



# Bharat Ratna Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's Perspective On Education, Youth And Nation Building

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## ABSTRACT

The early twentieth century was full of activities pertaining to national movement and responding to the exploitative foreign rule in India. The Indian National Congress (INC) and its leaders were at the forefront in demanding the political rights and measures to raise the standard of living of the common masses, from the British rule. There was different ideologist within the congress such as moderates and extremist to get their demands fulfilled from the British authorities. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (hereafter Malaviya) was respected by all the groups within the congress. During those days even world politics was in the state of conflict due to First World War. This paper proposes to study thoughts and works of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya which inspired the youth of nation and their contribution in Indian National Movement.

**Keywords** – Education, Youth, Nation Building, Mahamana, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Banaras Hindu University, National Movement.

## Introduction

Malaviya completed his graduation from the Muir College affiliated to University of Calcutta in 1884 at the age of 23 years. Due to his personal constraint, he could not complete his M.A degree. He joined as a teacher of English in the Government High School, Allahabad in 1884 to financially support his family. He was very enthusiastic, good in communication and a very innovative teacher. As a teacher he proved to be very ethical and full of moral standards. He was more than satisfied in the teaching profession. He had affectionate and kind attitude, amiable behaviour and attractive personality. The students in large numbers were influenced by him and was respected teacher by the students. He was a disciplinarian and guided students to perform their duties firmly and without any fear<sup>1</sup>.

He attended the second session of Indian National Congress (INC) held at Calcutta in December 1886, along with his preceptor Aditya Ram Bhattacharya and both of them represented Allahabad town. In his very first appearance and speech at the session of INC, he influenced the audience with his oratory skills and eloquence. Annie Besant, S. N. Banerjee, A. O. Hume and Raja Rampal Singh of Kalakankar were also appreciative and praised Madan Mohan Molaviya for his erudite speech and argumentative capacity with expert eloquence<sup>2</sup>.

In his speech on the proposed resolution by Ambika Charan Majumdar, Madan Mohan Malaviya argued at Calcutta session of 1906 that 'Swadeshi' was a religious duty of every Indian to keep starvation away from the masses. He supported and pleaded for 'Swadeshi', boycott of foreign commodities and protective tariffs to safeguard native Indians and nascent industries<sup>3</sup>.

## I Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's views on Education

Malaviya was of the opinion that youth having good foundation and education in ancient culture and morality could revitalize India as a nation<sup>4</sup>. Malaviya understood the importance of inculcating modern values and etiquettes among the students having rural background and therefore he advocated the training in manners and morals for the benefit of such students<sup>5</sup>.

Malaviya was very clear that education was for freedom of human beings. The freedom inculcated through education should reflect in the actions of the teachers and students. He had never objected for the participation of students and teachers in the Indian National Movement. He was of the view that there was an innate relation between university and nation. For the freedom of nation, various universities could be sacrificed. Malaviya

had well understood the importance of all India level university for national unity, he decided to established such a university at Banaras (Kashi)<sup>6</sup>.

Malaviya observed that after 20 years of education an Indian youth was unable to support financially himself and his family. He warranted the transformation in the education system by which the young men and women should be educated before they become parents. He highlighted that a large number of university graduate youths were unsuitable for employment as universities and educational institutions were not imparting education as per the needs of society and industry. He suggested to provide education in adequate manner and right type in Commerce, Agriculture, Technology, Engineering and Applied Chemistry. He was of the view that it was the responsibility of the government and universities to impart the right type of education and find careers for youth. The imparted education should be futuristic in a manner that all together it could accommodate quite a large number of young graduates. He had a firm conviction in the potential of Indian youth, which was greater in any given situation compared to youth of any other country<sup>7</sup>.

On his 75<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary, he exhorted in a speech dated 5<sup>th</sup> January 1937 that, it was our duty to express our thoughts and emotions in our mother-tongue, the respect of mother-tongue should be restored and then only depending upon the audience and other factors we may speak English. He guided the audience to follow the tenets of 'Varnashrama' and perform the duties as ascribed for students, family life, social life and attainment of salvation gradually through renunciation as the last phase of his life beyond 75 years of age. He propounded that one should follow celibacy throughout his life and marriage was to be meant only for progeny or child birth and not for pleasure. He instructed the students that they should always speak truth, practise Brahamacharya (pursuit of knowledge) through celibacy, do regular exercise, indulge in learning skill and education, serve the nation and attainment of respect in society through suitable and dutiful behaviour and action throughout life.

