

**Structural religious thinking and covid-19 in indian context.****Dr.Pundlik Eshwar Bhosle****Associate Professor Narayanrao Chavan Law College, Nanded.**

“Religion is for men and not men for religion”.

Introduction:-

Ours is a land of many religions, it has numerous cultures and different philosophies. The diversity of India is tremendous. It is obvious and may be observed by discerning eyes in various ways. The Indian society has preserved several traditions, customs and values, and the new ones, have largely emerged as a result of multi-farious historical and constitutional developments in the country. The legal, political and economic changes have added luster to the vividness and vitality of the pluralistic nature of Indian society. The structural and functional aspects of the Indian society have become more complex than ever. So to present and interpret the nature and scope of the Indian social system is a stupendous task for one mind.

The variety of the social system of India lies on the surface and anybody can see it. It concerns itself with religious-cultural bases as well as with certain mental habits, social traits and political differences. There is little unity of standards, and where standards differ, there can hardly be unity, i.e., a single social system based on any religion, be it Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Each religious community in India and elsewhere has its own social system which shows itself in ways of living and philosophical attitude to life and its problems. The Indian panorama is a world in itself, a culture and a civilization, which give shape to our social traditions and moral values in different shades.

The social dream of the constitution is something deeper and, within its socio-political fold, one can discover the nature and scope of the Indian social system, but never in any religion, for the whole India. The religion-based communities, or some ideological group, may be taken and treated as subsystems operating in various ways, the new legal and social system rests simply on the fact that it has been accepted and is used as a principle in the judicial and other official operations of our political system whose rules are generally obeyed. The constitution provides ultimate criterion of validity to our social and political systems, from this stand-point, the subsystems of all kinds are plainly the subordinate parts of a wider system characterized by the ultimate rules of the constitution.

Meaning and concept :-

Religion or Dharma is a comprehensive term for all rules of righteous conduct in every sphere of human activities. Dharma or religion regulates the rights and duties of every individual in order to ensure peace and happiness for all, by harmonizing the interests of the individuals and the society. In Indian context, the Vedas are the primordial sources of Dharma. Religion means the code of righteous conduct, evolved with the object of enabling on individual to establish control over his desires and senses and to be contended. The rules so formulated or evolved over a long period were meant to ensure peace and happiness to the individuals and the human society as well. These rules covered every sphere of human activity and to be called by a comprehensive word “Dharma”. It is expected by man in the real sense of the term should scrutinize all the sources of law with the eye of knowledge and should perform his duties in conformity with the injunction flowing from the concept religion.

धृति क्षमा दमोस्तेयं शौच निन्द्रिय निग्रहः ।
धीर्विद्या सत्यं क्रोधो दशकं धर्म लक्षणं ।



So far as human existence is concerned – actually the term religion or Dharma contains these ten attributes i.e., contentment, forgiveness, forbearance, man-attachment to worldly matters, non-avarice, purity, control or subjugation of senses, spiritual knowledge, truthfulness and being devoid of anger are the important specific attributes of religion.

As per the concept religion or Dharma, one could ascertain the rules of Dharma as an established good conduct or customs indicated in the given case. The test of Dharma is very significant which is based on good conscience namely as to what is agreeable to the soul or conscience of an individual which is the surest test as to what is good or what is bad. One may out of greed or anger or jealousy do wrongs and openly declare that what he had done was right, but he cannot deceive or convince as to what he had done had right. Therefore, great importance has been given to this criterion as part of Dharma, to find out what is dharma. No one can deny that norms of nature are supreme, good and have got eternal value for the welfare of humanity. Religion or religious principles are guidelines to live as human beings, no property or wealth acquired legally or illegally survives for the benefit of an individual after he dies. But what does survive is the good name earned by living in conformity with humanism and the service rendered to the people. In the constitution of India, the right to freedom of religion has been provided as one of the F.R of every citizen U/A 25 and 28. But the term “religion” has not been defined in the constitution of India. Actually it is hardly susceptible to any rigid definition. U/A 25 of the constitution of India, every Indian citizen is entitled to exercise freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion but subject to the public order, mortality and health and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, but at the same time the concerned entitled fellows must know that no this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the state from making any law towards regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activities which may be associated with religious practice. As per article 26 of the Indian constitution freedom to manage religious affairs is provided, but subject to public order, mortality and health. Every Indian being the citizen of this nation is rightful to established and maintain institution for religious and charitable purpose, own and acquire moveable property; but one can administer such property in accordance with law.

