

Life and Surrounding Of Acharya Narendra Dev: An Overview

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Abstract: Acharya Narendra Dev was the leading freedom fighter, journalist, litterateur and educationist of India as well as the principal ideologue of the Congress Socialist Party. Along with being a master of languages such as Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, English, Pali etc., he was also a excellent teacher and great educationist.

As a leader of the freedom struggle, he was imprisoned many times. Acharya Narendra Dev was a man of remarkable talent and personality, and from here he received the title of Acharya, since then Acharya became famous as Narendra Dev. He was also the Vice Chancellor of Lucknow University and Kashi Hindu University. He was active on the Congress party and was a member of the All India Congress Committee from 1916 to 1948. Acharya Narendra Dev was a socialist leader at heart and he led the Congress Socialist Party by staying in the Congress. He was a scholar of scientific socialism and throughout his life struggled for the lower classes of the society and the people sitting on the last rung.

Key Words: thinker, philosopher, socialism, Congress, freedom movement, sacrifice.

1. Introduction:

The personal life of Acharya Narendra Dev was very simple and ideal. Sheel, Desh-Prem and Nishkam Seva were the basic mantras of Acharyaji's life. Narendra Dev ji was born on 31 October 1889 in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh. His father's name was Baldev Prasad who was a lawyer by profession. The name of Narendrajji's childhood was Avinashi Lal. A good friend of his father, Madhav prasad had named Narendra Dev from Avinashi Lal. Two years after the birth of Narendra Dev, his grandfather died and after this, his father Baldev Prasad returned to his native city Faizabad from Sitapur district. And this was the childhood of Avinashi Lal (Narendra Dev). Narendra ji's father was a well-known lawyer of his time as well as a person of religious ideology. He also had little knowledge of politics. Religious, educated and political people used to visit his house. This generated religious and social interest in home environment. On a fateful day Swami Ramathirth, Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, Pandit Deendayalu Sharma etc. visited his own house. He got a chance to come close to them and was very influenced by their ideas. And with this, his love for Indian culture grew in his heart and his developed an inclination for politics. For further education, he got admitted in Allahabad University and from where he qualified his B.A. And went to Queens College in Kashi to study archaeology. He completed is Masters in Sanskrit in 1913.

Narendra Devji's father was a well-known lawyer, so he wished that Narendra Dev should also be an advocate and adopt the same profession, but by know he was more interested in politics. Narendra Devji realised that it might be easier to enter politics while practising law. With thiss thought in mind, he studied law. After its completion, he practiced law in Faizabad from 1915 to 1920.

2. Early life:

Every human is born in a particular place, date and Samvat. This is the reason that almost every human being or creature is tied in the periphery of the country. The country roaming like a bull of a crusher tied in the periphery of time, one day do not prove its usefulness in the world and settle down. Such ordinary people, despite living, do not get any essence in the world nor are they able to give anything to their surroundings. 'All his life is spent in raising bread and cloth for himself and his family. Although it is also an essential function of life and is also the ultimate duty of the householder life, when such paths are adopted for the purpose, which are not policy-oriented, they become life's essence. Those moments in general human life keep coming when they are a victim of circumstances, but fighting the circumstances, changing them and striving for mankind only leads ordinary man to exceptionalism. It is necessary to write something else before writing anything about Narendra Devji, about his life and surroundings, because his life as people got to see and understand, definitely transcends the periphery of the country and life time lived.

Acharya Narendra Dev ji was born into a staunch Sanatani Hindu family. His father Baldev Prasad was a spiritual man. There was always a visit of saints, ascetics and scholars to him. He used to spend a major part of his money to help the oppressed. The impact of that social and spiritual environment was lifelong on Narendra Dev ji. He was a staunch socialist in behavior and deeds. His personal life was as simple as ascetics. When he became the Vice

Chancellor of Lucknow and Kashi University, he used to spend half of his salary during that period on poor students and needy people. An intellectual atmosphere which he got in his heritage, due to which he moved towards history, philosophy and study of different languages.

Narendra Dev was born on 31 October 1889 in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh. His childhood name was Avinashilal. His father Baldev Prasad was a well-known lawyer of his time. Avinashi's childhood was spent mainly in Faizabad city. Baldev Prasad was a man of religious instinct and also took a little interest in politics due to which people of these areas used to come and go at his house. In this way, child Narendra Dev got a chance to get in touch with Swami Ramathirtha, Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, Pandit Deendayalu Sharma etc. Gradually, he grew fond of Indian culture and then when he grew up, the social and political condition of the country inspired him to enter politics.

