



NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN INDIA: DIFFICULTILE AND WAYS

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Abstract

The religious and political leader have tried to understand India as one cultural and historical unit since ancient days. Old religious scriptures have called India, a nation. Shankaracharya established four religious temples in East, West, North and south corners of the country. Ashok, Samudra Gupta, Allauddin Khilji, Akbar and Aurangzeb tried to give it the form of a nation by establishing their empire on the whole of India. But even then against these efforts, the effort off keeping it divided into several kingdoms continued. Historically North has been a solid unit but in the South, efforts of independent existence have continued and they have been successful, too.

Introduction

During the reign Harsh, Chalukyas reigned independently in the South. After the Mughals, independent reign of Marathas existed in several States. This fissiparous tendency always existed in India. Sometimes it remained suppressed and sometimes rose high. But the fact is that this tendency has always existed in one form or the other. There were the reasons for the partition of the country in 1947 also. This fissiparous tendency has been responsible for invasion of outsiders and invitation to them for their help. Some difficulties related Indian Integration of India is given below.

Religions

In India, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists have always been living. Here religious unity had come to an end with the beginning of Buddhist religion and communalism remained on the Indian horizon in its naked form. The level of communal ill- will stopped so low that there had been terrible bloodshed even between the different groups of the same sect. Communal disturbances have continued in India in one form or the other. The basis of partition also has been religious intolerance. Partition led to terrible man- slaughter and the problem of refugees was created. Religious intolerance and bitterness is the main obstacle in our national integration.

Communities

There are several communities in India, such as Brahmans, kshatriyas, Vaish and Sudras, in Hindus, Sheikh, Saiyed, Mughals and Pathans in Mulims; Digamber and Shwetambers in Jains; Akalis and Nirankaris in Sikhs etc. There are religious groups also in India for example, Sanatani and Aryasamajis, Shiya and Sunni, Mahayan and Hinyan etc. The attitude of these communities and groups is so narrow that they do not hesitate to neglect national interest before their communal or group selfishness. If in a particular region, a community or person is supreme, he tries to employ members of its own community or groups in services. Similarly, educational and other institutions serve communal interests, neglecting the national interest. In government services, in factories, even in Panchayats and general election, community reigns supreme. This communal illiberal attitude is that poisonous pest which is sucking the juice of the plant of national integration. This poisonous pest has to be destroyed.

Political Parties

Some Parties Formed On The Basis Of religions, community and provincialism are encouraging factional tendencies due to their policies and programmes. These tendencies led to foreign invasion in the past and Pakistan come into existence and now again the national unity is in danger due to the factional elements. But our top- ranking leaders are alive to the problem and they are determined that these elements do not gain strength. Now some effort is being made to change the attitude of political parties so that there may not be any danger to national unity. It is a matter of happiness that during 1965 and 1971 Indo- Pakistan wars Indian unity gained strength and the Indian army may be considered to be a glaring example of national integration.

Regional States

The policy of the British was 'Divide and Rule'. So when they sowed several poisonous seeds, they also sowed the seed of provincialism. India has been a big country and for the sake of administrative convenience, they divided it into several provinces. After Independence, the principle of organization of States on the basis of language was accepted and on that basis the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Maharashtra and Gujarat have been formed. The Akalis placed the demand for a Punjab State. As a result, Punjab and Haryana States were formed. In spite of all this, the feeling of provincialism in India is strong. There is some ill will between North and South due to government services and establishing of heavy industries. Even then a majority of our leaders and public give utmost importance to national interest. In view of national interest, we will have to adopt national policies instead of regional policies and give up the feeling of provincialism.



Languages

Due to several languages, sometimes there are language disputes which endanger national integration. At the time of framing the constitution, Hindi was accepted as the national language because majority of the Indian people used this language. It was decided that Hindi should be used in all administrative work after fifteen years. But due to the English mentality of an influential group of people and opposition of south, Hindi has not been given its due place. In the field of education, some people want to retain English for higher education. Many people want Hindi and regional languages as medium. Some political parties started 'Remove English' movement and anti-Hindi agitation is led in one or two States. Even in schools, the problem of medium of instruction has arisen. So we find variety of languages as an obstacle in the way of national integration.

Cultures

Indian culture, inspite to being influenced by several cultures, has its own peculiarities. Some people consider it simply a mixture of several cultures and support factional tendencies on that basis. They say that Indian culture has no independent existence of its own. It is a mixed form of Dravidian, Aryan, Muslim and Christian cultures. It is a wrong and misleading propaganda because exchange of persons and their ideas influences all cultures. So if this was the result in the context of Indian culture, why should it be considered as unnatural? Such a propaganda is harmful for national integration. So we should motivate people to have faith in Indian culture by refuting this wrong propaganda.

