



RBANM's

FIRST GRADE COLLEGE

REACCREDITED BY NAAC WITH 'A' GRADE,

Permanently Affiliated with Bengaluru City University. Established 1983

A Webinar on **The Relevance of Gandhism in Today's Youth**

Convener	Chief Guest	Resource Persons
Dr.Prathap Principal	Shri. A A Sanjeev Narrain Secretary, RBANMS Educational Charities	Mr. A S Arvind Narrain Human resource lawyer Ms. Poorna Ravishankar Advocate

Introduction

Gandhism is one of the major forces that continues to shape the world and the nation. Gandhism is often considered a simplistic concept however when we fully understand the ideals on which the Gandhian Philosophy is based, the complexity and the profoundness of Mahatma's ideals surface.

Gandhism and its influence on many fields of thought are immeasurable. The key component of Gandhianism is the non-violence of Gandhiji which was the great weapon used by him during the freedom movement of India against the British Raj. Normally, people say that non-violence is the weapon of the weak but in reality, non-violence and tolerance require a great level of courage and patience. In a world that is moving through the phases of war marred by violence and dance of death of common people due to the menace of terrorism, there is a significant requirement for the Gandhian idea of Non-violence more and more today than in the past days.

The secular ideologies of Gandhiji are not only there in the Indian constitution but also there in Indian society as a core value system. That is why so many people of diverse religions coexist in India. Gandhian was tolerant towards all religions and the world today needs more and more religiously and faith-wise tolerant people in societies where violence is committed in the name of religion. Tolerance in society will help in neutralizing the ethnocentric bias in the globe that is taking place day by day based on religion, caste, ethnicity, region, etc.

On the ethical and behavioral part, Gandhianism has much significance today because society is witnessing the degradation of values. Gandhian virtues of self-control are much needed in a materialistic world driven by the desire to achieve and acquire more. Societal values have degraded to such an extent that people don't hesitate to kill someone for the gratification of their own needs. Respect for women is one of the major ideas of Gandhian philosophy and the world is witnessing the increased level of violence, and subjugation women face nowadays in society. The Gandhian dream of a safe country necessitates safety for women and that will come from the virtue of self-control. Adding more to this list of moral qualities of Gandhiji are punctuality, duty boundness and honesty, etc and all these have to be the essence of administration for good governance and perfect service delivery to the last person standing in the queue as proposed by the philosophy of Gandhiji.

Gandhiji and Gandhianism are always more than what we know. Gandhiji's political contributions offered us Independence but his ideologies enlighten India as well as the world even today after so many years. Perhaps this was known to Nobel prize winner Rabindranath Tagore in those days and he had rightly called Gandhiji Mahatma. Every individual, thus, should follow the key Gandhian ideologies in their day-to-day life for a happy, prosperous, healthy, harmonious, and sustainable future.

Objectives of the Program

The Event today intends to:

- Understand the significance of Gandhism with a special focus on moral values and ethics.
- Understand the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi in orienting the nation's youth during the Nationalist Movement.
- Comprehend and follow the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and
- Recognize the timelessness of Gandhian Philosophy and its growing relevance in the present times.

Organizers

RBANM's First Grade College was established by RBANM's Educational Charities in 1983 to cater to the educational needs of the fast-growing modern and tech city of Bangalore. This is one of the institutions established under the umbrella of the RBANM's Educational Charities founded 147 years ago in 1873 by Dharmarathnakara Rai Bahadur Arcot Narrainswamy Mudaliar. Our founder embarked on his vision of social regeneration, providing for all classes and castes in the fields of education, social welfare, and religion. The institution is the fulfillment of the vision of its founder. In its three decades of service RBANM's FGC has made significant progress in education.

A student's achievement is largely due to the culture at home. Respect, humility, honesty, sincerity, loyalty, and citizenship to our institution, family, and country is fundamental. Students' pride in their Institution is highly correlated to their attitude towards their teachers.

At RBANM's Institution, we strongly believe that all children are born equal. We also believe that each one is blessed with a special talent. Students' attitudes and habits at home and in institution environments combine in unique ways to shape your personality and enable you to realize your full potential. Parents, the institution and you will have to work in harmony to make you the best that you can become

In all RBANM's Institutions, we want a partnership between the institution and the parents to make sure that all children can realize their true potential. The system in our institutions enables our teachers to take children under their wing and through our curricula and extra-curricular programs transform them into capable and responsible citizens of our country.

Resource persons

- **Mr. A S Arvind Narrain, Human resource lawyer**

Mr. A S Arvind Narrain has been involved with research, writing, and practice related to law and social concerns. He has a bachelor's in law from the National Law School of India University(NLSIU) followed by a master's in the University of Warwick on a Chevening scholarship. He is the author or co-editor of Law Like Love: Queer Perspectives on the law as well as the Co-author of Breathing Life into the Constitution. He was also a part of a team of lawyers challenging Section 377 of the IPC right from the High Court in 2009 to the Supreme Court in 2018. Arvind is a visiting faculty at the School of Policy and Governance.

- **Ms. Poorna Ravishankar, Advocate**

Ms. Poorna Ravishankar is a young advocate who joined the alternative law forum and is also a professor of constitutional Human Rights.

