

Lokhit Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda in the Background of Public Health

Santu Bhaluk

Assistant Professor in Political Science, Netaji Mahavidyalaya, Arambagh, Hooghly, W.B, India

Abstract

‘Public health’ has now become a well-discussed topic in the field of theories concerning human rights and development. And it has become a popular term now. On the eve of 2nd world war, the development of the countries, who had got their freedom very recently from the colonizers was of utmost importance. So, along with the increase of the state income, individual income was also a matter of experimentation. If we consider the development in the context of the real freedom enjoyed by people, we will see that human freedom is associated with other aspects of freedom like the development of state resource, the increase of the income of an individual.¹

Keywords: experimentation, epochmaking, aforementioned, infants, Millenium, emphasized etc.

Even after the epoch-making prosperity, innumerable people, possibly most of the people, are devoid of basic freedom. Sometimes this is due to economical causes they fail to provide a balanced diet or even food to defeat hunger, cannot afford medicine in illness, cannot get pure drinking water or any other opportunities to live a healthy life. In other cases, lack of freedom is associated with lack of suitable atmosphere needed in different types of social work plague preventive programmes, steps taken to protect health or different types of measures to spread education. Moreover sometimes it is hindered by an autocrat who takes away the socio-political right of a person and disturbs the socio-economic life of the same. Human rights can only be established if real freedom reflects through the field of development. For example we can recall the cases of South Africa, Namibia and Brazil, in which places the individual income of person may be a little more to that of a person in Sri Lanka, China and Kerala in India. But the life span of the people in those later countries is more than that of the people belonging to the aforementioned countries. So, it can be said that, a democratic government can take the responsibility of making ‘public health, an effective term.

In the report of UNO (2006), the necessity of health precept is given utmost importance. It is mentioned that, even now 260 crores people in the world remain outside the network of health percept (one person per two persons). It is also said that every year 18 lakhs infants die from enteric diseases that again can be protected only with the help of a glass of purified water and a toilet. 44.3 crores school-days are wasted due to the diseases caused by water. And in the developing countries, at least, 50% people suffer all the time from one or another disease for the lack of pure drinking water and toilet. This not only brings ruin to innumerable people but also hinders the economic prosperity of the country. It is said that this is also a dangerous problem (like starvation) that goes on running through the country silently and those who have political power and knowledge of artistry tolerate this without any

grudge. In many countries health programmes do not progress only due to lack of funds.

In most of the countries even 0.5% of the production of a state is not spent in this field. And sometimes the expenditure in marital field exceeds the same in the of health programme.² The report suggest, not at least 1% of the state income should be spend in this field. It is the 'Millenium Development Goal' that must be fulfilled within 2015. And we must make a hasty decision in this matter.

In India also the health programme is shamelessly slow. Till now there are toilets in only 35% houses in rural areas. So it is the responsibility of the government to provide one toilet per family. India is a vast country. And the overall progress record of this programme is not always the same. But what is interesting to note is that West Bengal has made a remarkable progress in this matter. In rural areas the percentage of the families possessing toilet is 75. It must not be forgotten that health is not the only thing to be dealt with. The prevention of epidemic diseases, sex, child- health, nutrition, providing a healthy environment and drinking water must be included in this programme. People must be made aware of individual clearness. Of the patients who are suffering from fatal diseases and the steps to be taken in this cases. And the most important thing is to campaign and to make the full use of mass-media. According to the report of 1998, in West Bengal 30 infant per 1000 infants die before they come to the age of 28 months. In this state 23 babies between the age group of one month to one year die. In West Bengal only 44% babies have taken B.C.G., the three doses of D.P.T., the three doses of polio and pox. 14% infants have no prevention at all. To provide security to the pregnant woman is an important part of this programme.

Near about 266 mothers lose their lives during giving birth to 1 lakh babies. In this state 40% delivery cases are only happened in medical institutes. Here the average age of mothers are 18.9 years. And the difference between the two babies are less than two years in 23% cases. About 492 persons per 1 lakh persons are suffering from Tuberculosis. In India about 1 crore and 30 lakhs people are effected by T.B. According to National Family & Health Research, 60-80% people suffer from roundworm & even 6 lakhs infants die from enteric deceases at the age of less than 5 years.

According to National Family and Health Research, about 63% women of the age of 15-49 years are suffering from anemia. Here 44% women are the victims of malnutrition. Even 49% infants of the age of 0-3 years have anemic tendency and 16 % are suffering from acute anemia, 25% mothers feed their babies breast milk within an hour of their birth. About 69% mothers waste their breast milk that is basic food for the babies.