Economic Disparities

During slavery, the victor exploits the people economically and gradually this mentality of exploitation permeates in the public. This happened in India. During foreign domination, the tendency of economic inequality and exploitation increased. At the time of Independence, economic disparity was at its peak. Almost half of the population could not make both ends meet whereas some persons were owners of crores of rupees. Some suitable efforts have been made in this regard. Consequently, economic disparity has decreased a little. But even now the problem exists in a great magnitude. If the peon of a department gets 250 rupees, the head of the department gets two thousand five hundred rupees per month. Similarly, if a worker in a factory gets ten or twelve rupees per day, the owner earns thousands of rupees per day. Economic disparity is the cause of dis-satisfaction. So its removal will be in the national interest.

Social Inequalities

Like economic disparities, social inequalities also create dis-satisfaction and encourage factionalism. It is regrettable that social inequalities terribly pervade in our country. Different religions, communities, and groups have different social beliefs and view each other with an eye of contempt. This tendency has to be uprooted for national integration.

Lack of Proper Education

Proper education is needed for national integration. It can help create such national feeling in the people as will be helpful in forging national unity. Even to day, the same education system persists in India which was determined by the British for their own interests. There have been some change after Independence. But it is insufficient and special attention has not been paid on national view- point in the text- books. The text- books of some States have been published according to regional interests. Much reform is needed in this direction. In th text books, nation's greatmen, national occupations and national defence etc., should find due place so that the feelings of national integration be created in children from the very beginning.

Selection of Employees in Various Services

Employees should be selected for different services impartially. In this selection there should be no place for provincialism, Community, religion and group feelings. In this work, Union Public Service Commission has been successful upto some extent, but the State Service commissions have not been so successful. Recommendations sent to employers and worthy applicants remains unsuccessful due to these recommendations. Some people think that sometimes in some circumstances the members of the Service Commissioned o not remain impartial. They are unable to control their feelings of caste, religion and region. Thus feeling of provincialism and community has increased in services. This obstructs the work of integration.

Ways of National Integration

The above are some of the obstacles due to which the programme of national integration has not made much headway and there is a lack of national integration in the country. Today how to remedy this? How do remove these obstacles? Below we shall discuss these questions:

1. Political Unity

The political unity of India is an undisputable fact and history bears a testimony to this. But some vested interests have



always raised doubts regarding this. In every period and in every nation some selfish persons and traitors are always present. So in India, too, the presence of such elements is no wonder. History tells us that in the time of Ashok, the whole of India including Pakistan was one unit politically. During the British rule also Indian was a great political unit. In fact, India of today is smaller than the India of the past. In the religious sphere too, important pilgrimages were established in the four corners of the country treating it as one unit. Badrinath in the North, Rameshwaram in the South, Jagannath in the East and Dwarka in the West are proofs of India's political unity. Similarly, the rivers that flow in several states have got special significance. The Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Krishna, Kaveri, Mahanadi, Sindhu and Brahmaputra are held in high esteem by all Indians. The people of North heartily wish to go for pilgrimage to Rameshwaram in the South. The people of the South wish to go to Kashi, Ayodhya and Prayag, Bengalis, Biharis and people of Orissa to Haridwar in large numbers every year. All these pilgrimages which are spread all over the country, are symbols of our cultural unity. The glaring example of political unity has been the old Indian National Congress and its struggle for freedom. The top ranking leaders of Indian National Congress have been Christians, Parsis, Muslims, Southern people, Bengalis, Biharis, Punjabis and persons from Uttar Pradesh. There has been no such State which has not made its valuable contribution to the struggle for freedom. This real national integration was such which was free from artificiality and which was led by a Gujarati (Mahatma Gandhi) and in which great leaders of all States remembered by every Indian, gladly participated. Whenever the need arose and proper leadership was available the entire country stood like one unit. The revolt of 1857 was also an example of political unity to a great extent but could not be successful due to lack of worthy leadership. We should convey this fact and history to our children through education and uproot the deceptive propaganda against it.

