

## Transcript of Zoom Meeting at 5.00 pm on September 03, 2025

Except for removing some garbage (which collects when someone speaks in Hindi and the caption language has not been reset) and my part, this transcript is mostly uncorrected and has machine-made errors. Request all to go through their parts and send me corrections. The docx file is available in shared Google Drive folder: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19iJT3j1d9JeDKNbzoJ2DEnvqAzI3kaz3?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19iJT3j1d9JeDKNbzoJ2DEnvqAzI3kaz3?usp=drive_link) - Girish

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### Girish Sahasrabudhe:

I think we can start. Gandhi is here. Avinash is not expected. And, who else? I don't know. Naresh is not there, either. I don't know whether Vijay is coming. So, there, I had sent a link in the morning, which is, to a google Drive folder. And I had attached only two of the documents, which... two of the write-ups which were received the latest. After that also Krish sent one, which was his piece which he has written earlier, but... which was... which had not been posted yet. So I have put all of that in the folder, Google Drive folder for today's meeting. That is in today's date. And quite a few of them, I think 4 or 5 of those documents are... essentially responses to each other. There are transcripts, also, which are not there [in this folder, but are there in Google Drive shared folders of corresponding Meeting dates]. For the 7th October meeting ... rather, 7th August meeting, GSRK wrote a response to the position Sunil had taken And then there was a short response from Sunil. All those documents have been put there. Then, even the transcripts for 16<sup>th</sup> and, And 20<sup>th</sup>... no, I suppose... 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, these two meetings also, and after that, we have had four more write-ups. One came from Gandhi, which was his write-up on Swaraj as a law of nature, essentially. His rehash of what he had written earlier, an expanded version. As all of you know, GSRK wrote a response to that, to which... Gandhi again wrote a rejoinder. And again, GSRK has responded to that.

Now, while going through all these, right from the earlier ones. I had two impressions. So I will just talk about them, and then... The first was that, first is that I sort of tended to recall ... and this is something which I have said earlier also, and I got the same feeling again.... Last year, we were discussing these programs, which were ... which, essentially came out in the form of two distinct proposals, one from Bengaluru, from Suresh and GSRK, and the second from Vidya Ashram. In the name of, *Bahujan Shodh Prastav*. Now, the discussions which we had at that time about ways of going about the task we have set ourselves, which, of course, all of us recognize is to talk about a new political imagination ... there were some very definite differences in the approaches, the two approaches, and we had detailed discussions on that. Now, some of those discussions seem to be reflected again in the exchange of opinions which we have had recently. In terms of how to go about, you know, deriving conclusions about, what we have called Lokavidya Samaj, or Bahujan Samaj ... what we are calling Bahujan Samaj now, or what is the ... what was also referred to as *Bahishkrit Samaj*. Essentially, the perception from one side is that there have been a lot of changes which are material in the sense that unless we are closely familiar with those, and take those into account, we... it is not possible to talk of a new political imagination the way we have been going about it. And the second position has been that we have talked about lokavidya in a very definite sense. We have never called it traditional knowledge. For us, it has always been contemporary

