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**8.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Gandhi laid great emphasis on the need to revitalise the village panchayats and establish village swaraj in the country. This was because he firmly believed that India lives in its seven hundred thousand and odd villages and that India had no future worth the name unless these villages play their proper part in the life of the country. His scheme of such a village swaraj comprehended every department of rural activity which went to make each village self-governing and self-contained as regards the essential needs of its inhabitants, so that on the solid foundation of a vast network of such little republics peacefully cooperating with one another for mutual benefit, the life of the nation could be broad based. Village sanitation and hygiene, nonviolent rural economy, trusteeship, Khadi and village industries, basic education, panchayati raj are some of the basic means through which village development could be achieved. Village swaraj is man-centered, non-exploitative, decentralised, simple village economy providing for achieving self-sufficiency in its basic requirements of food, clothing and other necessities of life. This Unit helps in understanding the various dimensions of gram swaraj. It also highlights the importance of rural India and

analyses the causes and consequences of village destruction and how gram swaraj can become a reality.

### **Aims and Objectives**

After going through this Unit, you should be able to understand

- the importance of rural India and the reasons for its underdevelopment
- what constitutes a village republic
- the importance of village in Gandhian model of development
- the basic principles of Gram Swaraj and its relevance today.

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## **8.2 INDIA LIVES IN VILLAGES**

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India lives in villages. Rural areas currently are home to nearly 70% of India's population and have historically accounted for more than half of Indian consumption. Even with increasing urbanisation and migration, it is estimated that 63 percent of India's population will continue to live in rural areas by 2025. In terms of economic output, rural India accounts for almost half (48%) of the country's economy, and the rural markets have the potential to reach \$500 billion by 2020. Thus rural areas will continue to remain vitally important to the Indian economy. However, it is unfortunate that a large percentage of this population lives in high risk and unpredictable environment. Large section of the population lacks even basic services like education, health, drinking water, sanitation and employment. Providing rural India with better access to services, technology, education and health care will reduce inequality, alleviate poverty for hundreds of millions of India's citizens and add an additional engine of growth to India's bulging economy.

The model of development that we adopted has not been able to alleviate the sufferings of the rural population. The problem is further compounded with the declining contribution of agriculture in India's GDP. Agriculture's share in the GDP in 1951 was 65%; it declined to 54% and is currently at 24%. The agricultural growth

rate has remained at around 1.4 % in the last two decades. The condition of the growing number of small farmers in the country is appalling, with lack of support in terms of investment, technology, markets, and rural infrastructure. Small and marginal farmer households account for 84% of all farm households. 57% of India's total employment and 73% of total rural employment comes from this sector. Farming in our country still is the backbone of the livelihood security system for a majority of our population. A mere 5% of the population still controls 25% of agricultural land. The remaining land is broken up into very small family plots, thus becoming uneconomic to cultivate. The land reform measures following independence have rectified some of the problems and inequalities in the system; however, not surprisingly, the large land owners still wield political power and have effectively blocked all attempts to reapportion of agricultural land.

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### **8.3 RURAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT**

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When we look at the question of poverty in terms of access to work opportunities and basic needs, the rural parts of India are in far worse situation. Self-reliance which made rural people meet their basic needs in the most adverse circumstances stands totally destroyed. Governments, which professed and promised to uplift the rural masses from the miserable living conditions, have failed to do much, if the records of the last six decades are to be seen. The implementation of the rural development schemes scores much less.

Rural underdevelopment has produced a vicious circle of poverty and unemployment. Today the small and marginal farmers are committing suicide as they are in severe debt. They have very little options left; a few migrate to over crowded cities. Not less than 30% of the rural people of India live below the poverty line. These are the people without food security, who cannot afford to send their children to schools, who have no money for health care, who hardly have a roof over their head; and who are partially or completely dependent on government's direct or indirect support. Apart from these the public service delivery mechanism is also very poor. The rural community is so fragmented that they do not depend on each other for help and

support. Sectors like education, health, environment, sanitation and infrastructure continue to be neglected. Gender discrimination is another area of concern. Even in prosperous states like Punjab and Haryana, the sex ratio is declining.

