

The concept of national Integration in India.

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Abstract:

India is a sovereign country with a socialist, secular, democratic and republican polity. But in contemporary India the daily ongoing problems on the basis of Religion, Caste, region, minority etc. drove my focus on the concept of national integration in India. The importance of national integration is obvious. The integrity implies that all people are equal regardless of their interests, religion, race, sex, and class. National integration is a helpful way to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of people. Promoting national integration means the country gives its people an opportunity to live together in peace and prosperity. The concept of Communalism, Regionalism, Linguism, Castism, and Religion etc. in the minds of the people of India makes them parochial, narrow-minded, provincial, communal and caste-minded, which are said to be the greatest hurdles in the process of National integration.

Key Words: *National Integration, Religion, Caste, fundamental rights, Regionalism, Linguism.*

Introduction:

As the great scholar, Aristotle posited "man is a social creature". This implies in each general public, there must exist individual differing interest and that of India is no exception. India is a nation with much assorted variety. The limits of India stretch out from the greater Himalayas to low profundities of the Indian Ocean. It touches the nations like China, Russia, Pakistan, Tibet and Burma. The general population of this nation has assorted traditions and customs and talk diverse dialects which have their own particular excellence, style and legacy. They have confidence in various religious beliefs and thoughts. History demonstrates that India had never one dialect talked all through the nation nor one religion preached by all. At no other time, the

whole region of geological India was ruled from one focus. Thus, India presents a remarkable variety of people who differ from one another in every respect. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru observed that national integration would weld Indian people into one and make India into ‘one strong national unit maintains at the same time all our wonderful diversity’. According to Dictionary of Political thought, “Integration means different groups within a jurisdiction may have the same rights in law that nevertheless enjoy unequal privileges and desperate social, educational and recreational institutions, integration is the process, where by all such institutions are made available to all members of the state regardless of creed, race and origin with the intention of forming a unified civil society within the jurisdiction of a unified state”¹

Meaning of National Integration

The term national integration is composed of two words: ‘Nation’ and ‘Integration’. Nation is a stable historically evolved community of territory, common economic life and a common psychological makeup either independent or struggling to be independent.² National integration is a positive concept to inculcate feeling of togetherness amongst diverse sections of society. It is not the uniformity of all religions, dress and food habits etc. It means both, preservation of diverse cultures and at the same time living, respecting and working in harmony with each other for the overall prosperity and development of the nation.

The meaning of national integration touches almost all points of national life. It synthesizes the sentiments and values of different castes, linguistic, regional and religious communities emotionally into a compact whole. It checks out narrow tendencies which are great hindrances to national unity and national progress. In brief it can be easily understood by these lines:

- (i) A feeling of brotherhood in the minds of the citizens of a country.
- (ii) A feeling of cohesion.
- (iii) A feeling of harmony.
- (iv) A feeling of loyalty to the country.
- (v) A feeling of patriotism.
- (vi) A feeling of oneness.

- (vii) A feeling of solidarity.
- (viii) A feeling of tolerance, especially tolerance of others, beliefs, etc.
- (ix) A feeling of unity of the country and
- (x) 'We feeling' and not 'I feeling'.

In simple words we can say National Integration means the process as a result of which community attains a psychological emotional and spiritual unity and solidarity and starts behaving as a strong and united nation committed to secure the national goals of socio economic, politico-cultural development. National integration refers to national unity and a sense of belonging to the nation. It is an essential aspect in the making of a nation. Integration means that all the individuals of the society feel that they are an important part of the society every member of the society identifies himself with the society state and nation in which he resides and inculcates the societal values rules and regulations and behaviour of that society even though every individual has his own aims and ambitions behaving in a way that his own welfare depends on the welfare of the society is called integration. A society and such a state comprises individuals and communities associations institutions group's families etc. built on the basis of race, colour, religion, caste, sex, etc...

National Integration was defined by the first National Integration Conference in 1965 as: "a psychological and educational process, involving the development of a feeling of unity (oneness) solidarity (team spirit) and cohesion (bond) in the hearts of the people, a sense of common citizenship and a deep feeling of loyalty to the nation".³

According to Rupert Emerson, "Integration is the process followed by the ethnically plural society in which different groups having different language, customs, values and cultures, bring them into one national culture by eliminating their parochial loyalties. National integration refers specifically to the problem of creating a sense of territorial nationality which overshadows or removes subordinate parochial loyalties."⁴ J.A. Cutlet defines National Integration "as a process of becoming a whole, of acquiring consciousness, of having a goal which makes it possible to rally round a pole of conjunction." Another scholar defines National Integration in terms of

emotional and psychological integration of the people through the inculcation of a spirit of spiritual, moral, national unity.

Myron Weiner: “National integration covers a vast range of human relationship and attitudes. The integration of diverse and discrete cultural loyalties, and the development of a sense of nationality (unity), the integration of political units into a common territorial framework with a government which can exercise authority, the integration of the rulers (Elites) and the ruled (Masses), the integration of the citizens into a common political process, and finally, the integration of individuals and organizations for purposive activities. Myron Weiner further observes that National Integration is the sum total of Territorial Integration and National Identity, Political Integration, Elite Mass Integration, Cultural Integration, Integrative Behaviour and defines them briefly as:

- (i) Territorial Integration and National Identity is the way toward uniting socially discrete gatherings into a solitary regional unit and the foundation of a national personality.
- (ii) Political Integration is the Process of building up a national focal specialist over subordinate political units or locales.
- (iii) Elite Mass Integration is the forging of links between the ruling elite and the broad mass of people who are ruled, i.e. reducing the gulf between the elite and the masses in terms of aspirations and life conditions.
- (iv) Cultural Integration is the development of minimum value consensus necessary to maintain a social order.
- (v) Integrative behavior is Securing of integrative behavior which involves the capacity of the people in a society to organize for some common purpose⁵.