knowledge, so whereas it is recognized that the Lokavidya Samaj has gone through many changes and has been affected in various ways by what has been going on, this is... there's no reflection on the notion of lokavidya. While the various changes have to be kept in mind, they have, really no direct bearing on our perception that that [lokavidya] is the basic strength of this Samaj. And, that is what forms the basis of... so that has been one, sort of... I mean, this is no complete statement, because ... but then I had another impression also that ... which is, that... the... many of the objections, have been to non-positions really ... as has been pointed out, I mean, some positions which have been assumed, which are actually not positions of the ... which are being argued against. So, that is one ... for example, this question which GSRK wrote about, when he said that, are we to maintain that there were no conflicts in the society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the society which ... Now, as I see it, we have never had that position. The question really was whether those conflicts can be understood in terms of modern categories, which have been used by the ... say, Marxist categories, or even categories used by the bourgeois historians of... see, the categories like landless, for example, or slave ... agristic slave, etc. The point was about whether these conflicts can be understood, and the position was that one doesn't really get much when Because... and experience says so... that it is not that these categories have not been in use. Detailed studies have been made, but nothing useful has come out as far as saying anything about what we have been calling [Lokavidya Samaj]. So that's what's my basic impression. I mean, when I'm saying that some of the objections were against non-positions, really I mean, they were really not... nobody, maintained ever that, there were no conflicts for example, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The question was, is it really useful to focus on them using categories like landless and so on, ... because, you see, that point came out quite specifically, because we were talking about a certain system which has been laid down, which has been inferred from the Chengalpettu data. And that system was basically regarding the shares, how the different sections, how different shares were distributed, not the size of shares, but the method of distribution, etc, etc. I mean, the point about what was the size of the share is, of course, material, ... but that was not under discussion at that time, and I really don't know whether... one can study those... I mean, it is meaningful. One can't say that... and it may make a lot of sense if one can actually work out what kind of shares were received by different sections of society at that time, because it will tend to give some idea about, what was the meaning of Nyaya, for example, for that society. But since the relation to land was actually through the shares and not at all through ownership, the category of landless... hardly means anything. That's what I thought. I mean, so in that sense, really, one was saying that this, these categories don't lead to anything useful. One can use them in certain very limited sense, but with qualification, with this kind of qualification, that it has no... it cannot have any, you see, modern type of meaning, etc.

So this is one, kind of impression I had, that And second was, of course, this about, Swaraj. That discussion also we have had. It has been a repetition, to some extent, and it has revolved around recognition of, or rather, acceptance of the dichotomies which have become important in Western... I mean, after Western studies become important. And the ones which we have actually questioned and asserted that, thinking... the broad thinking in non-Western societies has not made such distinctions. say, between objective and subjective and things like that. So, there have been differences of those type, and I don't see any possibility of a resolution of that type of differences. That is, I mean, they can be sort of resolved only by talking about certain other things.

And the most important thing, it seems to me, is talk more about what we mean by consciousness. This point did come up, and that may be a good starting point, as far as I can see. In discussing these things. What exactly do we mean by consciousness? When we talk about Bahujan consciousness, or Swaraj consciousness, etc. And there is, of course, obviously a large common ground in talking about Swaraj, maybe from different points of view, but so long as one, is agreed to talk in the language of Swaraj. And maybe also Bahujan, desirably. Then, there is a meaningful dialogue, as far as, new political imagination is concerned.

And one other point only, that this discussion seems to have a sort of gone a little far from the immediate context in which it was started, particularly the Changanpettu thing. It was started precisely in the context of the Swaraj Panchayat, which is being planned. And, in what way one can make use of the kind of data or whatever we have, what we know about the systems at that time. And how one can put it to the Bahujan Samaj in order to get their responses, in order to see how... so that was the central sort of point of departure at that time. The discussion, of course, went a little far from that, so maybe one can... For the time being, try to come back to that and come more to the question of consciousness. So, I mean, this is all I have to say to open the thing and, I'll invite, any opinions which ... can come. And I hope you have read at least some of these, all of you. And, so, maybe, Suresh, can we start with you?