The reasons for rural India's underdevelopment in spite of sixty years of Independence need to be analysed and understood. Poverty, unemployment, hunger, subsistence agriculture and poor public services are the hallmark of our rural development policies. Let us examine as to where we went wrong and how we can revitalise the rural community. It is important to understand the Gandhian model of village development as it provides a number of solutions to the problems faced by the rural community today.

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#### **8.4 GANDHIAN MODEL OF VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT**

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The problem of India for Gandhi was not merely political or economic but, in fact, multi-faceted. People needed courage and self-respect to disentangle themselves from slavish mentality developed over centuries of bondage. If these conditions were to be changed, then politics, educational, social reform, economy and technology had to suit the genius of the society. Gandhi was intensely concerned about poverty and wanted to utilise the energy of the vast army of rural unemployed to produce more goods for the nation and some wealth for themselves. Progress was to be measured in terms of human happiness and he wanted a social order that would secure the greatest good of all so that a society could be built in which every man would have equal opportunity and freedom to develop.

There is a perception that Gandhi was against modern machine. However, as early as 1936, Gandhi observed that there would be no objection to villagers using even the most modern machine and tools if they can make and can afford to use. He was against the exploitation of villagers by the cities. He always had the common man in his mind and visualised electricity, ship-building, iron works, machine-making and the like existing side by side with village handicrafts. Industrialisation was planned so as to destroy the village and village crafts but under his scheme, nothing would be allowed to be produced by the cities which could be produced by villagers. The proper function

of the cities was to serve as clearing houses for village products. However, Gandhi preferred to replace large-scale manufacture by cottage production. He believed that only cottage and village industries could bring prosperity back to India. He did not aim at eradication of all machinery but only at its limitation. The political and economic compulsions of the time forced him to take a rigid stand against heavy industries. The British had totally ruined Indian village economy and Gandhi felt that in case India went in for heavy industrialisation, the poorer sections of society could never recover. Therefore his concern for the rural masses moulded his ideology.

The cities and towns did not find a place in Gandhi's swaraj. According to him, the prosperity of the city people has become possible by sucking the blood of villages. The poor villages are exploited by the foreign governments and also by their own countrymen- the city dwellers. The villagers produce the food and go hungry. The half a dozen modern cities serve the evil purpose of draining the life-blood of the villages. The cities with their insolent torts are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villages. Gandhi regarded the growth of cities as an evil thing, unfortunate for mankind and the world and considered their growth as only a symptom of the malady.

The cities are capable of taking care of themselves. It is the village we have to turn to. We have to disabuse them of their prejudice, their superstitions and their narrow outlook. The task before every citizen is how to prevent the decay of the villages or how to reconstruct the villages of India so that it may be as easy for anyone to live in them as it is supposed to be in the cities. The village movement is as much an education of the city people as of the villagers. Workers drawn from the cities have to develop village mentality and learn the art of living after the manner of villagers. The cities must realise the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of exploiting them. Exploitation of villages is itself organised violence. If swaraj has to be built on non-violence, then the villages should get their proper place. Therefore there is a need to reconstruct the villages and establish village swaraj.

To be self-sufficient is not to be altogether self-contained. In no circumstances would we be able to produce all the things we need. Though our aim is complete self-sufficiency, we shall have to get from outside the village what we cannot produce in the village. We shall have to produce more of what we can to obtain in exchange what we are unable to produce. Thus, Gandhi spoke of collective inter-dependence and in a way asked for barter if it helped the community as such.

Gandhi was of the view that if the villages perish India will perish too. He constantly reminded all that India is to be found not in the few cities but in its 7, 00, 000 villages. Gandhi greatly understood the real India. His role was crucial in awakening the most dormant and stagnant sector of Indian society, i.e. Indian village. Constructive Programme for rebuilding the life in the countryside became an integral part of the total programme of Gandhi. In fact, to build the Indian villages was his main mission. The prevailing situation could be changed with the active participation and co-operation of the villagers themselves. The blue-print that he gave was unique, provided the real essence of the programmes was understood. Gandhi wanted a society in which every man would have equal opportunity and freedom to develop. For him the villages were the nerve-centers of India and if India were to develop and prosper it should not copy the European model of development but evolve a model that would suit its millions.

