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# Anti-Apartheid Movement: A Contribution of Gandhi

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**Abstract:** South Africa has become the home of racial policy for about 80 years. Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation of Anti Apartheid Movements which while being matured with mass following and involvement of African National Congress (ANC) has strengthened against government. ANC was in forefront to lead the AAM. The movement has its foundation over Gandhian tools of non violence, but in later phases they also acquire violent methods against Apartheid. AAM got international support from African Union (AU), United Nations (UN) and Commonwealth nations. United Nation adopted human rights instruments and imposed arms embargo and sanctions against South Africa. AAM has successful transnational support and global influence in comparison to any other social movements like National Liberation and Marxism. It was Gandhi who makes South African blacks much credible against the Apartheid laws and raises the movements actively away from India.

**Key words:** Campaigns, Registration, Civil disobedience, Demonstration, Disfranchise

## I. INTRODUCTION

South Africa apartheid regime discriminating its citizens on the basis of race and colour. This official discrimination period existed of around 90 years. But the actual discrimination or apartheid system continued after it till 1994. The person who opposed system either punished through put into jails or being killed. United Nations on one side morally seized this system but actually not in practice. The story of such discrimination is fight through the anti apartheid movements with successfully dismantling this system in 1994. Nationalist party which came into power in 1948 practiced racial segregation.

United Nation classified it as a crime against humanity in his adopted mission of International convention on the suppression and punishment of the crime of apartheid in 1973. The convention over apartheid also provide its definition in their article 2, as one purpose of establishing inhuman acts committed for domination of one racial groups of persons to other racial groups of persons by oppressing them.

Though it was institutionalised in 1948, the government before this period in South Africa are the precursors of Apartheid. The Britishers during their colonial rules in 19th century enacted many laws which prohibit the blacks in moments to the areas occupied by whites. Blacks have to carry their passes and not allowed on the streets of Cape colony and Natal after sunset. In 1905-06 Regulation bill passed which imposed many restrictions over black and Indians. It was also belonged with the bill which denied blacks to have a right to vote, limited them for a fixed area and pass system. South Africa Act of 1910 removes the right of blacks to sit in Parliament and Native land Act of 1913 prevents them to buy land outside their reserve areas. The Daniel Malan's government which came into power in 1948 makes the institutionalisation of apartheid system. Malan was first apartheid Prime Minister, as government forms many laws to institutionalise it. The state actions makes it a "Grand Apartheid" move which separate races on a large scale, pressurize people to be on a definite positions as defined for races. The population Registration Act of 1950 was first grand Apartheid law which classify each and every person of South Africa by race and groups like colour, African or Asian etc. The issue of identity card clearly mentions where one can live, schools for education, job opportunity, health services separately for blacks and whites.

The second pillar was group areas Act of 1950 which make diverse areas and determined where one can live according to race. Before this most settlement has people who live side by side either from any race. The act reserves 87% of the land for white which constitutes for 4.5 million people whereas 13% of the land for 27 million people were reserved for blacks.

The marriages between different races prohibited by Mixed Marriage Act Prohibition of 1949. It makes a criminal act to have sexual relations with a person of different race. The public parks, buses, hospitals, schools, universities have reserved for a particular races and along with that the services of inferior quality were supposed for Indians and coloured.

The communism was suppressed by banning it in 1950. The government banned the disorderly gathering for such organisations which were labelled as threatening for government. To move the forced people to their designated group areas government

implemented a policy during 1960, 1970 and 1980. About 3.5 million people resettle during this period under slum clearance programme, the inhabitants of the black spots and areas of blacks surrounded by white farms. The government day to day tightened the existing laws which make migration of blacks to white South Africa very difficult.

#### *A. Gandhi's contribution in Anti Apartheid movement*

The anti Apartheid movement were sown by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi in 1984 established the anti colonial and anti racial discrimination movement for Natal Indian Congress. When Gandhi knows about the disfranchise Indians, he urged them to protest for their rights. Gandhi sent petitions for this disfranchise in the South African legislation and another one to Lord Ripon who disallowed this disfranchising bill and Gandhi ultimately succeeded.

Gandhi experimented his Satyagraha in 1906 against the registration of Asians. Thousands of Asians opposed and boycotted this registration and government put them into jails. The burning of passes also makes a assert of thousands of Indians.

The 1930 epic march of Gandhi in the coal mines of Natal evokes massive response from the women's as well as makes workers voluntarily on strike. These features were the characterization of the AAM in the later phases. Gandhi left South Africa in 1915, but it was his Phoenix settlement, the Natal Indian Congress and Transvaal Indian Congress which was stood there and used in struggle against the racial dissemination policies. Gandhi third son, Manilal also leads the major campaign in 1946, against the discrimination against the Indians. This movement which continued for two years, only involved with Indians and this impressed blacks a lot. Nelson Mandela wrote that the spirit and courage which makes the fear away to jail, or rather boosted popularity was done by Natal Indian Congress and Transvaal Indian Congress. He said that freedom struggles are not only for passing resolutions, holding meetings and making speeches but to mass action and meticulous organization which involves sacrifice and willingness for their motherland and ideology.