**ଡ଼ା|| ଜକ୍ ସୁରେଶ୍ (Suresh) :**

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I really don't have too much to say. I have read all the writings on this specific question of Swaraj. And, to a large extent, I tend to agree with, Krishnan on, GSRK on the overall kind of import of, what, Swaraj should be. And how... One may sort of, in our enthusiasm for Swaraj, we may have to sort of characterize it somewhat differently from the way it has been, to a large extent. And, our allegiance, or our attraction to the idea of Swaraj should not also, you know, make us, add certain dimensions and features to Swaraj. Which do not seem to be very realistic. And that's one thing that I very firmly sort of believe in. To a large extent, many of these things have been discussed between GSR Krishnan, and I, and to a large extent, I mean, I agree with much of what he says. The second point, again, is, I think, coming back to this jungle Petu kind of data and so on. We may have to realize that there are two Aspects to all historical analysis. Which one may have to bear in mind, while even inspecting With the intention of borrowing, with the idea that something good may exist, and therefore is worthy of reflection upon, or borrow, or even, you know, consideration of some sort, of historical events. possibly one of the greatest truisms which all of us would acknowledge is that as you go more in the past, things become hazier and very, very different, I mean, in terms of its interpretability, as well as the kind of, I mean, you know. correctness of the interpretation, and so on, even in the sense of An interpretation which is in line with the dominant of that time. And I don't mean dominant in the sense in which the British, perhaps, interpreted India, nor even dominant in the sense that Indians themselves understood, if there is a way by which you can actually look at a dominant understanding. And it also appears that the present plays a very important part in the interpretation of history, which is why I hesitate a great deal that what we looked at at the data of Changan Pet 2 40 years ago is not the same way that I, for example, look at the Jungle Pet data of today. Although the data has not changed any. It is just that our interpretation, the possibilities of interpretation, possibly change. For example, the belief that a lot of this understanding of history is very important for us to progress as a nation in a

certain way, either in terms of our understanding, or in terms of our analysis, or in terms of our imagination of what the world should be today and tomorrow. I think many of these have changed, in my own mind, in the last 40 years, with the same data, with the same basis that, perhaps, I mean, the Rampal really started with, which hasn't really changed much. What we are saying is pretty much, I mean, much of what he was saying at that time. So, why is this happening? And to me, it appears that there is a danger in historical interpretation, historicism and the associated interpretation. that the locale in which we are presently, you know, planting our fruit in has a very great influence on that. And I find that, you know, this business of harking back to the past also creates problems of dealing very faithfully with the present, in terms of understanding what are the possibilities as we go ahead of a society, given its kind of capacity and so on. Just to give an example. while it is entirely possible that the idea of Hamin Panchayat, for example, was really something which served very well in the past. One may have to look at associated structures of society, such as the level of ruleability, that is, the ability to rule of even the great empires of the time, and as though decentralization was, in a sense, a default structure of society. Partly because that is how it was, and partly because Many regimes could not actually have made it very centralized. We do have situations where, when power changed in terms of, I mean, control of revenues and so on, there has been a fairly brutal kind of structure. While we often look at, let's say, Changanput data, as the data of relative permanence. There is a problem there. This is something which one might be able to look at in the period between 1750 to 1770. In the times beyond 1770 itself, there was a huge amount of, I mean, uproar in that area, as historical records show us, of how Hyder Ali. Today, we consider him to have done very great things. I mean, in fact, in terms of blunting the British assault in the areas of Madras, the then Madras and nearby areas, the seeded areas which became subsequently ceded areas. And, the kind of, I mean, rampages that, you know, Haider himself, I mean, you know, took to in terms of revenue collections, and in terms of setting fire to villages. That's one example. The second is, the post-Marata, post-Shivaji Marathas. the kind of, you know, the revenue structures that they imposed, which included a lot of, I mean, you know, raiding, taking away cattle and women, and murdering people, and so on and so forth, in much of Karnataka, which starts from central Karnataka, right from the Shumoga areas up till northern, what is today Karnataka, is something to be borne in mind. So this whole business of, I mean, revenues and stability of revenues share of revenues were, to a large extent also conditioned by time And, cherry-picking the time, not necessarily because we want to do it, but that is because Barnard has provided us the data in the 1750s to 1760s, and so on. Also gives a very wonky picture of the entire revenue settlement, the life of people, how fair the distribution was, and so on. So if you move the window, for example, to 30 years later, or perhaps, I mean, because we don't really know too much about things, I mean, let's say, 50 years earlier, in the Mysore region, one may get a very different picture of the distribution of revenues. So, what I would therefore say is, if you look at historical records and historicity as some guide for many of our thinking, maybe there is a little bit of a problem. It is very possible that those who are more perceptive amongst us, those who are more historically inclined, and perhaps are able to separate the wheat from the shaft. are able to draw very important lessons from the historical data or accounts of India, but I'm a little wary, especially because of the kinds of records that I've seen, both of revenues as well as You know, first person, second person, third person kind of accounts. of the times of, to a large extent, what I'm familiar is with southern India, and to a large extent, I mean, Karnataka and parts of Tamil Nadu, not much else and so on. But it gives me a little bit of a

