

# The Relevance of Integral Humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to highlight the relevance of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's integral humanism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, emphasizing the balanced and integrated development of human beings. According to Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, the main concern in India should be to develop an indigenous development model (Swadeshi in nature) that encompasses not just material well-being but also mental, intellectual, and spiritual aspects.

This paper justifies the vision of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, which emphasizes the essence of adopting swadeshi, economic policies based on our cultural, nationalist values and ethos to make India strong, vibrant and self-reliant, which is called 'Ekatma Manavavad' (Integral humanism). Truly speaking, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of integral humanism emphasizes participatory governance, antyodaya, sustainable development, and environmental justice.

This paper evaluates the contemporary relevance of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's integral humanism in the context of cultural preservation, which is essential to the global relevance of India's rich cultural heritage and a self-reliant economy. Integral humanism is a need of the hour, because it calls for orderly, decentralized and value-driven governance, rooted in local traditions and customs. This paper justifies the relevance of integral Humanism propounded by Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, because everybody seems to be indulged in monetary benefits and physical comforts and lacks spiritual feelings. Therefore, integral Humanism is of utmost significance for our all-round development.

**Keywords:** - *Integral humanism; relevance; Swadeshi; Antyodaya; Environmental Justice; cultural preservation.*

## Introduction

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was born on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1916 at Chandrabhan village of Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh. He was a very brilliant student and passed his B.A.(Mathematics) examination with First Class honors from S.D. College Kanpur. He worked as the editor of the weekly 'Panchajanya' and the daily 'Swadesh'. His service as the General Secretary of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh Party for Seventeen Years is well remembered for his marvelous ideas. He even served as the party's National President. Though he was assassinated by Unknown persons on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1968 at the young age of 52 years 04 months, his ideas are even relevant in 21st-century India.

The concept of Integral Humanism emphasizes self-reliance, small-scale industries, rural development, and cultural nationalism, which is the need of the hour, with millions of people unemployed. Still, our country is known as a developing country. In the present scenario, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's advocacy for a balanced integration of

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material and spiritual development aligns with contemporary discussions on holistic growth, sustainable development, and social justice.

Actually, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya emphasized an integral approach to development that harmonizes material and spiritual well-being. His ideas are deeply rooted in the cultural ethos of our country; in fact, his vision of Integral Humanism advocated decentralization, self-reliance, and social equity. The main aim of his vision was to uplift the deprived and marginalized class of society.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was a man of simple living and high thinking. Though he faced many struggles in his life, he didn't bow to the troubles and miseries. In fact, his vision of life was aligned to that of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. He never agreed with the ideas of capitalism or socialism. He stressed the need to adopt Swadeshi economic policies, rooted in our nationalist and cultural values and ethos, to make our motherland a self-reliant and economically advanced country. His ideas of 'Integral Humanism' are suited to the Indian economic model. His motto was to serve people in need, and he said that politicians must not crave power, positions, or money, and should remain committed to a pure life and serve the public in the best possible manner.

### Literature Review

1. Integral Humanism: This is one of the best sources to know about the philosophical ideas of Integral Humanism. As a matter of fact, when the cliches and dogmas in the name of secularism, socialism, communism, capitalism, regionalism and communalism lie in tatters in the face of the violence that has overtaken our society, it is time to take a fresh look at the philosophy of Integral Humanism pounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. (The Editor's Note Sn. Vasent Raj Pandit) In the book 'Integral Humanism', published by Deendayal Research Institute.

This is a trustworthy primary and secondary source for evaluating the ideas of Integral Humanism because it contains the speeches and lectures of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, in which he propounds his ideology.

2. Integral Humanism: An analysis of some Basic Elements. This authenticated book, written by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, allows one to better assess his basic ideology of Integral Humanism. This book throws ample light on the idea of Western versus Bharatiya views. The first characteristic of 'Bhartiya Culture' is that it looks upon life as an integrated whole. It has an integrated viewpoint—unity in diversity and the expression of Unity in various forms.

### Methodology

The study undertakes an overall evaluation of the philosophical ideas related to 'Integral Humanism' propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. The main problem of the research paper concerns the relevance of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. First of all, the primary source, such as Integral Humanism (Lecture series, April 1965), of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, published by Deendayal Upadhyaya Research Institute, has been thoroughly reviewed, and the secondary sources, such as the books 'Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya', Ideology and perception past an inquest, and Hindu Nationalism. A reader has been assessed to ensure that all aspects related to the 'Integral Humanism' of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya can be revisited accurately in this research article. Overall, the methodology adopted in the research paper is qualitative.