Part III of the Indian constitution is U/A 27, provides that, all persons are equally entitled to exercise freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion and at the same time it is provided that, no person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion. The next type of permission which has been given U/A 28 of the constitution is that “freedom as to attendance at religious instructions or religious worships in certain educational institutions; but subject to the condition that. No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly or maintained out of state funds.

The supreme court of India, in the case of A.S Narayan V/S State of A.P. has examined the meaning of religion and its object. The court has observed that the term religion or ‘Dharma’ devotes upholding, supporting nourishing that which upholds nourishes or supports the stability of the society maintaining social order and general well-being and progress of mankind. Religion approves ourself good conscience or springs from due deliberations for one’s own happiness and also for welfare of all beings free from fear, desire, disease, cherishing good feelings and serve to brotherhood, unity and friendship for integration of Bharat. This is the care religion which the constitution accords protection.

A religion undoubtedly has its basis in a system of beliefs and doctrine which are regarded by those who profess religion to be conducive to their spiritual well-being. A religion is not merely an opinion, doctrine or belief. It has outward expression in acts as well. It is not every aspect of religion that has been safeguarded by U/A 25 and 26 nor has the constitution provided that every religious activity can’t be interfered with religion, therefore, be constructed in the context of article 25 and 26



in its strict and etymological sense. Every religion must believe in a conscience and ethical and moral precepts. Therefore, whatever binds a man to his own conscience and whatever moral or ethical principle regulates the lives of man believing in that theistic, conscience or religious belief that alone can constitute religion as understood in the constitution which foster feelings of brotherhood, amenity or ethical principle regulates the lives of man believing in that theistic, conscience or religious belief that alone can constitute religion as understood in the constitution which foster feelings of brotherhood, amenity, fraternity and equality of all persons which find their foot-head in secular aspect of the constitution. Secular activities and aspects do not constitute religion which brings under its own clock every human activity. There is nothing which a man can do , whether in the way of wearing clothes or food or drink, which is not considered a religious activity.

Every human activity was not intended to be protected by the constitution under the guise of religion. The approach to conscience the protection of religion or matters of religion or religious practices guaranteed U/A 25 and 26 must be viewed with pragmatism since by the very nature of things or circumstances, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to define the expression religion of matters or religion or religious practice.

Incidences reflecting religiously sanctioned structural violence:-

In regard to structural religious thinking we can say that COVID-19 can be cured but who will cure the communal virus? Two diseases stalk India i.e., one new and mysterious confounding scientists worldwide, the other decade old, both are familiar and nurtured by the politics of hate and bigotry. The coronavirus disease has so far taken less than 2000 lives in India. But the disease of structural religious hatred has killed thousands over the years. As COVID-19 spreads, anti-Muslim sentiments are raging. Amelia narrative, pushed by a few toxic television channels, is that the Nizamuddin markaz mosque in Delhi-the venue of a Tabliki Jamaat meeting in March is solely and singly responsible for the spread of coronavirus infections all over India. A Muslim man was beaten up by a mob in Delhi. A Muslim mother and daughter have been abused by a grocery store owner. Muslim vegetable venders in up's mahoba complained that people called them Tablighis and refused to buy from them. An Ahmadabad hospital reportedly segregated corona patients on religious lines, public outrage forcing the Gujarat Govt. to issue a denial. Dozens of fake videos and whatsapp messages on Muslims -apparently flouting social distancing, all agedly spitting at people to "infect" them are in circulation.