skepticism when it comes to dealing with history, in the sense in which, let's say, the census records, the revenue records, and various other records actually provide. And that's one part. The second part is the immediacy of that history itself, in the sense that, how important if our own perspectives can change over 40 years. And these are of people like me, who are very marginal to both social analysis and political action. If, to a large extent, many of our analysis, understanding, and so on is so completely changeable because of the context that we are in today, both as I understand, politically, socially, and so on and so forth. It becomes a little bit of a moot point as to how well does history serve us. That's number one. Number two is, coming to the other part that I actually mentioned about. How, while I do believe that a lot of idealization is required to create a very viable kind of a historic, you know, somewhat historically informed, but not completely dependent upon history, a certain idea of Swaraj, for example, a certain idea of how one may govern oneself, how one may live, and so on. This may be called as a certain kind of a civilizational kind of, aspect of what we understand India to be, in order to create hypothesis, to create an imagination, which may serve us well as we project an idea of India for tomorrow. And to a certain extent, I would believe that, let's say, Gandhi and other people's... Kyake Gandhi, that is, and other people's efforts to look at Swaraj actually comes from that very important and useful kind of an understanding. But the point I would like to say is that this has to come with a warning. That this has to be grounded in a certain idea of what is feasible, what is possible, and not to add dimensions to it, which would make them less valid and much more weaker than they ought to be. That we will create this Swaraj, because we think coming that is very important. And this is, I mean, something essential to the unity of India, to the ethos of India, the culture of India, and so on, is acceptable. To say that this is because it is natural, and closer to, I mean, you know, the Where the animal world works and so on. He's to deny thousands of years of a certain kind of culturing, whether it is agriculture or other kinds of cultures. How do civilizations change and actually be different from each other? We speak about a Roman civilization, European, Indian, and Chinese civilization. So many of these are, you know, consequences of a certain kind of set of visible, invisible rules that we actually apply on, On people, and that we must recognize, and how far away from unconditioned signal individuals we have come, is shown by the way in which societies work today. And therefore, I would urge that when we look at ideas for the new, which compose, or which form a part of the, you know, politics of... imagination of politics for tomorrow, we may have to be far more grounded than we seem to be at this point. That's it from my side.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay. Krish? Naresh ... Naresh? Everybody, you have not edited your part of transcript. Please do that. Otherwise, you see the... Okay, anyway, go ahead, please.

**Naresh Kumar Sharma:**

No, I'm in taxi, so I will reach...

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

He can't talk immediately.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay. Alright, so... Yes, सुनील जी आप बोलेंगे?

