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**Season for nonviolence**

Powerful emperors who used to rule this beautiful earth through the sword have, despite all their achievements, been forgotten now.

On the other hand, all those who preached the message of peace, love, tolerance and brotherhood are still alive in people’s hearts and thus, succeeded to become immortal forever.

These thoughts came to my mind on the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi who was well-known preacher of peace and non-violence (ahimsa) in the modern history. He dedicated his entire life for the noble cause of serving mankind without any discrimination. Regardless of majority-minority differences, he always talked about equality and civic rights for everyone. He was a strong advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Gandhi and Quaid-e-Azam used to maintain friendly relations with each other. Gandhi was of the view that nobody should be targeted or kept deprived of their due rights on the basis of religious affiliations. Unfortunately, Gandhi was assassinated by an extremist on January 30, 1948.

Similarly, Martin Luther King Jr is highly regarded at the international level. The great peace activist led a successful movement to ensure equal rights for the black people of the United States. He initiated a tireless struggle for the protection of equal citizen rights in the American society. He demanded the inclusion of all American citizens in the national mainstream. It is quite unfortunate that Martin Luther King Jr also faced a similar fate and was murdered by extremists.

Gandhi was killed on January 30 and Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated on April 4. Keeping these two important historical dates in view, Arun Manilal Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, had presented the idea to mark the period of 64 days between the death anniversary dates of the two great legendary leaders as the ‘season for non-violence’. This wonderful proposal, emerged around 22 years ago, was widely lauded by peace activists around the world. In this regard, various activities and events are organized with a focus on emphasizing the importance of non-violence, tolerance and co-existence for global harmony and world peace.

Rather than just marking one day, if we dedicate 64 days – from January 30 to April 4 – for non-violence on an annual basis, then this could bring a positive change in our personalities. There is also a comprehensive toolkit available for the season in order to defeat anger, depression and other negativities. For example, a lesson for the first day (January 30) is to ensure courage in ourselves. A person is able to face worst kind of circumstances, if he/she has courage to overcome with a belief that God is present to help. In simple words, we can say, when there is a will, there is a way. Firm faith obviously provides courage during the crisis of life.

The thought for the second day (January 31) is that every person must face hurdles and hardships with a smile. No doubt, sharing a sincere smile with everyone is very necessary for creating a pleasant and friendly environment. On the other hand, there are many people who lose hope due to life’s difficulties. Such people become vulnerable to different mental stresses and thus, spoil their own lives.

Each day of the 64-day season for non-violence can be utilized to ensure positive attributes in our personalities, such as: we should openly appreciate someone‘s good work, we should understand that all sufferings of life come to an end one day. Rather than burning in the fire of revenge, those that forgive are the happiest.

The season also urges to develop a friendly and respectable attitude with other fellows. In my view, the basic aim to observe the season is to promote the peaceful teaching of Ahimsa, practised by Gandhi. He had emphasized adopting a simple life and ensuring tolerance, endurance, patience, promotion of education, harmony and social integrity in one’s lifestyle.

However, it is very unfortunate that Pakistan and India both have forgotten the teachings of their genuine leadership of Quaid-e-Azam and Mahatma Gandhi. In my view, there is a dire need to promote non-violence and follow the politics of principles.

As a patriotic Pakistani citizen, we should promise ourselves that whatever circumstances we have to face, we will not make our attitudes aggressive; and will discourage use of abusive language and expression of anger. Rather than taking emotional decisions in haste, we must analyse wisely and act accordingly.

We will transform our peace desire into unconquerable strength. Moving our peaceful struggle in a united way, all of us must play our due role for moving our beloved country towards peace and prosperity.

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