In one of the speeches in front of large number of students and teachers, on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1935, he propounded that the practice of writing personal diary by an individual could help the overcome of one's weaknesses and thereby helping in the progress to a great extent. He opined that we should mention are vices, bad habits and crimes considering almighty in front of us while writing diary. While reading any text try to immerse in to the thoughts of writer and leave irrelevant things in life during the course of self-study. He further exhorted that student should be competent in knowledge and power, profound learning and expertise in weaponry. He guided them to respect women and treat the elder ones as mother, the women of same age as sisters and that of younger age as daughters and desist from any rude behaviour and crime against them. He informed them that by acquiring knowledge in the pristine environment of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), their thoughts, emotions and soul should be pure enough to get respect wherever you go in future<sup>8</sup>.

Malaviya composed a Doha, which emphasised the importance of physical wellbeing along with studies, "Doodh Piyo Kasarat Karo Nitya Lev Hari Naam Man Lagay Vidya Padho Pooreng Sab Kaam". The English version of his Doha was "Drink milk, take exercise, repeat God's name (Ram naam) everyday; concentrate on your studies and your desire are assured to be fulfilled"<sup>9</sup>.

In his speech dated 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1935 at Shivaji Hall, Malaviya while addressing teachers and student expressed that prayer of almighty was the first duty of individuals. We must use our knowledge to understand almighty god. He further said that birth as a human being was rarest of the rare and it should not be wasted at any cost. We should perform our duties and feel the presence of omnipotent god in all the creatures and achievements during our lifetime. We should be proud of our motherland and devote our life in making our country supreme and the light of spirituality of India, Kashi and BHU should be highlighted at world platform. The young students should focus on their physical and mental nourishment and wellbeing. He was having faith in philanthropist class in promotion of BHU towards excellence through their donations. He appealed students to participate in religious festivals and discourses by the scholars. He appealed students to punctual and avoid wastage of time. He appealed them to become a role model in the form of students of BHU and remain away from discriminatory practices in society and indulged in social work by making their life pious and pristine<sup>10</sup>.

## **II Establishment of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Impact on Youths**

Malaviya believed that the universities were the source of knowledge and its dissemination. It was the responsibility of university to have periodic new perspective and responsiveness to fulfil the holistic human and societal development. Human values and societal commitments should be inculcated among the students of the universities as they are young and were very crucial for nation building<sup>11</sup>.

There was a great contribution by Malaviya in the socio-political life and economic regeneration in India. His greatest achievement was his selfless devotion in the field of education, establishment of BHU. In spite of economic constraint, he whole heartedly worked to realise his vision and mission to establish the University. He could collect a large sum of money and through his untiring energy and endeavour, became heart and soul of BHU. His main objective in establishing the university was to produce a man power having capacity to reconstruct India after the attainment of its freedom. The scholars and pass-outs of BHU has proven Malaviya true by their role played in infrastructural and development projects. The education of Science and Technology at BHU became the backbone of having institutional network of high repute in our country like Indian Institute of Technology, Management, Medicine etc. The alumni of BHU have proved their ability in the sector of steel,

coal, power and mining. He was the Vice Chancellor of the BHU between 1919 and 1939 and Rector from 1939 to 1946. He wished that Indian youth would be men of character<sup>12</sup>.

Malaviya conceived the prospects of the proposed BHU, which was issued in 1911. Later he was instrumental in recommendation of the Indian Industrial Commission related to technical education. He considered education to be balanced in training and development of physique, mind and emotions. His persistent appeal to the young men was always to maintain a good body strength and health by having the emotional training. He exhorted to the student to master Ragas and Raginis and also learn musical instrument of their choice. He emphasised that young men should be imparted education with respect to cultural heritage of Hindus so that they respect their own way of life and not indulge in mad race of following western culture and consider their culture as inferior to western. He was also concerned about education and training in the field of Science, Technology and Commerce which could lead to increased production and creation of wealth, leading to alleviate the poverty<sup>13</sup>.

Malaviya in his address to the gathering on occasion of twelfth convocation on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1929 of BHU, which started functioning from October 1917, highlighted one of the objectives of BHU being promoting the strong character among the youth through religion and ethics as an integral part of education. He believed that discourses on religion could have an impact on the minds of students to broaden their understanding on religion and ethics, it was the surest foundation of character and a real source of human happiness. It was also instrumental in infusing patriotic feelings among the youth of the nation<sup>14</sup>.