## **Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

By the time he... both the pieces by Gandhi, one on Swaraj movement... from Swaraj to Swadeshi in... in... Mahatma Gandhi. I read that, and I read also this other one, I read Gandhi GSRK dialogue. I think if the central question is Swaraj, then, in large part, talking about nature and human beings and the relation between the two. I think the two are talking past each other. Gandhi has made very clear in his writing leave other things. There are too many things in Gandhi's writing. We need not go into everything. the main point is, Saraj, Diversity, and self-organization. The idea of Swaraj is built around or in conjunction with the concepts of diversity and self-organization. There is no point discussing past each other about how different are human beings, etc. There is diversity, There is self-organization, And... Diversity is as if. very close to what may be Saraj. This is what Gandhi is saying, I'm not saying this. So, if we have something to say, then we can discuss other things. About how man is different from other animals or inanimate objects, and many other things can be discussed at length. But first come first, First point is that Swaraj is understood through diversity and self-organization. And while talking about diversity and self-organization, a comparison is made. With ecosystem... non-human ecosystems. What is it called? Ecologically sound systems. What are they called? Ecosystems. which are instances for Gandhi, which are instances of self-organization, and also of diversity. And while discussing such instances, That is discussing the concept of ecosystem as embodying diversity, serage, and self-organization. A concept of evolution gets discussed. Which is not central to the article. It is an added feature. There are many other things that Gandhi discusses about Swabha and Swadharma and so on. Which, in my view, are problematic. I don't agree with Gandhi's discussion of Swadharm... Swadharm, Swaraj, and other... Swadharm, and so how? when he talks about Swadeshi, when he lifts the idea of Swadeshi and Swaraj to a spiritual level, to the level of values, and not just material organization, as Gandhi may have seen it ... as Mahatma Gandhi may have seen it, there is something to understand there, something significant that is being said. So, lifting the conceptual apparatus of Swaraj to a value spiritual framework. practical. To say value and spiritual framework is not to say it is unpractical. Practical, very much practical. But value-laden and spiritual. And... To see that, In human beings, in comparison to How ecosystems of non-human material world, non-human world. How ecosystems with great diversity and self-organization How they evolve, or how they maintain themselves with a certain change element on the time axis. I personally think that even we can leave that comparison, if we don't like it very much. The central point is diversity, self-organization, and Swiraj. If somebody knows more about societies like those of China. We will be... we will understand in... at greater length whether diversity is the greatest reason for having a dis- different kind of political history we had compared to China. harm people as we are told. We are... can lay people with that respect. I don't know anything about China other than on hearsay. that Han people constitute 80%, that their language is the main language. Some of these things are starkly different in the Indian case from the Chinese case. that India never had a central hold, the kind... the type China had again and again in its history. It's a bare fact told to us by various historians. dynasty after dynasty, there are no such dynasties. Even Mughal rule does not qualify as a dynasty of that kind, that the Wing and the Ming and the Qing dynasty, etc, existed in China. the way their governors could go from one end of the Chinese peninsula to another end, and take the governance of the central apparatus with them. It has been observed very well in the case of opium consumption and illegal imports there. What I'm saying is... That... My view is that what needs to be taken from Gandhi's article. He may have more things to... he has many more things

to say. But the bare minimum for a political imagination. he's... diversity, Self-organization, and Swaraj, and Swaraj residing in a complex of practical values and spirituality. Along with Sradishi. And that these things put together. constitute a certain evolutionary frame also. That is, evolutionary meaning a change element with respect to time. I think if we look at this. At present, there is one factor which is missing. In Gandhi's, which I would like, him to pay greater attention. Maybe it is there. About what is the meaning of ordinary people in all this? In... in... when you talk about diversities Swaraj and self-organization. How do ordinary people come into all this? As in contrast with the elite. How do ordinary people come into a discussion of this kind? One would like to see that written also. that would readily connect us to the idea of Bahujan in the present day. Without that idea of ordinary people as distinct from the elite. While talking about diversity, Swaraj, and self-organization. It is... it is somewhat tenuous. To connect it with the present conditions. Where we want to talk about esvaraj consciousness as something similar to a Bahujan consciousness. That's all.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay. Okay, Gandhi?

