

## BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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### Introduction:

India is a country of diversity where people of India are divided into different castes, religions and the languages they speak. In our country, people love their religion, caste and native language more. Our religion is as dear to everyone as life. In fact, it can be said that it is dearer than life. In such a situation, how will our country remain united? In the history of our country, we see that India has been divided in many ways and through that division; the bitter fruits of independence have been tasted even without the desire of the people of the country. So, we cannot forget the history of India. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar says, "He who forgets history cannot create history." Arabs, Persians, Muslims, British, etc. ruled this country for many years. The only reason for this is the diversity in this country; taking advantage of the country's ethnic and political diversity, foreigners established their rule over this country. Many thinkers have proven this by citing historical examples.

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The patriots of the independence era were aware of this country. Parliament and religion are very different and their paths are also different. They should not be mixed. Patriotic rulers of that time worked very hard day and night to run this country in a democratic way and they gifted a precious Constitution to run this country smoothly. Therefore, in the future, there will be no rivalry between the states. There will be no opportunity for foreign powers to take over.

There is diversity in this country and it is not possible to reduce it because every person loves their religion, caste, language and culture. However, creating unity from this diversity is the need of the time, without which we cannot achieve progress in our country. Therefore, creating unity at the ideological level is the need of the time; I think that it will be possible to achieve national unity through it. The rulers and thinkers of our country are aware of this and I have to admit that the government has made many efforts in this regard.

The people of India use about twenty-five scripts for writing. Three hundred and twenty-five languages are used as spoken languages. The people of this country are divided into seven major religions - Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, Sikh and there are more than six thousand castes of people in India. Different regions, regional environment, dress, food, worship, different customs, poverty and wealth, along with ignorance and superstition are the mainstays of this country. Taking advantage of religion, caste, ignorance and superstition, some politicians and some people in the administration have become bad and corrupted. Due to the above reasons, maintaining unity has become difficult in India, the fear of the poor has increased and the tendency of hatred has prevailed among the common people.



So, the suffering has become an inevitable part of the lives of the poor people in India.

Considering all the above reasons and the difficulties arising from it, will India really become a secular nation as stated in the Constitution of India or not? This question arose in the minds of the scholars and some objectives were set to bring about national integration, which mainly include creating unity in diversity, maintaining integrity, creating awareness about rights and duties, destroying narrow-mindedness, increasing mutual tolerance, reducing religious fanaticism, destroying casteism, eradicating regional differences, destroying linguisticism, reducing communalism, autocratic attitude, resolving regional disputes, etc. Many scholars have expressed their views on national integration and have also defined national integration according to their views.

According to Ravindra Nath Mukherjee, “The process of finding a common thread in many diversities and weaving all life together in that thread is national integration.” As has been said that, “National integration, as defined by various authors, is the process of fostering unity and cohesion within a nation, where diverse groups come together to form a collective identity and work towards common goals, prioritizing national interests over individual or group ones”.

Considering the reasons for the gap in national unity indicated above, the definitions given by some scholars regarding national unity, and the objectives of the government in this regard, it seems that it is necessary to connect all human beings with some kind of comprehensive emotional but scientific thread. Such a comprehensive philosophical thread is found in Buddhism. In fact, I would say that Buddhism has the power to achieve not only national unity but also world unity. All the religions of the world revolve around the concept of salvation, sin-virtue, heaven-hell, rebirth, etc. The thought that stands the test of science is found in Buddhism. Scholars have proven that the root cause of all the riots that have occurred in India to date has been solely and exclusively religious and casteist sentiments.

People who have come together after various measures often become divided only because of religious strife and forget their mutual relations even with a small spark and become enemies of each other. They do not look back and forth to tear each other’s bodies by shedding blood. They are seen to be brave enough to do whatever they want for the sake of religion. This caste of people, who are sometimes as submissive as cows, becomes even more violent when the feeling of religion flares up. They are ready to suffer any suffering and endure exploitation in the false hope of attaining heaven in the pursuit of salvation. Nothing can be gained from this except suffering, and a miserable person can never make others happy. Suffering increases and people move away from unity.

The principles of Buddhism do not revolve around the attainment of salvation, sin-virtue, heaven-hell, rebirth, etc. The Buddha does not revolve around the Buddha himself. He finds the causes of suffering and guides them to eradicate it. Most importantly, Buddha’s thoughts have stood the test of science and he accepts scientific rationalism. This guidance does not discriminate but advocates justice among human beings and encourages equality, freedom and brotherhood. Buddha’s principles do not believe in any imaginary, non-existent objects or forces.



We have accepted that India is a democratic secular nation through our Constitution and the Indian Constitution has the fragrance of the principles of Buddha. Many religions of the world have tried to bring ideological strength to their respective religions by adopting the principles of Buddha. They have been successful in this. This proves that the power of creating secularism and achieving national unity lies in the philosophy of Buddha.

Tathagata Gautama Buddha gave special importance to wisdom, morality, compassion, ethics, non-violence, etc. According to him, wisdom means wisdom. He differentiates between knowledge and wisdom. The wisdom of Buddha should be sown in the minds of people and added to it by virtue because wisdom has no value without virtue. Tathagata has given five basic principles about virtue. The first principle is about killing, the second is about stealing, the third is about material injustice, the fourth is about lying and the fifth is about drinking. These five principles are very important and every person needs them. These five principles are called the Panchashils. These are the five rules. These five qualities have been prescribed to a person to control his body, mind and verbal actions and to refrain from what is harmful. It is observed that the people of the family who follow the Panchashils are more peaceful, happy and joyful than others.

Even though we have become knowledgeable today, due to the absence of Panchasheela, we are wasting our knowledge for the sake of self-realization. That is why a sense of corruption is arising and national unity is being destroyed. The world has made great progress through science, but due to the absence of Panchasheela, that progress has started being misused. That is why; the national unity is in danger.

Today, many people in the world are intelligent and follow the teaching. But since everyone is stingy in adopting the important principle of 'compassion' of Buddha, many difficulties are arising in getting justice for the poor, the oppressed and the suffering. Some societies have devoted themselves in using their intellect to make others weak out of a sense of dominance. Some religions allow such a thing that if we have committed some mistakes, we are asked to atone for it and show the way to get rid of sins, and it seems that they have given permission to do bad deeds. The teaching of doing false deeds throughout our lives, ruining the lives of ordinary people and sitting around chanting their names at the end of our lives is not acceptable to Buddha. Because this is the reason why the gap between the poor and the rich, friend and enemy has been created. In such a situation, how are we going to achieve national unity? For that, there is a need to adopt the 'Five Virtues' and 'Compassion' of Buddha.

### **Conclusion:**

Buddha gives importance to non-violence along with wisdom, morality, and compassion. According to Buddha, 'Ahimsa' means 'love'. If we love everyone, there is no question of violence. The principles taught by Buddha are simple and easy. Adopting them will definitely help in eradicating the river of sorrow flowing on the back of the world. I believe that human beings will be successful in achieving not only national unity but also world unity.



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