Emotional Integration

If the people of the country do not feel emotionally integrated, then there can be no national integration in spite of best efforts. Fortunately the thread of emotional integration is available in our country. Our holy rivers, several pilgrimages, beautiful mountains and Valleys, beautiful animals and birds are symbols of the thread of our emotional integration. But the forceful impact of slavery had made this thread weak. It will not be improper to say that during slavery the foreigners knowingly tried to make this thread weak. At present, the need of the hour is that this thread of emotional integration should be made so strong that loss of any kind in any corner of the country should be treated as his own loss by every citizen. For this we shall have to explain to our children that India has been a nation historically, geographically and culturally since times immemorial and will continue to be so. They will have to be told that foreign rulers have tried to break this unity several times, but they could not succeed. They will have to be told about the old division of Bengal. They will have to be educated regarding the formation of Pakistan and struggle for freedom by Bangladesh so that they may know that even after partition, the thread of emotional integration with Bengalis could not be broken. In spite of the efforts to the contrary, emotional unity between India and Bangladesh exists even today.

Social Unity

The Communities have been formed on the basis of religion, class and region which keep the interest of their community above national interest due to their narrow mindedness. Consequently, the members of these communities feel hesitant in establishing mutual relationship due to which national and emotional integration is hurt. We shall have to teach that national interest is supreme. If the nation is alive, the communities will also live, otherwise their destruction, too, is certain. They will have to be told how European countries ignored their communal interests for the sake of national interest due to which those nations became strong and Europe became dominant in the world. For strengthening social unity, regionalism, communalism and provincialism have to be forgotten before national interests. Some such national programmes are to be organized which may bring people of different communities together. We shall have to tell our children regarding those traditions of some of the foreign nations which gave importance of national interest in those countries. We shall have to inform our countrymen regarding Japan, England, Germany, France, Russia and U.S.A. etc. We shall have to explain to them why these countries are strong and why they are so forward in the international politics.

In politics religion and caste are dominant in our country. This can be clearly seen during our elections. Elections are fought on Hindu, Muslim and caste basis. This dirty tradition is adopted by each political party. It affects our emotional integration adversely. It promotes disintegrating tendencies. In the national interest, the sooner this policy is given up, better it will be. The good of the nation lies in changing this policy.

Inter- Caste Marriages

Many people are of the opinion that inter-caste and inter-state marriage strengthen national and emotional integration and in support of this view they cite the example of U.S.A and Japan. Inter caste marriages means to marry in a caste other than one's own. For example, Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudras should have mutual marriage relationships. Hindus and Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis etc. should inter-marry their sons and daughters. At the same time, people of one State



should establish marriage relationship in other States. It is held that the children born of such marriages will not belong to any particular caste or community. In fact, they regard themselves only Indians. It will help in national integration. People of several countries migrated to U.S.A. and their descendents began to be called Americans. They feel pride in calling themselves Americans. In Japan, members of the same family follow different religions and all feel pride in calling themselves Japanese. This idea seems attractive and proper in principle. Some inter- caste marriages are held even here but their number is very small. In the background of special social situation religious beliefs and culture of India, it is difficult to say that people will accept such marriage in large numbers. For this publicity will have to be made very carefully, because if some revolutionary step is taken in this direction, it will be opposed vehemently and one cannot say how terrible the consequence will be.

Economic Unity

Regarding economic disparities we have already discussed earlier. We shall have to remove these disparities. At the same time financial help and more representation and protection to backward communities will have to be provided in services so that their economic and intellectual status may be improved. It will give satisfaction to the backward classes and they will move ahead in the way of national integration.

National Language

According to the Constitution 15 years time was given to non- Hindu speaking people to learn Hindi and in the year 1965, Hindi was to be used in administrative work. And this led to disturbances in the South. A great majority of people favour Hindi in the Devnagri script as national language and ultimately it may be instituted as national language completely. But in view of the feeling of non- Hindi speaking people of the country, 'go slow' policy has been rightly adopted. Even when giving due place to English and regional languages, we shall have to make efforts to give Hindi its proper place because even one per cent of people cannot speak and write English correctly. Slightly better is the position of regional languages. So we shall have to create an environment in which people become gladly ready to place Hindi in its proper place. In place of hurry and eagerness, we shall have to advise the Hindi enthusiasts to go slow and we shall have to work hard for making Hindi popular. Thus a painful obstacle in the way of national integration will be removed gradually with patience and great care.

Education

By educating the masses, we can strengthen national integration. Education is our unerring medium through which we can instill the feeling of national integration. In the field of education, we should adopt such a policy which may encourage elements of nationalism. We shall have to construct the curriculum, select books, trained teachers and write books on this basis. We shall have to control the feelings of communalism, class- struggle and casteism etc. This policy should be implemented in all spheres.

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