In a letter to retiring Malaviya, Vice-Chancellor of BHU, the staff and students of the Women's College and hostel presented the '*Kirti Ghant*' on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 1939. They were very grateful to Malaviya for the establishment of separate college for women which was need of the hour. They found themselves spell bound to express their feelings for the contribution of Malaviya in the field of education and his role as founder and Vice-Chancellor of BHU. They appreciated his charismatic personality which had a strong and greater impact than any other contemporary personality on the minds of young men and women under gone training or education at BHU during his leadership. They highlighted the practical illustration through simple living and high thinking was a realistic approach and not merely a visionary ideal<sup>15</sup>.

### **III Impact of Madan Mohan Malaviya on Youth and Indian National Movement**

Malaviya expected that the Motherland i.e., India should have the highest place in the heart of every youth and believed that they should be ready to do the duty if country demanded so. As per his faith in youth of our country, he expected that they would promote unity among the people of the country by their actions and thoughts. He appealed that youth to get themselves in the activities which remove the immense ignorance prevailing among the masses through various community-based literary activities, establishing schools, promoting simple education to the masses, making them aware about personal and social hygiene. He expected that youth of nation would form '*Lokshiksha Samiti*' (A People's Education League) to dispel illiteracy and ignorance and appealed all the educated youth to get associated with it which could bring success to their efforts. In all these endeavours of the youth, his emphasis was on the remembrance of God so that it could generate the feeling of brotherliness, kindness and compassion towards all creatures of God<sup>16</sup>.

Malaviya believed that young students should devote their spare time in reading history of the nation, history of the religion, the biographies of our leaders of the past and present, world history, newspapers, magazines etc. They should also with their own interest listen to speeches of intellectuals. All these activities would help them to be a good citizen having independent thoughts to serve nation effectively. He was against the involvement of youth in political activities as he considered it would deviate them from path of learning. He was also averse of students involve in business as it would be a barrier to their education<sup>17</sup>.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India accepted that he was inspired by selfless work, simplicity of life, enthusiasm for education and love for the country, as reflected in the personality and works of Malaviya. He was attracted by the promotional activity of Hindi and expansion of educational facilities by Malaviya, which got further strengthen due to political movements. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and other youth icons were influenced by the spark of patriotism which resulted in being the role model for others in the future of Indian National Movement<sup>18</sup>.

S. P. Tripathi, the freedom fighter and Former Public Relation Officer of BHU highlighted that, bright young men and woman left the university education and participated in freedom struggle, due to the inspirations of Malaviya. On the 13<sup>th</sup> August, 1942, Malaviya advised the young students of BHU participating in '*Quit India Movement*' not to resort any violent act as it could discredit Mahatma Gandhi and Congress for their efforts towards freedom. He appealed the students to maintain the dignity and preserve the tradition of non-violent protest by BHU students of the past. On the same day there was police firing near the Harishchandra Ghat on a procession of students in which around two dozen students got bullet injuries. Malaviya visited the S. S. Hospital of the university and became very emotional and wept bitterly when students told him that they had received the injuries on their chest and not on the back. Malaviya told Professor Radhe Shyam Sharma to find a solution because death of any student was unacceptable to Malaviya himself. During '*Quit India Movement*' many students left the BHU campus after the armed forces occupied the campus. Many of them were arrested at several places in the country included Bhagwatdayal Sharma, Narendra Kumar Goel, Siyaram Maitreya, Hari Prasad Varma, Shyama Charan Shukla, R. Tarachandra Jain, Raghunath, Hukum Chand Chaudhary, Dr. Ram

Chandra Shukla, Sitala Prasad Jain, Raj Narain Singh, Sagan Chaudhary, Prabhu Narain Singh, Balchand Jain, Dr. Om Prakash Gupta, Harindra Bhushan Jain, Aanand Mohan, Awadhesh Dube, Motilal, Gulab Chand Chaudhary, Sardar Kashmiri Singh, Ramayan Rai, Sardar Pratap Singh, Ram Dhan, Sardar Harbans Singh, Sheetala Prasad, Sardar Resham Singh, Ashok Barne, Sardar Manjeet Singh, Kushal Chand Gorawals, Raj Tilak, Parash Nath Mishra, Raghuraj Bahadur etc. There were women freedom fighters of the BHU who were arrested during the same period such as Kumari Snehlata, Kumari Damayanti Jasara, Kumari Kunti Nagar, Kumari Surjeet Singh etc.

When interim Government was established under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on September 2, 1946, Malaviya despite of senility and ill health became very happy and retorted, 'Apne Desh Men Apna Raj'. Malaviya embraced the eternal peace on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1946<sup>19</sup>.

