



'Baal Swaraj'

In India, much before the UNCRC came into being in 1989, Mahatma Gandhi's idea of 'Sarvodaya' meaning welfare of all, is very much connected with the human rights. Later, in 1992 India ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children in 1992. A considerable influence of Mahatma Gandhi is seen in the various articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights primarily defines principles that are intended to offer a common standard of achievement for all peoples' and all nations.

More and more number of incidents of different types of violence against children have made headlines in the recent times. The incidents range from violence on the children; by known and unknown people, in different settings etc. As per NCRB reports, crime against children in India has increased by a sharp 11% from 2015 (94172) to 2016 (106958). Going by absolute numbers, it's an increase of 12,786 reported crimes against children across the country. The cause of incidents and gravity of nature of the incident cannot be attributed to a single factor. However, irrespective of the causes, Mahatma Gandhi's teachings and belief of non-violence and self-rule have found its relevance for contemporary society where children and adults can apply these to themselves in their own lives within personal responsibility at all places.

Similarly, acknowledging the rising trends on violence against children, the theme was included in SDGs 2030 in 2016 when the World began implementing the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", that includes a specific target to end all forms of violence against children. In the spirit of an integrated approach, it is vital to tackle violence against children through broader efforts, such as the promotion of high-quality education and gender equality.

Though Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, his writings are widely read, the implications of his philosophy have not been adequately explored in terms of rights of children in contemporary India keeping the indigenous culture intact. It is proposed that in the '150th year of celebrating Mahatma'; NCPCR as per its function under section 13 (h) and rule 17 (f) of the CPC Act, 2005 and CPC Rules, 2006, respectively may take up activities in collaboration with State Commissions. The objective is to create awareness among youth and children regarding Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy in terms of child rights and to develop a broader perspective in the discourse of rights of children-nationally and globally.

Methodology

A two-pronged approach is proposed to be adopted in this regard. *First*, a series of lecture on Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy on different aspects in child rights shall be conducted in renowned Universities, preferably Government Universities) to inspire a deeper understanding on how Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy guides the child rights discourse in India. NCPCR will facilitate in inviting eminent experts and scholars from across India for the lecture series. The Governor/Chief Minister of States may also be invited for the event by respective SCPCRs. The following are the suggestive topics for lecture series-

- Mahatma Gandhi and children's right to education
- Mahatma Gandhi on equality and non-discrimination
- Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on relevance of skill-based education
- Mahatma Gandhi and legal rights of children
- Mahatma Gandhi and violence against children
- Mahatma Gandhi's views regarding girl empowerment
- Mahatma Gandhi and children's right to health and nutrition
- Mahatma Gandhi and children's right to participation
- Mahatma Gandhi on value education

Second, to develop awareness and understanding in children regarding their rights and contribution of Mahatma Gandhi different activities shall be conducted at school level. The activities may include poster competition, essay writing, extempore, quiz competition etc. The

winners shall be felicitated with literature on Gandhi's philosophy during the lecture series in Universities. All the children participants shall be given certificate of participation.

Proposed Budget

The series of lectures and school-level activities shall be conducted in collaboration with respective State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) between 02.10.2019 to 02.11.2019. For this, a proposal shall be sought from all interested SCPCRs and a budget of up to Rs. 50,000/- may be given to SCPCRs after completion of the activities and submission of activity report along with photographs, videos and Utilization Certificate within stipulated time.