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## **8.5 VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION**

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Gandhi was completely devoted to the cause of village reconstruction, to uplift the standard and quality of rural life through the active participation of people themselves. Since he spoke in their language and lived like them- a life of utter simplicity, he succeeded in enlisting their participation in the freedom struggle. Gandhi held that the individual was of supreme importance and believed in the inner development of man. Accordingly man must pursue truth and non-violence in life if he wants inner contentment. Purity of means was more important than the desirability of the end. If the means were pure, one was bound to reach the goal. As far as possible any imposition or curtailment of individual freedom should be avoided. Equality which is

the basis of economic independent must be achieved through peaceful and non-violent methods. Perhaps Gandhi's attitude to violence makes his message of special significance to the modern age. For him personal liberty was of great value.

Behind Gandhi's insistence on village economy was his grand design of the new civilisation based on sustainable development in the real sense of the term. He wanted the human intrusion into the functioning of the biosphere to be minimised by closing man-dominated systems such as cities, and industrial activities to the point where their net effects on the biosphere approximated those of the natural systems they have replaced. No other system of human settlement can achieve this except the village.

Gandhi attached great importance to education and insisted on good education; he advocated free and compulsory education up to the final basic course. Special importance was attached to women's education especially relating to health and hygiene. He believed that if every activity was conducted on a cooperative basis, there would be no caste as we have today. The village Panchayats would act as major popular agencies involving only the village people. In his structure composed of innumerable villages there would be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life would not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it would be an oceanic circle whose centre will be an individual always ready to perish for the circles of villages till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble sharing the majority of the oceanic circles of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. None will be the first and none the last. In the final analysis, the unit of society should be a village or a manageable small group of people who would be self-sufficient as a unit and bound together in bonds of mutual cooperation and independence.

The basic principles that formed his idea of rural reconstruction were: communal unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition, use of Khadi, promotion of village industries, upliftment of underprivileged classes and women, full employment,

promotion of economic equality and self-sufficient village economy. Above all he preached a simple life and for the development of moral values in society and conceptualised an integrated rural development programme that would serve the Indian needs best.

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## **8.6 GRAM SWARAJ: MEANING AND CONTENT**

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Swaraj generally means self-governance or 'home-rule'. It lays stress on governance not by a hierarchical government, but by self-governance through individuals and community-building. The focus was on decentralisation and Gandhi thought it necessary to evolve a mechanism to achieve the twin objectives of empowering the people and empowering the state. It was for this that he developed the twin-pronged strategy of resistance (to the state) and reconstruction (through voluntary and participatory social action).

Although the word Swaraj means self-rule, Gandhi gave it the content of an internal revolution that encompasses all spheres of life. At the individual level, swaraj is vitally connected with the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing self-reliance. Politically, swaraj is self-government and it means a continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign government or national. Economically, swaraj means full economic freedom for the toiling masses. Since achieving swaraj could not be possible without the elimination of all forms of dominance, Gandhi undertook a number of constructive activities aimed at reducing the dependence of Indians from the British and simultaneously making them self-reliant.

Gandhi was not only a man of ideas but also a person of great practical wisdom. He worked out meticulously the details of a wide variety of practical things which were vital to building a graceful village life. Gandhi's conception of village was not anchored on the modern (urban-industrial) notion of development but on the post-modern perspective of quality of life. His main emphasis was on the quality of life and his ideal village would contain intelligent human beings, where they would not live in dirt and drunkenness as animals... There would be neither plague nor cholera, nor



small-pox. No one would wallow in luxury and everyone would have to contribute his quota of manual labour.

Gandhi's Gram Swaraj was not the resurrection of the old village but the formation of fresh independent units of villages having a self-sufficient economy. He clearly spelt out the political and economic relations that ought to exist in the village. For him Man was supreme. The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth. Self-sufficiency in basic needs was one of the fundamental conditions of Gandhian village reconstruction. Food, clothing and other basic necessities should be produced at the village level itself, leading to full employment and the employment of almost each able-bodied person, which would prevent rural-to-urban migration in search of employment and better opportunities.

