



Gandhian Principals

Venue: Seminar hall

Date: 30 September 2021

Time: 2:00-3:00 pm

Organized by: Department of English

Attended by: BA students

The Department of English (PG) organized an activity, "Read Gandhi & Speak Your Mind", on 30 September 2021, in the BA English classroom commemorating Gandhi's 152nd birth anniversary. All the participants were given copies of a few letters written by Mahatma Gandhi to Adolf Hitler before the commencement of the Second World War. Gandhi recognized the power of languages and encouraged learning many languages, including, of course, the mother tongue. In this effort, he learnt himself Urdu on one of his sea voyages. He practiced writing with his left hand for when the right grew tired. Educationists untiringly stress the importance of doing and learning. So did he — not just to learn but to build character and self-reliance.

He called his philosophy of education Nai Taleem. Anil Sadgopal quotes Gandhi as saying: "Look at takli ... The lesson of this takli will be the first lesson of our students through which they would be able to learn a substantial part of the history of cotton, Lancashire, and the British empire ... When he was asked to count the number of cotton threads of takli and he was asked to report how many did he spin, it became possible to acquaint him step by step with a good deal of mathematical knowledge." He also felt children should learn to draw before they learned to write, in order that they develop good handwriting.

Today, when we've been overrun by the virus of rote learning, Gandhi's holistic, self-supporting approach to education could well provide a partial antidote to mass cheating and unemployability. To quote Sadagopal again, "...the central thesis of Gandhian pedagogy is

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Promoting human welfare through coexistence and cooperation, elimination of inequality and poverty and a sustainable relationship with nature."

Prof. Karibasavana Gowda elaborated on the historical background for Gandhi's letters and read them out to the students. They were given some time to ruminate over the content and then, they were asked to present their views on Gandhi's letters, his belief in non-violence, and his sense of humanity.

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