Considering all facts we can state that National Integration is the process of joining together and arranging the general population of the nation into a well-knit country, group candidly joined together and resolved to serve the national enthusiasm through integrative endeavors involving territorial integration, emotional integration, political integration, cultural integration, elite-mass integration and integrative behavior. In fact, National Integration means the inculcation of a spirit of unity in diversity and emotional integration among the people⁶.

Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan's model of National Integration that has been accepted in India, which is rightly observed as "It means and ought to mean cohesion not fusion, unity but not uniformity, reconciliation but not merger, agglomeration but not assimilation of the discrete segments of the people who constitute a political community or state."⁷

According to Dorothy Thomason, 'National Integration' 'is a feeling that binds the citizens of a country together'. National integration is 'the job to inculcate knowledge of our country, pride in it, and respect for the best in our national environment, aspiration and traditions and a wish to improve our country'.

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, 'National integration cannot be built by brick and mortar. It cannot be carved by chisel and hammer. It has to grow silently in the minds and hearts of the people residing in the country. The only process is the process of education. Education can modify the behavior of an individual which can help in attaining national integration of our country.

According to Kothari Commission (1964 – 66) 'National integration is the first step for creation of a strong united country which is an essential precondition for all progresses. The commission further explained that national integration is a blend of sentiments resulting in love for the country.

According to Iqbal Narain, "National Integration as a concept is at once holistic and multidimensional. It is holistic because it takes into account society, culture, economy, polity, administration and even education. It is multi-dimensional because it is a question of cultural politico administrative, economic and emotional integration"⁸. The prime minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi once remarked in her speech in 1969 that integration is a vital condition of national life and progress and that the greatest threat to integration came from communalism. She appealed to all political leaders to treat the problem of national integration as national not as a political issue. While addressing a meeting of the steering commission of the national integration council, she said that the barriers in the minds of the people standing in the way of national integration could be knocked down one by one, when we take it up as a national issue and do not try to take political advantage out of it. She further added that the government was keen on the cooperation of all parties and the people in promoting the task of national integration.

Smt. Indira Gandhi made every possible way to integrate India into a single unit and led her life in the way of national integration. Her views on National integration of India can be seen from the lines which will give a proper knowledge how conscious she was for national integration. *“If I die a violent death, as some fear and a few are plotting, I know that the violence will be in the thought and the action of the assassins, not in my dying. But every drop of my blood will strengthen the unity, peace and brotherhood of the Country”.* Smt. Indira Gandhi in her speech at Bhubaneswar on 30th October 1984, a day before her death. India observes 19th November, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi every year as national integration Day. Its main aim is to promote among the peoples unity, peace, affection and brotherhood. On 31st October 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own body guards. She was the victim of the demand for the creation of a separate state of Khalistan out of the state of Punjab. The commemoration of Mrs. Gandhi birth anniversary as national integration Day speaks volumes about her commitment and the supreme sacrifice that she made for protecting and promoting the unity and integrity of India since independence has been struggling to keep its unity intact. Mrs. Gandhi has done yeomen service for the cause of national integration. In fact, she had laid down her life for it. She made it amply clear in her last speech on 30th October 1984 at Bhubaneswar that she was prepared to go to any length to protect and promote the unity and integrity of the nation¹². When the country was partitioned, communal clashes culminated in the death of thousands of innocent people and in the martyrdom of the father of the Nation. Fifteen years after the independence the situation was not much better. The then Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru convened national integration conference in September-October, 1961 to find ways and means to combat the evils of communalism, casteism, regionalism, linguism and narrow mindedness and to formulate definite conclusions in order to give a lead to the country. This conference decided to set up a National Integration Council (NIC) to review all matters pertaining to national integration and to make recommendations thereon. The National Integration Council (NIC) was constituted accordingly and in 1962 Jawaharlal Nehru convened the first National Integration council to discuss the question of national integration and to evolve the methods of making every Indian realize the importance of national unity. At the time of Chinese invasion of India (1962), the whole country rose as one man condemned the aggression and was prepared to make any sacrifice in order to save every inch of the country's territory.

When in later years, there was no common enemy to fight with how ever Indians started quarrelling with one another.

It is extremely significant to note that Indira Gandhi, whenever she talked of national integration, she always appealed people to derive their inspiration from the glorious epoch of nationalist struggle launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Her world view of the nationalist phase of struggle was colored by her faith on non-violence, secularism and democratic values, which provided sustenance and inspiration to Indian people as a whole. The Government of India, after the achievement of independence assiduously sought to promote these values. Indira Gandhi often stressed the efficacy of a policy of right means and right ends following Gandhiji philosophy. She said so often: “Violence never solved any problem however noble our objectives might be, if we adopt wrong means we cannot achieve these objective satisfactorily”.⁹

Conclusion:

The concept of national integration refers to national unity or we can say oneness of the whole country. The main motive of national integration in India is to build the nation within the nation. National integration has played a key role in the development of nations. One can find a sense of strong national integration in any developed nation. India is leading among the developing nations and the problem of national integration is one of the hindrances in its way. A strong sense of national integration is the need of hour to change the status of our nation from developing to developed nation. The government is working tooth and nails to make our country to be counted among the developed countries, but this is impossible without the proper support of the general public. So it is the prime duty of every citizen of India irrespective of caste creed color or sex etc to contribute their best in the development of our nation.

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