His main mission was to make villages a "thing of beauty" as his ideal village would be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation. It would have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation, but of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages would have courtyards enabling the householders to plant vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle. The village lanes and streets would be free of all avoidable dust. It would have wells according to its needs and accessible to all. It would have houses of worship for all, a common meeting place, common pastures for grazing its cattle, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools in which industrial education would be the central factor and it would have village Panchayats for settling disputes. It would produce its own grains, vegetables, and fruits and its own Khadi. Gandhi not only visualised the development of the village but the community as a whole. He propagated a theory of interdependence and co-existence which would lead to overall growth and development.

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### **8.7 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GRAM SWARAJ**

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In Order to grasp the essence of Gram Swaraj we need to understand the basic principles of gram swaraj. These are as follows:

1. Supremacy of man–Full employment

2. Body–labour
3. Equality
4. Trusteeship
5. Decentralisation
6. Swedeshi
7. Self -sufficiency
8. Co-operation
9. Satyagraha
10. Equality of religions
11. Panchayati raj
12. Nai Talim

Everyone needs to have basic necessities of life. The economic constitution of any country should ensure that no one suffers from want of food and clothing. Everyone should get sufficient work to earn his income. To ensure this, the means of production of the elementary necessities of life must remain in control of the masses and monopolisation by a country, nation or an individual would be unjust. Destitution is due to the neglect of this basic principle. Every man has an equal right to the necessities of life. Any plan which exploited the raw material of a country and neglected the potentially more powerful manpower was lop-sided and could never tend to establish human equality. Real planning consisted in the best utilisation of manpower of India.

Gandhi opined that God created man to work for his food and that those who ate without work were thieves. A man who does not do body labour has no right to eat. If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be no over-population, no disease and no misery. Such labour would be the highest form of sacrifice. As far as equality is concerned, economic equality would be the master key to non–violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between the capital and the labour. It means the leveling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation’s wealth on the one hand and a

leveling up of the semi-starved millions on the other. True economics stands for social justice; it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life.

At the root of this doctrine of equal distribution lies the principle of trusteeship. The wealthy should not be dispossessed of the wealth by violent means but by non-violent way. The rich should be left in possession of their wealth of which they would use what they would reasonably require for their personal needs and would act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. Land was one of the main concerns of Gandhi and he argued for collective ownership and to be operated collectively. Decentralisation was another important principle of gram swaraj. If India had to evolve on nonviolent means, it has to decentralise as centralisation cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Non-violence cannot be built on a factory civilisation but on self-contained villages. The rural economy eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence.

Gandhi was against the overthrow of the landed class; instead, he advised the zamindars that they should give their tenants fixity of tenure, take a lively interest in their welfare, provide well-managed schools for their children, look after the sanitation and in a number of other ways, make them feel that the zamindars are their true friends taking only a fixed commission for their manifold services. Gandhi wanted the zamindars to change their hearts and own only so much as they really needed and become trustees and trusted friends of the entire village community. This would pave the way for a non-violent society. It is here that the economists have greatly disagreed with Gandhi's concept of Trusteeship. By nature man is property-conscious and it would be difficult to agree in practical terms that without State intervention the upper class would relinquish major part of its property and more so in a capitalist society where property relations and exploitation are best evident. A feeling emerges that Gandhi did not give a major role to the peasants and saw them as passive people and advised them to wait for a change in the zamindar's heart. In fact, to an extent, Gandhi

diluted the effects of Marxism through his theory of peaceful co-existence, non-violence and Trusteeship.

Swadeshi found an important place in his gram swaraj. The swadeshi doctrine would enable every village in India to be self-supporting and self-contained unit, exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages which are not locally producible. Every village had to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. The unit of society should be a village or a manageable small group of people who would be self-sufficient in matters relating to their vital requirements as a unit. As far as possible every activity would be conducted on a cooperative basis and this cooperation should be based on non-violence. Non-violence could be the sanction of the village community in which every religion would have its full and equal place.