About 8, 37, 50,191 People live in this state. The Percentages of literacy among males and females are respectively 77.58 and 60.72. 7, 19, 623 children do not go to school out of 91, 08, 709. Only 83, 89, 086 children are admitted to school in time. The sum total of all the children admitted to school at primary level are 1,00,83,062.³

So the questions are- what type of prosperity is this? Development for whom? Why is the standard of the lifestyle of common people not uplifted, though national production is being increased?

In a developing country like India the cause of most of the diseases are-the use of dirty water, ignorance of the drainage system, lack of healthy habit and scientific sanitary system, lack of the sense of clearness. In India the percentage of child death is also very high. In rural India 72 children per one thousand infants die within a few day of their birth.

Here many infants are also affected by malnutrition. According to the child, a report by the Central Human Development Department (2002), in India 47.7% babies of below 5 years age are suffering from this. Again this is due to the lack of proper drainage system, the diseases by water, and the worms that bear the germs of diseases. Actually there is a strong bonding between pure drinking water, sanitary system, nutrition, health and a healthy life.

According to the report of WHO, 80% diseases are due to lack of purified drinking water and healthy atmosphere. Moreover these are the causes of the diseases like malaria, cholera and other epidemic diseases. As a result in our country 18 crores working days are wasted every year. In economic terms the wastage is of Rs.1200 crores (Source: Central Bureau of Health Organization). Different types of diseases and the wastage of working days affect the life of the rural people. A person suffers from such kinds of diseases 3 times in a year. And every time 2 working days are wasted and he/she loses at least Rs. 50 a days. Moreover she/he has to spend. Some money in diagnosis. It must be remembered that this is all about the lowest stratum of life. So the economic burden is an important thing. For example, Diarrhea causes a huge amount of economic wastage. According to the census of 2001, only 22% families have attached toilets in their houses in rural India .We can guess the real horrible situation from this .In additional the drainage system is also without any proper plan. Due to lack of fund sometimes the constructions of sanitary system is stopped. The result is malaria, dengue, trachoma, T.B., Jaundice etc. due to repeated suffering from these diseases, more working days are wasted indirectly. Beside these breathing problem and heart diseases contribute to this wastage.⁴

In recent time human development has acquired a great importance in the discussion of general development. Human Development Index (H.D.I.) has been included in the article of U.N.O. about their duties regarding human development. Development of daily life-style is a vital element in human development. And development of life-style includes the arrangement of purified drinking water, acquiring a healthy habit, cleanliness etc.

1. We cannot call a person healthy even if he is not diseased. Health actually means physical, psychological and social comfort i.e. if the body, the mind and the environment are healthy, public-health can be maintained.
2. And every person has a responsibility in it. Everyone has to follow certain codes in order to be healthy – cleanliness, a healthy food habit, to avoid any addiction, to follow the preventive measures against different diseases, to keep the environment clean, to drink purified water and above all to use toilets.
3. Public health includes all kinds of preventive measures against different types of diseases.

In order to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, superstition from India, Vivekananda decided to start a religious movement named “Lokhit Movement” (a movement for human welfare), Before that two types of movements had already started in India – Social reformation movement and political movement. The former was started by Raja Rammohan Roy and the later became popular with the foundation of National congress in 1885. Vivekananda found faults with both the movements and felt the need of a completely new kind of movement. He focussed on the development of public – health and on the campaigning of the same.

He emphasized on cleanliness as a part of health. According to him, mental and physical cleanliness is actually what we call purity.⁵

1. Soil, water etc, make our body pure. We are responsible for so many diseases like malaria, cholera etc.⁶
2. He asserted that those diseases are gradually devouring up our society because we fail to keep ourselves and our environment clean.⁷ So he concluded that human being are ill-mannered.

Measures:-

1. To wear clean cloth on clean body.
2. To wash mouth and to brush the teeth regularly.
3. To clean the house.
4. To clean the surroundings.
5. The cook has to follow cleanliness\.
6. To have food from clean pot at a pleasant place.

From the statistics of world Health Organization, it is seen that eighty percent (80) of the diseases are caused by lack of purified drinking water.⁸

1. That’s why we have to face diseases like cholera, Malaria and diarrhoea. Because of this, 18 crore working days are wasted i.e. Rs. 12000 crore is wasted.
2. Vivekananda also declared that dirty water is the cause of most of the diseases. According to him, when filtration of drinking water was first started, Kolkata did not see plague for next five years. He advised people to use filtered water to prevent such disease. A balance diet makes our mind healthy. Lack of a healthy diet makes our organs paralyzed. He thought that food must maintain a balance with psycho-somatic condition. He wanted to make a public-health movement through the welfare of people. He had a firm belief that contemporary reformation movement would be meaningless if the development of public-health is ignored. He started a new social reformation movement to rally the entire humanity behind the reformation and he kept the Ramakrishna Mission at the center.

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