Program Sheet

1. Welcome Address
2. Opening Remarks by Prof. Pavithra, Dept of Commerce, Convener
3. Introduction of Chief Guest
4. Address by Chief Guest, Shri. A A Sanjeev Narrain Secretary, RBANMS Educational Charities
5. Introduction of Resource Person Session by Mr. A S Arvind Narrain, Human resource lawyer, Ms. Poorna Ravishankar, Advocate

Resource Person's Lecture

Are Gandhian principles still relevant?

Gandhi still shines as a world preceptor or guru whose sermons and principles are still pertinent across the globe by their concern for humanity and universality. But on superficial perusal, one may find that his principles are utopian and unrealistic. One may find that humans are highly selfish and their interactions, be it socio-political or personal, are coupled with persistent distrust, conflict, disharmony, and violence. If humans are highly self-interested, then the Gandhian principles of ahimsa, asteya, and aparigraha hold no importance for them. Hence, the ideal society which is based on truth, nonviolence, and mutual love is highly unrealistic and imaginative.

Also, people hold the view that his principle of Aparigraha is inimical to the economic well-being of the individual and leads to voluntary poverty. In reality, this is not true. This concept of Aparigraha teaches us self-sustenance. His principle of Aparigraha holds the view that one must acquire only those possessions which are necessary for his sustenance and the rest should be used for the collective benefit of society. So this principle in no way connotes voluntary poverty.

In the Gandhian polity, freedom and justice may not be realized by the individual as he says that religion and politics are inseparable and this would bring irrationality, orthodoxy, and conservatism into politics. So, his ideal society would be devoid of freedom and justice. On examination by his contemporary thinkers, it was revealed that he was not a visionary but a practical idealist. Although he said that religion and politics are inseparable, he also said that

individuals need not be selfless all the time. People belong to different races and religions, therefore, it would be difficult for us to live united. So, people must develop a habit of tolerance and mutual respect, so that they can live together. He also said that the cause of injustice will not survive and people should raise their voices against injustice.

Some of the Gandhian principles hold universal relevance. He thought that the main aim of education should not be getting a good degree or a good job, rather it should aim at grooming and character-building good citizens. But the contemporary education system negates the Gandhian surmise of education. There is a mad rush to secure good marks and gain a good job, rather than inculcating the values to build one's personality and good character. He said that instead of being a corrupt individual, one should fight against corruption. But this character-building is unlikely to happen because we see mushrooming of such educational institutions that don't add even a single tinge of quality to education. It is not wrong to remark that his principle of non-violence holds eternal relevance. But some hold the view that non-violence doesn't work every time. It offered no solutions to many colonial-ruled nations who achieved independence only after violent and bloody struggles. It is not imprudent to remark that Indian Independence is an achievement due to the non-violent means advocated by Gandhi, but we shouldn't forget the Bombay mutiny or Royal Indian Navy mutiny, in which the Indian sailors of the Royal Indian Navy attacked the British ports by turning the British ship cannons. The British were aware that they could easily incarcerate an old man or allow him to fast, but they could not suppress a mutiny or rebellion which enjoyed a large support base of the subjects they ruled. Also, non-violence must be coupled with the truth. When the truth is rejected, and when an illusory view of the world clouds our judgment, non-violence is also rejected. So, ahimsa is effective only when it is aligned with Satya. But in contemporary times, violence doesn't seem to be a feasible alternative. People say that countries are still determined to adhere to violence even if the opposing country is non-violent, but the truth is that non-violence requires tolerance and perseverance. It is rightly said that an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.

Also, when he says that government interference is not desirable as it undermines the true spirit of democracy, he was wrong in saying that. Government interference is necessary where people need incentives to make their lives better or to even meet their needs. His idea of the promotion of local producers still holds significance.

On the behavioral and ethical part, Gandhian principles are of vital importance as the world is seeing the degradation of values. His values of self-empowerment and self-control are crucial because people seem to have succumbed to worldly temptations. The degradation of values is to such an extent that people are ready to kill another person just to gratify their own needs. Respect for women is another idea of Gandhianism and is the need of the hour as the world is witnessing increasing brutality and subjugation against women. His dream of a safe nation necessitates the safety of women which can be achieved through exercising self-control. Adding more to the list includes Gandhian principles of punctuality, honesty, and duty boundness, which are the essence of good administration and governance.

His functional perspective of religious integration and coherence while vehemently criticizing religious conflicts, intolerance and exploitation are quite relevant. Our political situation is

hanging by a thread. Rarely do we find a political leader who hasn't sold his moral scruples and is selflessly working for the betterment of society. The need for true leadership like Gandhi's is quite significant.

Number of participants

200 – Zoom

173 -- YouTube

The outcome of the Event

The students are made aware of the following:

- The core concepts of Gandhian thought and philosophy.
- The Gandhian view on many social constructs such as youth, politics, etc.
- The relevance of Gandhian concepts in today's society.
- Gandhi was an ideal image for the youth of India

Feedback Report

The students were able to learn the importance of Gandhi, not as a political figure, but as a profound philosopher and a creator of Indian identity on the world stage. His ideology of nonviolence sets him apart from the many scores of politicians and revolutionaries that existed before him and after him. The students of RBANMS Educational institutions are reminded of the immense ideas of Mahatma and his views for the future free generations of Indians. This event helped the students to understand the importance of freedom, its value, and how it is ingrained in the human spirit.