On the occasion of twelfth convocation of BHU dated 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1929, he said "Speak the truth, live truth, think truth. Continue your studies throughout your life. Be just and fear none. Fear only to do that which is ill or ignoble. Stand up for right. Love to serve your fellow-men. Love the motherland, promote public will, do good wherever you get a chance for it, love to give whatever you can spare"<sup>20</sup>.

He further believed that economic development of the country was feasible by combining teaching of science and technology with that of religion. He was fully assured that education and righteousness, we can generate the national spirit among the youth<sup>21</sup>.

Ram Naresh Tripathi, who stayed with Malaviya for 40 days in 1940 highlighted the Malaviya's appreciation of self-reliance among the students<sup>22</sup>.

In the BHU campus various physical exercises were organised in the form of outdoors games in which students and staff members used to participate. There were the provisions of playing games such as Tennis, Badminton and Volleyball in the hostel grounds. There were arrangements for physical exercises in the Indian style, with relatively inexpensive equipment was also facilitated. In 1936 services of famous Athlete Professor Ram Murti, was hired as instructor in physical culture, who trained students in body building by indigenous methods. Malaviya was concerned about the deterioration of body physique and strength of average Hindu as compared to other community individuals who claimed to dominate over Hindu individuals by sheer brute force<sup>23</sup>.

Malaviya was fully convinced that educational and industrial activities were important for national development. He further believed that, it was also necessary to have educated patriotic soldiers for the national movement. To fulfil these aspirations, he established BHU<sup>24</sup>.

Malaviya appealed to the student community that they should never speak lie. Any false statement should be accepted in front of God and plead for mercy and forgiveness and should take a vow not to speak lie at any cost. He advised the married students to follow 'Brahmacharya' – practice celibacy during their stay and education in university. He considered patriotism as integral part of religion, so that it could motivate the people of country to do everything which was good for nation. He always believed that religion was a reflection of patriotism<sup>25</sup>.

Malaviya was one of the makers of modern India. He was associated with the INC from the second year of inception and actively participated throughout his life. He used parliamentary methods in the freedom struggle. He participated and led non-cooperation movement and witnessed the rise of INC to the power at Delhi during his lifetime. He always supported in political objectives with enthusiasm. He was a bridge between the senior and young INC workers and political activist. He was firm in his conviction and people used to respect him in spite of difference of opinion<sup>26</sup>.

He gave utmost importance to concept of nationality as he believed that like Japan and England, the feeling of nationality could modernise and transform India also<sup>27</sup>.

Malaviya was very firm on his thought of compulsory education of nationality among the students. It should be religion of the nation and above all parameters or priorities of every citizen of the nation<sup>28</sup>.

While speaking on one of the proposals related to death penalty through hanging of Sardar Bhagat Singh and his associates Sukhdev and Rajguru at INC session at Karachi in 1931, Malaviya expressed deep condolences and stated that the sacrifice of Sardar Bhagat Singh and his associates were for the cause of nation i.e., to get the freedom from British rule. He further clarified that the violent methods for getting freedom could not be acceptable to the INC but what Bhagat Singh and his associates had done was without any personal motive. Malaviya very clearly blamed the repressive policies of British Government and denial of giving 'Swaraj' to Indians. Malaviya appealed to the youth of nation to learn a lesson from the martyrdom of Sardar Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev and pledge to get rid of foreign rule as early as possible through peaceful means. He was of the opinion that if British Government could have accepted the INC demand to convert death penalty to life imprisonment for Sardar Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev then it would have impacted positively in peaceful manner to thousands of Indian youths. He exhorted the youth to come together and follow the Gandhian path for achieving freedom from foreign power<sup>29</sup>.

### Conclusion

Malaviya was a great human being and his approach to reform the society was through the education. For him education based on religion and morality was the basis for inculcating the values of patriotism among the youth. His views on education were very futuristic and put emphasis on overall development of the students. He had

a great faith in youth of nation at a very high level. He established BHU to produce well educated youth with patriotic feeling in them. He was equally concerned with female youth and her role in society, for which he established Women's College in the BHU. He was very supportive for the cause of young students and their participation in the national movement because it was without any personal motive. His main focus was that youth should adopt non-violent methods while participating in national movements. It has also been observed that many scholars of BHU participated in Indian National Movement and they inspired the youth of contemporary period. Malaviya firmly believed that vocational and professional education could be helpful in making the youth of nation self-reliance financially. He was a great institution builder and his impact on the youth of our nation reflected through the contributions of the youth during Indian National Movement. He was in a true sense a great nation builder.

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