Narendra Dev earned his BA from Allahabad University And then went to Queens College in Kashi to study archeology. After that he did MA in Sanskrit in 1913. His Dad was a well-known lawyer, the family members wanted to teach him advocacy too, but Narendra Dev did not like this profession but he felt that it would be easy to participate in politics while advocating, so read the law.

3. Political life :

Narendra dev ji's political views gradually started to match those of the Extremists. Due to his radical ideology, he left the party. When the two parties met in the Congress in 1916, he again came to the Congress. After studying the period, He practiced law in Faizabad district for five years from 1915-20. At the same time, the Non-Cooperation Movement started in protest against the British Government, after which Narendra Dev gave up advocacy and went to Kashi Vidyapeeth where he started teaching work. Here he started work at Vidyapeeth under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhagwandas. In the year 1926, he also became the Chancellor of Vidyapeeth and it was here that the address of 'Acharya' was also associated with his name. The teachers and students of Kashi Vidyapeeth made significant contribution in the freedom struggle under the leadership of Narendra Dev.

Narendra Dev started taking interest in politics from his student life. He was also a member of the All India Congress Committee from 1916 to 1948 and an active member of the Congress Working Committee along with Jawaharlal Nehru. Despite poor health, Narendra Dev participated in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930, the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932 and the Individual Satyagraha Movement of 1941, and also faced torture in prison. During the Quit India Movement in 1942, when Gandhiji proposed "do or die" on 8 August, he was arrested along with all the members of the Congress Working Committee in Bombay. After that Narendra Dev remained locked in the fort of Ahmednagar with Jawaharlal Nehru from 1942-45. Here, impressed by his knowledge, Pandit Nehru got him to revise the manuscript of his famous book "Discovery of India".

In 1934, Acharya Narendra Dev, along with Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia and other allies, founded the Congress Socialist Party and was also the President of the first session in 1934 with the aim of taking the Congress towards socialist ideas. When the Congress Party decided that there would be no other party inside the Congress, they left the Congress Party with their allies. Acharya Narendra Dev has played a very important place in the socialist movement in India.

4. Linguistic knowledge:

Along with political activist and thinker, Narendra Dev was also a litterateur and great educationist. Apart from Sanskrit, Hindi, he had a good knowledge of English, Urdu, Persian, Pali, Bangla, French and Prakrit languages. After 'Kashi Vidyapeeth', he was also the Vice Chancellor of 'Lucknow University' and 'Kashi Hindu University' and made his invaluable contribution in the field of education.

5. Published work and speeches:

Once Acharya Narendra Dev said in a radio talk titled "Mere Sansmaran": "There have always been two trends in my life - one for reading and the other for politics!" He had a special interest in the study of Buddhism and throughout his life he remained absorbed in the study of Buddhism. In the last days of his life, he completed his book on "Buddhism-philosophy" and also published "Abhidharmakosh". Along with this, he also translated "Abhidhammatthasamho" in Hindi. He started the compiling a dictionary of terms related to Buddhist philosophy, but his accidental demise did not allow him to complete the task.

The most important of his published works has been his speeches by Acharya Narendra Dev. He edited the "Vidyapeeth" quarterly magazine, "Samaj" quarterly, "Janavani" monthly, "Sangharsh" and "Samaj" weekly papers. Many articles and comments were published from time to time in these journals which are: Nationalism and Socialism, Socialism: Goals and Measures, Socialist Party and Marxism, History of National Movement of India, War and India, Question of Farmers etc.

6. A great saga of self-sacrifice :

The eloquence of Acharya Narendra Dev was not the same as the manner of speech of the Jananeta, but he was attractive to intellectuals and well-wishers. In public statements also, he used to present a topic in a logical and well-organized manner, like a person who has been a professor and advocate.

Because of the conciseness and genius of synthesis, he used to present clear and vivid explanations of historical events in a few sentences and in select words in such a way that the audience was enchanted. His life is a great example of self-sacrifice. He had devoted himself to the country and never tried to gain wealth and fame.

