

**REVIEW OF ECONOMIC IDEA FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF
MAHATMA GANDHI**

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❖ INTRODUCTION:

Indians should not forget Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to India's independence. In the history of independent India, you can see the name of Mahatma Gandhi engraved in golden letters. The way of social, political, economic, and cultural life that Mahatma Gandhi tainted man became immortal not only in India but in the world. The thoughts expressed by Mahatma Gandhi, whatever he wrote, are his economic thoughts. Mahatma Gandhi was not an economist, he did not even study economics in-depth, but he was influenced by Tolstoy, Those, Kropotkin, Ruskin and Gokhale's thoughts had an impact. Mahatma Gandhi who was a great freedom fighter and is a celebrated national leader had a certain positive economic idea based on non-violence and truth. People know Gandhiji not only as a Mahatma or political agitator but also as a social and economic reformer. He found that the progress of the country lies in the development of the majority of its rural villages; develop rural economy industry and rural skill. Mahatma Gandhi always used to say that "India lives in its villages" literally and form the social, economic, and political respective the statement is valid even today. As on today around 45% of the nation's population living in rural areas. Those People who live in rural areas also right to live with the same quality of life as the people living in urban areas.

Mahatma Gandhi's views on Sarvodaya, religion, politics, sociology, village industries, trustees, etc., seem to hide his economic views. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas were put together by his followers to form Gandhian economics. But Gandhiji did not accept the principle of economics as Gandhian economics. No matter how much discussion, how much brainstorming, how much writing was done on Gandhiji's thought, it has not been done on the thought of any modern Indian expert. Some universities in our country have set up separate departments to study Mahatma Gandhi's ideas. To study Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas, it is necessary to study the various concepts he proposed.

❖ CONCEPT OF GRAM SWARAJ:

Among various economic concepts of Mahatma Gandhi, "Walk to the village" is an important concept. True India rejoices in the village, that is why Gandhiji gave this message. Gandhiji wanted every village to be economically self-sufficient for the development of the country. Before the arrival of the British in India, India was a developed nation. The villages in India were self-

sufficient. The rural man did not have to rush to the city in search of employment. After the establishment of British rule in India, the British government did not try to set up new industries in India. The British imported substitutes for goods produced in India. As a result, industries in India shut down. Small and cottage industries in particular suffered heavy losses. Modernization led to the collapse of small cottage industries. The self-sufficiency of the villages came to an end. The villagers started living in unemployment and poverty due to a lack of employment. So some were migrating to the city in search of employment, in such a situation, the GramSwaraj concept presented by Mahatma Gandhi. On the basis of which the development of rural areas will make it possible to develop the whole of India. Rural development is possible through Gandhi's concept of Gram Swaraj. While explaining this, Gandhi explains the two concepts of village self-sufficient and ideal village.

A) Villages self-sufficient:

According to Mahatma Gandhi, people who preserve Indian culture and lead a very simple life are literally born from villages. To solve the problem of poverty in rural areas, rural industries should be revived with emphasis on the development of industries such as khadi industry, soap, paper, firewood manufacturing, leather making and their manufacture. Charkha is a symbol of development to reduce rural unemployment. Each person should produce and use at least as much khadi as he needs. With the emphasis on rural development, agri-business and other occupations will meet the needs of rural people in the village itself. The life of every person in the village will be prosperous.

B) Ideal village:

Mahatma Gandhi emphasis on creating ideal villages in the concept of GramSwaraj. Villages should be designed to have sewerage systems, roadside trees, clean roads, flower trees in front of houses, schools, hospices, theaters, hospitals, clean drinking water, etc. There should be grounds for children to play and cattle to graze. All transactions should be conducted on a co-operative basis, making the production of the village available in the local market. Basic education should be compulsory. Laws and justice should be done through Gram Panchayat. Caste should be eradicated. Etc. features should be created in every village so that every village in India will have an ideal village.