The government of the village would be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons, elected annually by the adult men and women possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. The Panchayat would be the legislature, judiciary and the executive combined together. It would be expected to attend to the education of boys and girls in its village, sanitation, medical needs, the upkeep and cleanliness of village wells and ponds and the upliftment of and daily wants of the so-called untouchables. A Panchayat should have no criminal jurisdiction; however it may try civil suits if the parties to them refer their disputes to the panchayats. No panchayat should have any authority to impose fines, the only sanction behind its civil decrees being its moral authority, strict impartiality and the willing obedience of the parties concerned. A panchayat that fails without just cause to attend to the requirements of the villagers within six months of its election, or fails otherwise to retain goodwill of the villagers, or stands self-condemned for any cause, may be disbanded and another elected in its place.

Village sanitation is important in the scheme of gram swaraj. The things to attend to in the villages were cleaning tanks and wells and keeping them clean, getting rid of dump

heaps as the village tanks were promiscuously used for bathing, washing clothes and drinking and cooking purposes. Many village tanks were also used by cattle and buffaloes were often seen wallowing in them. However in spite of this sinful use of village tanks, the villages were never destroyed by epidemics. Lanes and streets had to be cleaned of all the rubbish, which should be classified. There should be portions which can be turned into manure, or have to be simply buried or can be directly turned into wealth. Rags and waste paper could be turned into paper.

To achieve gram swaraj, education was of prime importance. Accordingly literacy was not the end of education or even the beginning and only one of the means whereby man and women could be educated. Education should draw the best out of the child and man-body, mind and spirit. A new concept of education was offered wherein head, heart and hand could be trained to work in unison and give rise to creative human beings and this was *nai talim* or New Education. It was new because it was completely different from the Western model of education in vogue. *Nai talim* laid great stress on pupils' contact with nature through manual work and on the concept of unity of life.

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## **8.8 GRAM SWARAJ- A COMPLETE REPUBLIC**

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Illustrating his idea of Gram Swaraj, Gandhi emphasised that it should be a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus the village's first concern would be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. If there is more land available, it would grow useful money crops, thus excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like. The village would maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. There would be no caste with their graded untouchability. Nonviolence with its technique of Satyagraha and non-cooperation would be the sanction of the village community. There would be a compulsory service of village guards who would be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village would be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. They

would have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there would be no system of punishment in the accepted sense, the Panchayat would be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for a year of office. Any village could become such a republic without much interference, even from the present government whose sole effective connection with the villages was the exaction of village revenue.

The purpose was to present an outline of village government where there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and the government where an individual and his village are able to defy the might of a world. The law governing every villager was that he would suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour. Thus, Gandhi's conception of the village was based on the post-modern perspective of quality of life.

Keeping aside his theory of Non-violence and Trusteeship even his close associates and friends failed to understand the meaning and significance of the Village Society that he had advocated. Most of his close associates were people influenced by the European thought and way of life. In a letter to Pandit Nehru in 1945 he wrote, that he was convinced that if India had to attain true freedom and through India the world also sooner or later, the fact has to be recognised that the people had to live in the villages, not in towns, in huts not in palaces. Crores of people would never be able to live in peace with each other in cities and palaces. They would have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth. Without truth and non-violence there could be nothing but destruction of humanity. Truth and non-violence could only be realised in the simplicity of the village life and the simplicity could best be found in the Charkha and all that the Charkha connotes. He did not fear if the world today was going the wrong way and it may be that India too would go that way and like the proverbial moth burn itself eventually in the flame around which it dances more and more fiercely. However he thought it to be his duty to his last breath to try and protect India and, through India, the entire world from such a doom. The essence of what he said was that man should

rest content with what are his real needs and become self-sufficient; if he does not have this control, he cannot save himself.

