition, 2018).

³⁴ Ramchandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* 27 (1st edition, 2008).

³⁵ Ramchandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* 104 (1st edition, 2008).

³⁶ Krishnadas Rajgopal, Debates show why Preamble’s original text left out the two words, *The Hindu*, (April 27, 2022, 10:00 pm) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/debates-show-why-preambles-original-text-left-out-the-two-words/article6831694.ece>

January 1948. The absence of a unifying figure haunts the secular state and humanity, and in order to protect the secular character of our constitution, we need a Gandhi in 21st century India. We need a Gandhi to fill this absence and to work toward peace among warring sections of humanity.³⁷

Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi lived one of the greatest lives but was assassinated by Nathuram Godse on 30th January 1948. Recently, one of the Member of Parliament designated Godse to be a true patriot. Though, the Member of Parliament publicly apologized for her wrong, after the harsh criticism and condemnation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.³⁸ This is the public image of Gandhi that none can dare to tarnish.

Speaking on All India Radio on the evening of 30th January 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru said, “*the light has gone out of our lives but immediately corrected himself saying no the light shines and will continue to shine thousands of years hence.*”³⁹ While going through the aforementioned lines by our first prime minister, and witnessing the spring of events post-independence, one will always stuck in the binary wherein he will question his wisdom that whether we as a state have assimilated Gandhi in the national character? Whether Gandhi is enjoying a vigorous after life?

In the authors opinion the answer to these questions seems to be in negative. While going through the above-mentioned lines by our first prime minister, and witnessing the Gandhi-Godse debate and the spring of events, at times authors gets persuaded with the fact that whatever Nehru said in his opening lines to mourn the Mahatma's death was correct. The light has gone out of our lives. At least the post-independence experiences mirror the same story. We have confined Gandhi to a visual order where paying homage on 2nd October and 30th January has

³⁷ Sudarshan Iyengar, Gandhi's vision of a liberal, non-violent society can save humanity from ecological and other disasters, *The Indian Express*, (April 27, 2022, 10:00 pm), <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/mahatma-gandhi-teachings-ideology-6056803/>

³⁸ Akhilesh Singh & Mohua Chatterjee, Won't be able to forgive Pragya for Gandhi remarks: PM Modi, *The Times OF India*, (April 28, 2022, 09:00 am) <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/news/wont-be-able-to-forgive-pragya-for-gandhi-remarks-pm-modi/articleshow/69381258.cms>

³⁹ Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi the years that changed the world* 886 (1st edition, 2018).

been established as the greatest tribute. But actually, if we wish to see that light shining, we need to instill Gandhi in the national character, we need to frame policies based upon the Gandhian principles, state actions should mirror the attitude to being non repressive, and more importantly we need to instill Gandhi in our private lives.

The colonial legacy of sedition need be given a revisit in the light of post-independence experience. His exceptional bravado of submitting his dissent should be cherished in independent India by allowing a free space to flower the right of freedom of speech and expression. We, as a nation need to understand the difference between the criticism of the government doesn't mean being against the nation.

If we wish to see the light signing, we need to bridge the income gulf through pro-active government policy. Governments need to re-visit their poverty elevation and income equality policies, and re-discover a pro-active poverty elevation policy with a through reference of Gandhian egalitarianism. We as a nation should strive towards a welfare state not only in principle, but in practice.

If, we really wish to give Gandhi a vigorous after-life, then we as nation with all our strength should wipe out communal animalistic instinct from our social order. Gandhi preached and practiced communal harmony all across his life, and finally got assassinated by a bullet fired from a communal pistol. If we really wish to provide him a better after life, we need to adopt secularism in not only in social sphere but in our personal lives as well.