

“Saptkranti” is needed now, more than ever!

A freedom fighter, a soldier of Goa freedom Struggle, leader of Socialist movement and a Socialist thinker Dr Ram Manohar Lohia died in just 57 years of age while having a small surgery. It was a case of carelessness, and some people do say that it was a coldblooded murder. Whatever it may be, it was actually a great loss and Dr Lohia is no more with us, today. He passed away on 12th October 1967 at Wellington Hospital, which is now named after Dr Ram Manohar Lohia. He is known as a “father of non-congress-ism” concept. He had appealed all non-Congress parties to stand united so that Congress’ rule across India could be done away. As a result, saw a major defeat in seven states in 1967, and all these states had chosen a non-congress government. Later a non-congress government was formed at centre also, in 1977. Today, Congress party is limited to very few states and most states have a government without Congress. Even the BJP led NDA government has also come to power by repeating the same slogan of non-congress-ism.

On his memorial day, we need to understand Dr Lohia’s effect on Indian society and politics. Typical or staunch Lohiite will say that Dr Lohia’s dream of nation without Congress is now materialized. We must know that Dr Lohia never limited his effort to government formation only. When the era of coalition governments started in 1967, he pressed all such governments to immediately implement pro-people schemes, so that people may realize that there happened a change in ruling party and at the government. He wanted people feel a change in their life for having chosen a non-congress government. After a general assessment of the working and vision of today’s non-congress governments in the country, can we say that Dr Lohia’s dream is materialized? Perhaps NOT! Separate assessment of all state governments and the central government is not possible in a single article. But generally speaking, it is quite visible that these governments have not followed policies which Dr Lohia had introduced in Congress Socialist Party, Praja Socialist Party or Sanyukt Socialist Party. Dr Lohia even demanded the resignation of his own government in Kerala, when there was a case of police firing in the state. But these non Congress governments have never taken such cases so importantly. Instead, police firing on peaceful, non violent peoples’ gathering have now become a case which quite often happens in all states. Thousands of innocent people have died in such incidents after independence.

Dr Lohia undertook the responsibility of “Saptkranti” against seven injustices happening against people in society-country-world. He wanted to end economic disparity, exploitation all over the world. But, with the constant change of governments, this inequality has no come to an end. Instead, it has become larger. Dr Lohia wanted to create a world where economic inequality was not more than 1:10. But, almost 80 crore people are living on less than Rs 20 per day, whereas rest of the 5% people own almost all resources in the world. In such situation, addressing the question of inequality has become a challenge. Socialists of our country need to prepare for a big struggle against such inequality.

Dr Lohia saw the caste, sex and racial discrimination as main injustice happening in the society, and he included them in his model of “Saptkranti”. It is right to note that such discrimination is not as severe today as it was in Dr Lohia’s time, but the change and the speed of change, both, are not satisfactory. That we will abandon such discrimination in coming 50 years is still doubtful. Castes which have suffered discrimination for a long time are now united. Dr Ambedkar’s effort to provide reservation to such castes and Dr Lohia’s struggle to provide reservation to women and other

backward castes are yielding positive results now. Reservation has surely helped them improve their living conditions, but it has not been able to do away the discrimination.

Dr Lohia correlated this to the mindset of people and the thousands year old culture that people are living in. He coined the questions of Draupadi and Savitri to change the way of thinking in the society. Increasing violence against women shows that women still not enjoy a respectful position in the society, leave alone equality. Despite having strictest possible laws against racial discriminations in America, Europe or Australia, incidents of racial crimes are not decreasing in those countries. They have not yet developed an equal vision for all. But, in comparison to Dr Lohia's time, the situation is far too better now. America had arrested Dr Lohia for attempting to enter a cafeteria where people with colored skin were not allowed. And the same country has elected Obama as its President. The result that Nelson Mandela's life long struggle yielded is also a success story against racial discrimination.

Conquering countries or societies by the use of weapons of mass destructions was also considered by Dr Lohia as one of the seven injustices. Today, the naked dance of American imperialism is visible everywhere. It forced Saddam Hussain out of power in Iraq and then destroyed the whole country to offer open loot by corporate. Also, terror organizations like Al Quayda or ISIS are creating all possible forms of violence in Iraq to form convert Iraq into an Islamic State. Israil, too, is implying the same terror technique in order to acquire Gaza, where several hundred people have died due to Israil's continuous attacks. In India, more than 80,000 people are murdered in police firings after independence. Even after 14 years continuous fast against AFSPA by Irom Sharmila, the army enjoys full immunity to violate human rights in north east states and Jammu and Kashmir. Violence has increased all over. The world is still in danger due to atomic weapons. But, arms race is still going on everywhere. It is still a dream to create a world which would be free from atomic, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Dr Lohia included the right to privacy in "Saptkranti". Because of this, a renowned litterateur Mr. U R Ananthmurthy, while speaking on his birth centenary, termed Dr. Lohia as the biggest contributor in history. But, the right to privacy is still limited to papers. Right to think, wear, faith, or even choice of life partners too, independently, is still a dream. Terms like "love Jihad" are coined in order to limit love by the RSS supportive fundamental forces. Disturbance created by Bajrangis during Valentine's Day, every year is not a secret now. Instead of demanding toughest punishments for rapists, several leaders are asking girls to wear "culturally" and demanding moral-policing in the society also seen often. Going to school or going out in night is being prohibited for girls, and those who defy such bans have to face consequences like Malala. Right to disagree is continuously shrinking. A young man was beaten to death in Pune by the cadres of Hindu Rashtra Sena for his alleged comments on Facebook, or Dr Narendra Dabholkar was killed due to his protest against the practices of superstitions in the society. Some days ago, when Narmada Ghati Samvad Yatra was organized, a press release was issued by the district collector of Badwani that arrests will be made, if any controversial remark on facebook, whatsapp or Twitter is found. The communication technologies have empowered the government and influential people to always keep an ear over what we are talking on phone. Misuses of sting operations has encroached the right to privacy, completely. Rest is done by much controversial Adhar Card, which demands all of our biological information, leaving a blot on right to citizen's privacy in India.

In short, the seven injustices are converted into hundreds of injustices all over the world. Dr Lohia used to see a ray of hope in the protests against these injustices. We all should strengthen such protests wherever we can. Are we ready to do this?

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