

International Conference (Blended Mode)

on

M. K. Gandhi, Pandemic and International Politics: Back to the Future

Organized by

Centre for Gandhian Thought and Peace Studies,

School of Social Science, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

on the occasion of *Gandhi Jayanti* and

to celebrate 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence, *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*

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Historically, pandemic has been the recurring phenomenon in the world, which causes deaths of millions of people around the globe while destabilising economic, social political development. Evidently, the twentieth century has experienced most tragic episodes in the form of three destructive happenings, the Spanish flu, also known as the 1918 flu pandemic, the first World War and the Second World War. These tragic occurrences have not only transformed the social and economic composition of world communities but it has also brought dynamic changes in the international politics. The twenty years crisis, the decline of British Empire, the use of nuclear weapons, advent of the United States (US) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and superpowers rivalry. Additionally, the emergences of international organisations have been major features of international political development. Various mechanism and approaches, both peaceful and forceful, have been experimented to maintain international peace and security in international system.

In fact, the philosophers and practitioners of international politics attempted to provide the idealist, liberalist and realist methods to resolve the complex nature of unfolding conflicts and violence among the nation states. Practically, the superpowers rivalries equipped with realism (self-help, survivalist approach based on zero-sum calculations) dominated the international politics. Contrarily, there have been attempt by philosophers, leaders, practitioners, policy makers and the international organisations to generate conducive environment to have harmonious and mutually advantageous international order while resolving international conflicts based on non-discrimination, non-exploitation, non-violence (*Ahimsa*) and development for all (*Sarvodaya*) principles and built peaceful and prosperous global society.

Significantly, Birth of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (M.K. Gandhi) and his incarnation as Mahatma had been the result of the complex social and international political scenario in the context. Learning of M.K. Gandhi from both Indian philosophical teachings and western teachings has made him to equip himself with the idea of peace, Non-violence, truth and *Satyagraha* for liberating many states from empire and individuals from many evil forces to have peaceful and prosperous international community. Gandhi's experience with pandemic of 1918, the first war and the Second World War, had provided him unique opportunities to experiment with truth in multi-dimensional aspects. Consequently, Gandhi had not only taught

and practices the methods and ideas to have peaceful, clean and healthy social order but he also taught lessons to establish peaceful international order based on mutually advantageous relationship free from power politics and self (national)-oriented approaches to development and struggle for power.

Presently, the pandemic, Covid-19, brought the international community again back to the square one where both peaceful social order and peaceful international order are under grave danger. Thus, it's pertinent to revisit the experiences and teachings of M.K. Gandhi to find out solutions of ongoing multi-level, multi-layered and multi-dimensional crises from individual to the nation-state and to the international system. Significantly, this year is also historical for India particularly due to the successful accomplishment of our 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence, *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. Therefore, this international Conference themed on *M.K. Gandhi, Pandemic and International Politics: Back to the Future* had invited eminent scholars from glob to ponder upon the methods and approaches to resolve the ongoing crises emerged from the Covid-19 while focussing on the teaching and experiences of M.K. Gandhi. Significantly, the Conference also aims at the deliberation and discourses on the successful completion of 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence. The conference invited prominent scholars working on the following subthemes and scheduled accordingly

1. Gandhi's philosophy and peace
2. Gandhi, Non-violence and Conflict Resolution
3. Gandhi, Development and Peace
4. Gandhi , non-violence and Global Peace Movement
5. Gandhi, Culture of Peace and the United Nations
6. Gandhi, Pandemic, Health and Human Security
7. India's Contribution to International Peace and Security
8. India @75th Years of Independence
9. India, Pandemic and International Politics
10. India and post-Covid-19 World Order

The above themes have been indicative and not the mandatory. Other significant subthemes have been also considered for the deliberation in this historic academic event.

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