Even after independence, when he was made Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow and Banaras Universities, he spent a large part of his income on the scholarship of the students. Apparently, this is why they were always surrounded by economic difficulties. Probably many people do not know that he was suffering from debt at the time of death, because they could not fulfill both the objectives simultaneously. What Acharya Narendra Dev said about the role of farmers, decentralization of power, language and linguistic territories, and the right to property on an equally important subject, is equally appropriate today. For example, for the right to property, he wrote - "The fundamental right to property is to be amended in such a way as to make it possible for both the central and territorial legislative authorities to acquire property for the public interest."

They should be given the rights by which they can socialize industries and other economic institutions and make arrangements for public management of personal property and personal businesses in the common interest of the class of workers concerned. In such case, if the compensation is given, then only the legislative authority should have the right to decide.

7. A Multidisciplinary Thinker:

Acharya Narendra Dev was a great philosopher and thinker. His thinking was not only towards the backward class of the country, but his thinking was in relation to the circumstances which were going on outside the boundaries of the country. India attained independence and the end of an era. The new era knocked at the door. Along with calculating the effects of the changing international circumstances, relations and protests, Acharya Narendra Dev gave the introduction of quick wisdom and intense thinking.

"There was a benefit of national independence." But democracy is becoming far away. In Asia, Africa and Latin America, democracy has to defend itself everywhere. Caste, tribal, territorial and linguistic effects on backward and anti-colonial economies are hollowing out the democratic institutions established with such pomp after the attainment of national independence. " Since then the world has changed a lot and so has India. The world we are living in, it is no longer humanity. Both Atlantic and Soviet Union groups have changed a lot. France's freeing of American influence, the East's indestructibility from the Suez (canal), the inexpressible call of Britain to Europe, the excitement of negotiating with the East in West Germany, and the increasing terror of China from the southeast. All these have reinforced the imagination of the European group.

America on the one hand and China on the other side - both of them want to suppress this vast territory, which includes many large parts of ancient Asia, located in the east and south of ancient Russia." Nuclear and space-searching nations have full destructive power from the imagery of new bombs, the inability to protect inter-continental missiles and, on the other hand, the emergence of China as a nuclear-powered country, forcing these two superpowers to rethink. They are motivating the world to act wisely and thus play the role of the world's defenders. The result is uncertain, because while developed nations are slowly trying to realize the changing environment and try to reshape each other, this kind of awakening is very rare in developing countries. In developing countries, all those who have moved forward, leaving the least developed countries, often appear eager to join the throats of developed and sea countries, rather than taking them with them to a new level of progress. It has always been the endeavor of developed nations to create discord among the less developed countries and pretend to solve their problems at their own cost. Their power and resourcefulness and awareness of what is at stake as well helps them in doing so. Least developed nations find themselves helpless in the absence of these decisive factors.

Acharya Narendra Dev had neither a narration style like Dr. Lohia nor an encouraging clarity like Jai Prakash Narayan. In contrast to his eloquent way of speaking, his style of writing can be called deceptive, clean and erudite. We would prefer to call them an 'artisan' than a skilled craftsman working in a splendid environment

8. Last journey of life:

Acharya Narendra Dev was a patient of asthma all his life. On the invitation of his friend and the Governor of Madras Sriprakash, he went to Chennai for health benefits where he died in Adore on 19 February 1956 due to asthma. He was 67 years old at the time of his death.

9. Conclusion:

The personal life of Acharya Narendra Dev was very simple and ideal. Sheel, Desh-Prem and Nishkam Seva were the basic mantras of Acharyaji's life. He had made an outstanding contribution to the Independence struggle and later to nation-building as a teacher, thinker and socialist leader.

His life is a great example of self-sacrifice. He had devoted himself to the country and never tried to gain wealth and fame. Even after independence, when he was made Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow and Banaras Universities, he spent a large part of his income on the scholarship of the students. Apparently, this is why they were always surrounded by economic difficulties.

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The aim of life for Narendra Dev was to generate such a creative power through which great national efforts could be possible for the physical and cultural advancement of the country. In his view, this creative power could create awareness among the educated towards social duty and moral obligations. He considered it national wealth. In this creative power, we saw the possibility of that great intellectual effort, which can be used to reduce inertia, immorality, selfishness, violence and vengeance. With this, the best feelings and conscience can be aroused in the society. He saw education as a social and cultural force.

Therefore, Acharya ji's entire life is exemplary for us.

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