#### *B. Impact and Strategies*

AAM was established in 1959 in which Britain, African nations and commonwealth nations participated. The 20th century remarked with the first successful transnational social movement which has extent support of governments, organizations and individuals from all continents. The international support in this movement was mobilised due to racist apartheid regime in South Africa. This movement had geared such global support which Marxism and National liberation movement cannot. The movement was very active and achieved much.

The internal aspect of AAM is to destabilise the racist regime in South Africa and external aspect is to make political, cultural and economic campaign in South Africa stronger. External support can be of regional efforts which form military basis and diplomatic supports to liberation movement and other is to make international sanctions against the ongoing regime and make direct help to the liberal movement. The movement has gone through step by step procedure. First step responded non violence tactics under the leadership of African National Congress (ANC), South African Communist Party (SACP), The Pan African Congress (PAC), and Indian National Congress (INC).

These coalitions organised and oppose the suppression of communist government. Workers were on strikes and government retaliate it in a brutal way in which numbers of workers died. The boycott and strikes seen as a mass civil disobedience campaigns collectively known as "Campaign of Defiance of unjust laws". ANC chief Nelson Mandela urged people to defy apartheid and unjust laws. The banning of anti apartheid organisations and declaring state emergency were the retaliation done by the government. The second phase of the movement was characterised by the internationalisation of the governments with unique support of African Union (AU). The making up of military bases and their trainings by AU and other neighbouring countries of South Africa known as "Frontline states" are the common features of internationalisation of the movement. The attacking over neighbours of South Africa was the retaliating approach by Apartheid regime. The 1980 was the year when the struggle against apartheid regime entered into their third phase.

The anti apartheid activist make the country ungoverned through the methods of boycotts, strikes and demonstrations. The coalition and church formed United Democratic Front to lead the government. To make split and divide the government offered limited franchise for Indians and coloured in the elections of 1984. But the matured anti apartheid movement not besieged and this was the time when most countries in the world imposed military and economic sanctions against South Africa.

The combined pressure demise the state and regime retreat of repealing the apartheid legislation, lifted ban from SACP, ANC and PAC, repealed 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, Separate Act, Population registration Act etc. Nelson Mandela released from jail in 1991 and on 1994 became the president of South Africa.



### C. Role of ANC and African leaders

African National Congress (ANC) was the primary source of AAM. Prior to 1940, their policies are confined within political actions which stood on Gandhian tactics of non violence and protest made up of constitutional form. In 1949, they changed their gear from constitutional protest to unlawful demonstration. The Defiance Campaign launched by them in 1950 made a mass resistance to Apartheid. The government claimed such campaign as communist document and arrested leaders of ANC. ANC was declared as unlawful organisation in 1960. The ANC still believed in non violent methods to deal with apartheid but the intimidating efforts of governments resist them all.

Feeling that there were no choices left as peaceful protest were banned by Apartheid regime the ANC took up arms against government. The strategic buildings were targeted which were the places of the whites. In span of 18 months around 200 sabotage actions were done. Government stood to take some strong action but the blacks were morally strengthened by such actions.

Strikes broke out which makes increasing prices and this continued to grow stronger the power of ANC. Despite of organised resistance by apartheid system, the Pretoria regime engaged into mass killings of blacks which oppose the policy of apartheid. With growing opposition to apartheid regime, government declared a state of emergency in some parts of Africa in 1985, and later on from 1986 to 1990. In 1990 African government recognised the ANC and other organisation. This recognition makes the way clear for peaceful solution of Apartheid system. Mandela who became first president of multi racial South Africa was the prominent leader of civil disobedience campaign against apartheid. He later awarded with Nobel Prize for peace in 1993 along with De Klerk.

## II. CONCLUSION

More than 500 resolutions and recommendations were adopted by General Assembly and Security Council of United Nations. The South Africa and its policy of apartheid influenced and engaged United Nations from their establishment. India in 1946, complained about racial treatment of Indians in South Africa. Initially such racial and human rights abuses considered to be the domestic policies of the states in which world organisations have no right to interfere. But after a large number of complaints from different countries concerning that it became a threat to international peace and security under Chapter vii of the charter it took some notice from global scenario. United Nation discontinued its discussions after democratic government in South Africa replaces Apartheid regime.

It can be said that the lack of policies and national will, lack of strong political and sincerity approach, lack of coexistence among great powers and the double standards of the system the apartheid regime continued for so long. It was long ago when UNO have no agenda regarding human rights before this movement. The apartheid policies give motive to the UN and other organizations to make efforts on behalf of human right violation. The imposed sanctions from United Nations and international pressure influence the racist government of South Africa. It makes adverse impact on economy and living standards of the white which makes them to shift their ideology regarding blacks. The creation of 'new South Africa' was became a reality in 1994. Gandhian philosophy makes it judgement behaviour after the death of Gandhi through Nelson Mandela and others. The civil disobedience and Satyagraha were became the tools again in the last phases of 20th century which influences that Gandhian tools still be relevant in contemporary world.

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