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## **8.9 GRAM SWARAJ: CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT**

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Gandhi's Gram Swaraj in fact aimed at individual's development, character-building and adherence to basic human values for the development of the community as a whole. But the way our Panchayati Raj system in its present form addresses to these problems remains a question of debate and inquiry. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act was brought about to confer a constitutional status on the panchayats but except in a few states, the situation remains unchanged. People's participation in the development of the villages is missing as the gram sabhas rarely meet to discuss the village development plans. No doubt due to reservation of seats a large number of women and members from the deprived class have come to occupy positions in the panchayats, but their role in decision-making is very limited. The concept of service to the community or 'shramdaan' appears alien in our system of village development as the dependence on government has increased to a large extent. The Gandhian concept of rural development is more of a people's movement than a system of regimented governance. Unemployment is increasing, environment degradation is a major problem, village community is fragmented, people do not participate in development process and due to break down of village and cottage industries and migration to the cities has only aggregated the problem. The answer to some of these problems lies in adopting the Gandhian model of village reconstruction, where every village will be self-dependent and self-sufficient to meet its basic needs and the individual will have enough to lead a life of contentment .

The development of villages was not considered by Gandhi as an end in itself. He thought of the villages not in their isolation but as a starting point in the crusade for a better and peaceful world order. If we do not go back to the ideals of Gandhi as envisaged for the upliftment of the rural population, rural India would continue to suffer as a result of evidently super-imposed process of development. During the last six decades we have seen that the Gram Sabhas and village Panchayats that formed a

part of Gandhi's political philosophy got relegated to political dormancy. But as Gandhi recedes into history he appears more and more a decentralist, even localist and less and less nationalist. In the Gandhian model, village is the central and not the peripheral source that would generate forces of social transformation. The goal of Gandhian action is attainment of a truthful human society and not the creation of a powerful, *albeit* just state. We shall be deluding if we believe that the recent attempts to revive Panchayati Raj Institutions are not an incarnation of the structural elements of state power. They will derive their legitimacy and authority from the state and not from society as such as is being projected. In the present form, the system of rural governance will only perpetuate the 'Raj' further where the ruling class would continue to dominate. By the time the nation rediscovers Gandhi's Gram Swaraj, it may be too late.

The path of development that we have chosen for the Panchayats to trek upon will lead us nowhere near to Gandhi's gram swaraj. In the years to come it will only complicate the rural scene further leading to greater migration to the cities in search of employment. The solution lies in promoting cottage and small-scale industries so as to hold back people from flooding the cities. Employment has to be generated within the confines of the village boundary. The Gandhian approach to rural development should be understood. Gandhian concept of gram swaraj does not really answer only one aspect of development, i.e. economic, but it is a way of life to be practised by a developing, over-populated and rural-based country like India to solve its multi-dimensional problems. Our present development model has no answers to many of these questions.

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## **8.10 SUMMARY**

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Gandhi is perhaps the only great thinker of this century who could foresee the social and ecological consequences of the exploitative model of development and offer an alternative model. Gandhi was not only a pioneer but also very original as he was not an academic theoretician, but a man of unparalleled wisdom. The gap between this man of wisdom and the men of knowledge that this century has produced in plenty still



remains unabridged. The nonviolent struggle launched successfully against the mightiest colonial power of the time was emulated elsewhere too but it has yet to make a major dent in the war machine of the world and the war mentality of the people. He demonstrated how a very high level of culture and civilisation could be evolved without destroying the environment, and without exploiting nature and fellow humans.

Gandhi's philosophy offers a practical way to a peaceful social revolution to improve the quality of life. What he preached was not only for the Indian masses but for the entire deprived people of the world. His message was not for a particular time but for the future of the mankind, especially his theory of non-violence and peaceful co-existence. But his immediate concern was the Indian masses, especially in the countryside. In fact people needed courage and sense of self-respect to enable them to come out of the slavish mentality developed over centuries of bondage. In his view if these conditions were to be changed, politics, education, social reform, economy, and technology had to suit the genius of the society.

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### **8.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

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1. India lives in Villages. Discuss
2. State the basic principles of gram swaraj.
3. What did Gandhi's Gram Swaraj aim at?
4. Define Gandhi's views on modern machine.

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### **SUGGESTED READINGS**

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