

Secularism of Jawaharlal Nehru

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ABSTRACT:

Jawaharlal Nehru is the architect of modern India. His farsightedness and political wisdom were based on a comprehensive theory of democracy, socialism, secularism and non-alignment. This theory was born out of a rich reading of history and a refined sensitivity to both the needs and sentiments of the masses whom he loved, and who loved him in return. India is a heterogeneous country. After independence first prime minister pundit Jawaharlal Nehru build up unity in diversity. By his hand India started to work as a developing nation. He took few principles for construct of state. As like secularism was very important idea of him. Its relevancy still significant today. In whole life Nehru believed in unity among all religion. He condemned to divided polities. Trust on any religion is always personal matter state should not interfere on it. Fundamental rights of constitution clearly assert right to freedom of religion for citizen. State cannot force to citizen of religious affairs. Even the term secularism not used in the whole constitution at first though the term 'secular' added by 42th constitutional amendment act of 1976. But at the end Nehru's concept of secularism very essential against riots and it can create always communal harmony in the nation.

Keywords: Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, Secular, Religion.

INTRODUCTION:

Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru was a politician as well as nation builder of India. The nature of secularism incorporated in the Indian constitution was determined by the renaissance of Indian tradition, colonial experience under gone by the society, ideological heritage of the nationalist movement, Nehru's perception of social realities and his search for an identity of the nation in modern terms. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru express alternative thinking and subject in modern Indian political thought. His thought can't describe in the linear zed way. In his life Nehru negotiated various type subjects. These various subjects are democracy socialism, secularism, nationalism, forcing policy, diplomacy, mixed economy, non-aligned movement and so on. He given these concepts in his books 'Autobiography' (1936), 'Glimpses of World History' (1939), 'Discovery of India' (1946), Whither India.

He was kept great contribution to the development of Indian democracy and culture. Nehru's thought on religions was totally different from other Indian thinkers. He believed religious blended object of state is danger in Indian heterogenous, multi- religious society. So Nehru accepted secularist ideology for welfare of society.

If we analyze the life of Jawaharlal Nehru's then can see he was personally belong from Kashmiri brahmin family. But he was not a conservative person. He was influenced by the Buddha, Shankaracharya, Saint Kabir, emperor Ashok and Akbar. He always described the objects scientifically and technologically. In his view formerly lead the Indian democracy.

VIEW ON SECULARISM:

Jawaharlal Nehru express the idea of secularism in Indian society and politics. He always condemned to the religion blended idea from political life. Nehru presented secularism opposite of communalism. During independence movement of India Nehru drafted congress resolution on fundamental rights (1931) at Karachi. In this draft stated state should observe neutrally in regard to all religion. He kept practice on propagation of religion of individual as personal and avoidance the parochial idea of religion from the political, culture, social. In the personally Jawaharlal Nehru was an agnostic. He not believed to the spiritualism. In his political

life he influenced by the Gandhi but not accepted the Gandhian concept of religion. In his book 'Discovery of India' Nehru used term 'Dharma' and stated.

“Dharma really means something more than religion. It is from a root word which means to hold together, it is the most constitution of a thing, the law of its in our being. It is an ethical concept which include the moral code, Righteousness and the whole range of man's duties and responsibilities.” And he said about Hindu –

“Hindu means a people and not the followers of a particular religion.” The view remembers to ask that the India is multinational country. He said Hindu means all Indians. He described all religion like Hindu, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism and others.

Nehru's definition of secularism was –

1. Separation of religion from political, economic, social, and cultural aspect of life. Religion being treated as purely personal matter.
2. Neutrally of the state from religion.
3. Full freedom to all religion and tolerance of all religion.
4. Equal opportunities for followers of all religions and no discrimination on grounds of religion.

After independence periods fundamental rights of Indian constitution (article 25-28) and 42nd constitutional amendment act of 1976 added right to freedom of religion and secular in the preamble. This thing is alive to Nehru's idea of secularism. In his whole life condemned to fanaticism, communal separation, violence riots. If we see Indian history then can be found secularism from ancient time. But secularism is strong Nehru's hand. The way Nehru portrays secularism in his contemporary time is relevant today and will be in the future.

NEHRU ON RELIGION:

Nehru was neither irreligious nor anti-religious but his approach to religion also was influenced by the three basic assumptions of humanist liberal tradition, individualism, rationalism, universalism. Nehru's view regarding religion were very clear but whether the society and even the political leadership of the country was prepared for it is a different matter. If the views of Nehru on religion were accepted, religion would create no problem in public life.

Few shared Nehru's rational outlook on religion and his perception of the communal problem. The communal divide had gone deep into the society and the stronghold of the religious prejudices in the two major communities could not be overlooked. This gave rise to the minority problem which became the major issue in solution of political problem of the country.

SECULARISM AND DEMOCRACY:

Nehru had often linked secularism with democracy. In his mind two were apparently inseparable. The secular ideal is a sine qua non condition for the full equality professed by modern democracy. Religious or theocratic state has no relevancy in the modern times.

It is this conviction that forced Nehru to warn some members of the constituent assembly that had done nothing 'amazingly generous' in making India a secular state. In drawing up a constitution which declared India as a secular state its law makers had done only something which almost every country in the world was doing, except for a few backward countries cut off from the mainstream of modern thought.

To many, India and Hinduism had been identical for centuries and the firm grip of Hinduism on the individual should cause on to pause for a while before starting to talk about a secular India. The religious inclination and the stoic temperament of the people are equally well known. Added to this is the fact that the vast majority of the people are Hindus. In these circumstances, the emergence of India in the mid-twentieth century as a secular state is a significant development.

CONCLUSION:

This concluding chapter will attempt to make a critical evaluation of Nehru's concept of the secular state and his contribution toward the realization this ideal in modern India. The concept of the secular state is of a later origin. At first it developed in terms of 'separation of church and state.' It gradually evolved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries out of definite historical situation. The theory of the secular state in India

raises many problems unknown to western political experience, such as separate electorates for the various religious communities, communal personal laws, the caste system and so forth.

The concept of secularism adopted in the Indian constitution is not an exact replica of the American model. In giving secular character to the constitution and also to the society, Nehru's views played a prominent role. Actually, secularism is likely to be his most enduring contribution to India, and it is the one of which he is most proud.

The creation of a secular state in India was beset with immense difficulties. A multi-religious society imbued with superstitions and blind faith, culturally and economically backward could hardly be a soil for a secular state. So long those entrusted with the responsibility of working out the constitution keep the ideology of Nehru in mind, the country will be nearer the goal.

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