Let's do a reality check through instances and incidences concerning to the subject. One of the reality check incident is the Tablighi Jamat gathering was an instances of ignorant civic irresponsibility and should never have been allowed by Delhi police, which operates under the Union have ministry. Tablighis did spread the virus in parts of Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Telangana but the logic to say they are responsible for all cases in India, in every state and town. In Mumbai, the worst affected city, coronavirus is cutting across religion, caste and class with middle class worli-koliwada, slum settlement Dharavi and posh Malabar-Hills all affected. No doubt due to Tablighis attitude COVID-19 cases increased in the country but only Tablighis is not held responsible to spread the COVID-19 in India.

On the other side, huge numbers of Muslim health workers are on the battle lines of covid-19. In the Indore incident, of the two doctors who were targeted by a mob of Muslim community; one was a Muslim doctor, Dr. Zakia. Now the nationwide and in regard to India, statewise model for fighting corona, has a sizable Muslim population and one of the reasons the state has been so successful is precisely because of Muslim, Hindus and Christians are working side, without discrimination, in a united effort.

The biggest corporate donor to fight against COVID-19 is Muslim. Azim Premji, India's biggest Pharma companies, both in the front of the fight against COVID-19. The Dawoodi Bohras of Mumbai are feeding thousands through free kitchens. The another incident which reflects humane activity



taken place in Indore city, Muslim neighbors carried a Hindu women's body to her funeral. To willfully search out Muslims as coronavirus "culprits" for TV anchors to deliberately seek out "Madarssa hotspot" is not only a chilling pursuit, but also serves to district citizens from failures of government policy responses. Violent majoritarian vigilantism operating under the cover of an anti-corona campaign will make the fight against the disease even harder and weaken India's resolve by creating social turmoil. The another incident which has happened regarding policemen's hand, then, not every Sikh is held responsible. When some gorakshaks lynch and murder, when some villagers lynch two sadhoos' in Palghar, Maharashtra, Nanded Gurudwara pilgrims contributed to spread COVID-19 cases in Punjab, not every Hindu is blamed. Why then should every Muslim be cast as an infection-spreading Tablighis?

The incident took place in Karnataka – a Karnataka BJP MLA held a birthday party, Mumbai VIP's travelled in a convoy to a picnic and this week thousands violated lockdown rules to celebrate a chariot festival in a Karnataka Temple. All these incidences happened in our country giving less importance to humanity and human existence and excess significance to religious structural tendency. These incidences reflect traits of mindless civic irresponsibility of all Indian's, not just Tablighis. All these incidences contains member of all religion but contribution of Tablighi in excess and the hate virus is highly contagious. From above mentioned incidents we must think that scientists are working to find a vaccine for corona virus, but who will curve the structural religious communal virus?

Suggestions :-

In Indian context, followers of all religion i.e., Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Boudh and Christians have got equal status as citizens of India. In our country, as per the constitutional provisions made in part III of the Indian constitution U/A 25 and 28, all Indian's are rightful to exercise their rights as per their respective religious principles, but these religious rights would be subject to mortality and public health. The preamble of the constitution contains 'secularism' principles which means religion shall be individual and there shall not be any particular religion to the government. The Indian government or administration department has no particular religion and all religions be treated as equal.

Therefore, all Indians must bear in their mind that first of all we are Indians, preference be given to natural interest and to find the humanity within, to treat fellow human beings as equals. After all, this in the teaching of every great religion, whether Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam. Because, the global pandemic COVID-19 which knows no boundaries.

Conclusion :-

Conclusively we can say that, human existence is important and valuable. Hence, Human Rights and Humane treatment be signified. After protecting our existence, second stage is that as to how and in what way we should lead our life, it means by following principles of what religion we can survive. For the continuity of religion and religious practices human being is required; without human being there will not be existence of religion. Therefore, "religion is for men and not men for religion."

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