For Gandhi, the model of self-reliant villages was the basis of a free democracy. He declared, "My idea of village *swaraj* is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity." His was not a model of a closed economy and a village economy perpetuating itself at the lower levels of income, but one in which local populations could be employed locally but with rising incomes and higher productivity. It is not well known that in his quest for technological improvement, Gandhi had put out an advertisement for a better

version of the *charkha* in British and Indian newspapers in 1929, and even offered a handsome reward of Rs 1 lakh for it (about ~2.5 crores on today). (www.hindustantimes.com)

❖ CONCEPT OF TRUSTEESHIP:

Mahatma Gandhi came up with the idea that the rich should be the trustees of wealth and not the masters. That is, the rich should use their wealth for the benefit of the people, not just for their own consumption. The idea of a trustee was based on the principle that man should keep his needs to a minimum. Behind this role was the principle of economic equality. The role played by the capitalists, the feudal lords, the landlords were to eliminate the inequality in the society if the trusted ideas were implemented. In his speech at the inauguration of Banaras Hindu VishwaVidyalaya (February 1916), Mahatma Gandhi introduced the idea of trust. Gandhiji's colleagues Kishorelal Mashruwala, Narhari Parikh, and Pyarelal drafted a draft in 1942 after discussing among themselves, in which Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of Sarvodaya prioritizes economic and social equality, and a credible idea is a basis for it. (*Marathi Vishvakosh Khand-16*)

Gandhiji being said, how can create economic equality in the capitalist economy by presenting the idea of trusteeship. The development of the country is based on economic equality. The idea of the trustee is to establish economic equality in the country in a non-violent way. With the rise of capitalism, the wealth of capitalists, entrepreneurs, traders, and landlords was increasing and the income of other like labor was not increasing. These are all components of the same country, so the income of all of them should increase equally. According to Gandhiji, those who have higher income should keep as much income as they need to spend and all other income should be spent for the benefit of the poor. In this context he did first then said. He had created a trust fund of all his income while he was in South Africa before telling the world the principle of trust. On this basis, he was challenging the rich of the country to become the trustees of the society. This challenge also received a response in that period. Ahmedabad's great labor organization, unique in the country, was an important step in this direction. In response to Gandhiji's challenge, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj created a trust fund called 'Jamnalal Seva Trust' Wardha and he became the first trustee of that trust. Gandhi used to call him a merchant prince. Such trustees should produce socialist not for the individual. Individuals should not have more wealth than society allows them to have. Gandhiji's motive behind this idea was to create a classless society.

❖ CONCEPT OF SWADESHI:

Swadeshi is also the mainstay of Gandhiji's economic thinking. Swadeshi was Gandhiji's political weapon at that time. Gandhiji's motive behind this movement was to protect the domestic industry by boycotting foreign goods. Gandhiji insisted that only if the goods required by the people of the country were produced in the country, then the development of domestic industries could take place and the wealth going abroad in the form of profit

could remain in the country and the nation could become self-reliant. Gandhiji was of the view that the use of indigenous goods gives impetus to domestic industry, the people of the country get jobs and income, other goods are fully utilized, the country's wealth remains in the country, the country's economic condition improves and the nation becomes self-reliant. But in the current changing situation, there are doubts about the importance of Swadeshi. Because the whole world is open and India is also supporting open trade. Mahatma Gandhi explained his thoughts on Swadeshi to the entire country. In it, he said that self-reliance, national interest and self-reliance are necessary for the conduct of Swadeshi. Swadeshi means to create such a perfect organization. Swadeshi means creating economic autonomy. The Swadeshi movement protects our self-esteem. At that time, people considered it their religious duty to participate in the Swadeshi movement and they believed that it would bring them freedom.

❖ **DECENTRALIZATION AND APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY**

According to Mahatma Gandhi, large-scale production was meant to be profit-oriented and therefore, harmful to society as it could lead to concentration of wealth and power in a few hands. Gandhiji was a staunch opponent of industrialization in the country and a supporter of a decentralized economy. According to him, instead of large mechanical industries, industries should be decentralized. The development of small scale industries will help in alleviating the problem of poverty and unemployment. Gandhi advocated decentralization because it could avoid violence. He suggested delocalization of production as against concentration, especially areas. His beliefs on decentralization were aimed at correcting all evils of a centralized economy. Gandhiji knew the particular implications of aggressive capitalism; no such humanitarian economic considerations can possibly curb the relentless advance of large mechanization initiated by high capitalist agencies. Therefore, he devised a scheme to suit one and all. A nation low on man-power can well use mechanization to reinforce its agricultural and mechanical production. But for a nation with a teeming population like India, it might augur no good. In 1946, Gandhi wrote: "I am not against machinery intrinsically. I am against machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle." (www.businesssociety.in) Gandhiji wasn't against machinery and welcomed such instruments and machinery that saved individual labour. But he was wary of technology-induced unemployment. Mechanization was good till it did not render people idle and unemployed.

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