

Sarvodaya

Introduction

The concept of Sarvodaya is a significant contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to the socio-political philosophy. His vision of Sarvodaya is not independent from the religions he came across, the persons with whom he came into contact, and the movements he has acquainted with. Though it is not easy to define properly Gandhi's vision of Sarvodaya it is an all-comprehensive vision assuring the total good of every individual: religious, moral, social, political, and economic. He used the word Sarvodaya to describe the principles that he felt should guide us in our efforts to build ourselves, our families, our communities and nations. He had arrived at these principles of a Sarvodaya society on the basis of his studies, his observations and his experiments with truth and non-violence. In the world threatened by poverty, unemployment, racial discrimination, exploitation, ecological destruction, war, and dehumanization, it was Gandhi's ardent desire to establish a new just society free from all social evils and which would ensure the good of all. He proposes Sarvodaya to achieve the integral development of every individual. It is an ideal to be translated into action in order to build up a new world society.

Meaning

Sarvodaya is a Sanskrit word derived from two words, namely, sarva and udaya. Sarva means 'all' which includes every kind of living beings. Udaya means 'rise,' 'uplift,' 'prosperity,' 'affluence,' etc. So Sarvodaya literally means 'the welfare of all' or 'the upliftment of all.' The ultimate objective of Sarvodaya is the total well-being of all or the greatest good of all. By 'welfare of all' Gandhi means the sum total of conditions – religious, moral, political, social and economic – for the all round growth of the total individual and of every individual in the context of the overall development of society. By the concept Sarvodaya Gandhi really means universal uplift or the welfare of all men and women and not just the welfare, or greatest happiness, of the greatest number. Sarvodaya is the name Gandhi gives to the new society embracing the betterment of the entire humankind and the world at large. It is a society directed towards the integral welfare of all living beings based on age and on the old spiritual and moral values of Indian and those found elsewhere