### Results

#### The Purpose of Integral Humanism

This is the high time to implement the ideas of Integral Humanism propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, because at this critical juncture, when the cliches and dogmas in the name of secularism, socialism, communalism, regionalism, capitalism and communism, lie in tatters in the face of the violence that has overtaken our society, it is time to take a fresh look at the philosophy of Integral Humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Integral Humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya is based on a series of his speeches in Bombay from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1965. It talks about a system of governance suited to the Indian nation and its people, regardless of caste, colour, region, religion, or any distinctive differences. According to Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, "Integral Humanism is an alternative for all-round human development".

In his first lecture on Integral Humanism, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya asks one question, “So long as the country was under the yoke of the British rule, all the movements and policies in the country had one principal aim to drive out the foreign rulers and to achieve independence. But what would be the face of the new Bharat after independence? In which direction were we to advance?”

Further, he narrates, “We must ponder whether we can progress under such conditions. If we stop to analyze the reasons for the problems facing the country, we find that the confusion about our goal and direction is mainly responsible for this chaos. I realize that all 450 million people of Bharat cannot agree on everything, or even on a single question. This is not possible in any country. Yet there is generally, what is called more or less, a common desire among the people of any nation. If this popular longing is made the basis of our aims, the commoner feels that the Nation is moving in a proper direction and that his own aspiration is reflected in the Nation’s efforts.”

If we look into the problems of our country, we find the root of our problems is neglect of self and lack of national Identity in a true sense. Therefore, Integral Humanism, propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, emphasizes the balanced development of both the individual and society. This philosophy seeks to harmonize the needs of the body, mind, intellect, and soul, arguing that true development is achieved when all these dimensions are nurtured properly. It emphasizes the balanced and integrated development of human beings, encompassing not just material well-being but also intellectual, mental, and spiritual aspects. His ideas led to an ideology that aimed to balance material progress with the upliftment of spirit and to redefine development from an Indian civilization perspective.

He used to argue that Western ideologies tended to focus solely on material desires, which are based on wealth (Artha) and Physical needs (Kama), and neglect moral duties and spiritual liberation, which are known as Dharma and Moksha as per Indian philosophy; as per his views, ‘Dharma’ and ‘Moksha’ are assets for true human happiness and fulfilment.

### **Objectives of Humankind (Purushartha)**

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya held that the concept of ‘Purushartha’ in our ancient Indian philosophy encompasses Dharma (moral duties), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire or satisfaction), and Moksha (Salvation or total liberation). According to him, the practice of Purushartha develops both the individual and society by following the path of humanity and spirituality. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya stressed the need for cultural values and traditions in shaping a nation’s identity. He advocated for a form of nationalism deeply rooted in India’s past, cultural heritage, and value-based society. Integral Humanism always emphasizes the preservation and promotion of Indian cultural heritage. Without our ancient, glorified past, national pride and unity will be meaningless. The cultural nationalism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya is not merely about celebrating traditions, but also about integrating these values into contemporary societal structures.

### **Discussion**

#### **Harmony Between the Individual and the Collectivity**

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya expressed his views, “Yesterday we considered man as an individual. There are different aspects to an individual’s personality and different levels of need for an individual to develop a complete personality. To satisfy needs progressively and simultaneously at all levels, specific kinds of efforts (Purushartha) are needed. These, too, were considered. But man does not exist merely as an individual. The individual comprising body, mind, intellect and soul is not limited to a singular ‘I’, but is also inseparably related to the plural ‘We’. Therefore, we must also think of the group or the society.”

He was of the firm opinion that body, mind, intelligence and the soul – these four make up an individual. But these are integrated. We cannot think of each part separately. The confusion that has arisen in the West is due to their treating each of the above aspects of a human being separately, without regard to the rest.

In this manner, we may observe the views of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, who always considers the betterment of society. If society is properly groomed, its citizens will benefit in a true sense. He considers that the root of our problems is a lack of national identity; without this identity, there is no meaning to independence, nor can independence serve as an instrument of progress and happiness. As long as there is ignorance of ‘National Identity’ among the minds of the citizens, we cannot recognize or develop all our potentialities. What is true is that under alien

rule, this identity is suppressed. The reason behind the Independence of one country is that the citizens of that independent country can progress in a better manner.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's social thought is basically shaped by his philosophy of Integral Humanism, which advocates for a comprehensive approach to human development that harmonizes material, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth. His vision and ideology hold that progress must integrate economic development with cultural and spiritual enrichment. The vision of Pandit Upadhyaya extends beyond mere economic growth; it emphasizes that development should uplift both the individual and society in all dimensions, promoting balanced and equitable progress.

### **Integral Approach to Integral Humanism: -**

If we brood over the ideas of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, it is evident that the integral approach of integral Humanism places the individual at the centre of all development efforts. This approach can address a wide range of human problems from multiple angles, drawing on Indian thought and processes.

Therefore, the integral approach envisions various facets of the problems and provides a permanent solution. Is this approach also known as the 'Synthetic Approach'? As a matter of fact, the integral approach of Integral Humanism places the individual as the main source. Upadhyaya envisioned the state as a facilitator for holistic development, with policies and governance aligned with ethical and moral values. This approach calls for a form of governance that is transparent, ethical, and dedicated to the welfare of all citizens. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya opposed both Western 'capitalist individualism' and Marxist socialism. He argued that capitalist and socialist ideologies consider only the needs of the body and mind, making them entirely materialistic and lacking spiritual development. This is why the integral humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya aims to explain that India must develop an indigenous economic model that puts the human being at the center stage.

Integral humanism provides ample opportunity to ensure a dignified life for every human being, while balancing the needs of the individual and society. In fact, the philosophy of Integral Humanism places human beings at the center of development.

### **Relevance of Integral Humanism**

**Self-Reliant Economy (Swadeshi):** This is one of the best ideas of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, which emphasizes decentralized development, village-centric models, and sustainable livelihoods, aligning with Gandhian ideas of Gram Swaraj. This is the appropriate time to recognize local self-sufficiency and swadeshi-style small-scale enterprises, while reconciling them with global economic integration & comparative advantage. 21st-century India needs both vibrant local economies and competitive participation in global value chains. This is vital for strengthening our Indian economy because promoting Swadeshi goods keeps profits within the country. If we purchase Swadeshi goods, then our local artisans and manufacturers will get employment opportunities, and the unemployment problem can be solved.

**Antyodaya & Policy Making:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was a great statesman of India. He had a vision of India as a country where nobody would remain untouched by the latest developmental works. He believed that welfare must not be a mere state policy but a moral imperative. Literally, the meaning of *Antyodaya* is the 'rise of the last person'. Even Gandhi Ji focused on uplifting the poorest, most marginalized, and most vulnerable people in society first. At present, the Government of India meets the needs of *Antyodaya* by distributing free ration to the poorest, most marginalized, and vulnerable people, enabling them to live with pride like other fellow citizens of the country. '*Antyodaya Anna Yojana*' was launched in 2000 C.E. and remains a guiding principle for inclusive development in India.

**Holistic Approach to Development:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya dreamt of an India that could march on the path of holistic development, integrating both the material and spiritual aspects of life. This philosophy gives more emphasis on the balanced growth of the Individual, encompassing the body, mind, intellect, and soul.

**Cultural Nationalism:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya calls for reviving India's heritage, language, arts, and civilizational wisdom, not as nostalgia, but as guiding lights for future innovation. He emphasized the importance of

cultural nationalism. The main aim of our cultural nationalism should be the preservation of ancient heritage and traditional values of our Mother India.

**Strengthen Local Institutions with Capacity and Accountability:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya held that panchayats and municipal bodies must be empowered through fiscal decentralization, capacity building, digital governance tools, and transparency norms. He believed in strengthening Local Institutions so that the flow of the economy from the center to the state would be streamlined fairly and squarely.

### Human-Centred Development and Well-being Metrics

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya endeavored to develop human beings both materially and spiritually based on Indian thought. His philosophy reflects the Indian value systems - Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The whole is one family). In an age where technological change, environmental crisis, and fractured social bonds create new insecurities, the philosophy of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya stresses dignity, decentralization, and balanced development of society.

### The Person as an Integral Whole

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya holds that humans are not merely economic units (as in some capitalist thought) nor reducible to class or mass entities (as in some socialist discourses), but *integral* beings with material, moral, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Any political or economic system must, therefore, cater to this totality.

### Conclusion & Findings

Based on the above-mentioned facts, it can be summarised that the philosophy of Integral Humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya lies in underlying the idea of welfare of all, i.e., 'Sarve bhavantu sukhinah, Sarve santu niraamayaah. Sarve bhadrani pashyantu, Ma kashcid- dukkha-bhaag-bhavet. (May all be happy; may all be free from illness. May all see auspiciousness, may no one suffer.)

As a matter of fact, the integral Humanism remains an intellectually rich and politically resonant framework in the 21st century. Its primary enduring contribution is the insistence that societies must treat humans as whole beings — material, moral, and spiritual — and that economic policy should be instrumental to human flourishing. The philosophy of Integral Humanism follows an integral or synthetic approach rooted in Indian thought and has the potential to establish a peaceful, harmonious, and just world. Swadeshi, antyodaya & cultural nationalism remind us of the essence of our freedom and instill positive energy of patriotic feelings and nationalist sentiments in our minds, which is the real gist of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism.

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