**Krishna Gandhi:**

I will talk, just now as a reaction to what Sunil has said. To... Actually, the point is, there is diversity. And, there is also... There is change. You cannot say that there is no change. So, how does that change occur? So... human societies, when you are... we are specifically talking about Virgin, that means we are talking about human societies. So, human societies come into contact, different communities, different civilizations, different cultures, languages, etc, they come into contact with each other. So, how does that, Interaction. Those interactions... How are they managed? Or how are they dealt with? According to a Swaraj's... Swaraj viewpoint. Or, how India did it, we may also think about that. So, my, this thing is that... Today, we are talking about ordinary people and a Bahujan, almost, meaning the same. But, India is a diverse country and a diverse population, different languages, different cultures, everything is there in India. So, how can we, Continue to use the idea of ordinary people And, Bahujan in a diverse... country. My thinking is that, the Swaraj approach. Would say that there are certain norms of, interacting. with each other. That meets the diverse elements They can, interact with each other. And there... there are certain letters, values of, Interaction, based on which of the interactions take place. So, over a period of time, those, some changes may occur. And, many new entities may come up. So, there is no necessity that For example. That, the same language should exist without change. Or the same culture should remain without change. Indian culture, you cannot say that... we cannot claim that Indian culture did not change over thousands of years. It changed. People got to know each other, and they learned from each other. They adopted each other's customs and cultures. This was happening in India. For thousands of years. So, if you are going to take some lesson from that, how that diversity played out in India. In the past 2,000 years, I think, we may get some idea of, how... that, in the context of today's diversity, how the idea of, Swaraj, can... be, let us say, explained, or let us say, worked out. for a diverse society as exists in India. My point is that... As I said in my article also, swaraj and diversity Means there are the interactions, between different... Diverse, entities will be of... One of a non-violent nature. True... We have been... Talking about, Nonviolence, in the interaction of, different people, different cultures, and, that has been one enduring Message from

India. Another thing is that when we are talking about Panchayita system, The main point that is... Seems, worth, taking the lesson that we need to take from the Panchayat system of deliberations is that Every community is represented in it. So... Nobody's left out of a panchayat. Everybody is a present. And everybody can voice his opinions. At the same time, There is no majority vote. So... The thing is that decisions are taken according to a consensus. So, consensus, building. Building of a consensus. That is the most important thing in a panchayat, sent a... And, Nobody is, left out. Everybody has his say. And, there is, the discussions can keep on... Taking... Over long, you know, long days, months. But after all that, some consensus is arrived. So, I think if, those, aspects of, the interaction... among the... communities. Even now, India has thousands of communities. And, if we practice those... values of interaction. One thing is nonviolence. Second is... Consens... consensual decision. Making. Everywhere. So, I think, the idea of a Swaraj... Is, can be... Let us visualize or imagine, you know. society, diverse society as India, and the idea of a Bahujan. Has having many identities. non-exclusive identities. is also possible. So, it is not necessary that we have to imagine, when we are talking about Bahujan, that he belongs to this caste, or that caste, or that he is a Muslim or a Hindu. I don't think those... Identities have to be kept in mind when we are talking about version. We are encompassing all those people under the Umbrella term, version. And, the thing is that Belgian, when they... Interact with each other. They are... They take a non-violent... And a consensual approach to But... getting things done. That is what I want to say regarding, Sunil's point. That's all I want to say. Thank you.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhe:**

Another thing ... at the end of one of the paragraphs Gandhi has written. there is an idea. It's not before me, but Gandhi, of course, since he has written it, he can tell us again. the concept of equality being rooted in diversity, since You see, distinctness being different from each other. provides the location for the concept of equality to be applicable. You see, it is in stark opposition. To seeing equality in terms of that every human being has something essential which is common to all of them, and therefore they are equal to each other, or one another. Gandhi, can you read out that sentence at the end of one of the paragraphs which says, in diversity lies the equality?

**Krishna Gandhi:**

No, no, no, what I want to say regarding that is that the concept of equality as, is, is based around the idea of comparability, that we can compare people. And if you're talking about students in a class, we see some are taller, some are shorter, etc, so we are saying that they are not equal in height. Like that. So, if you are talking about, let us say, calorie intake. We can say there is a non-uniform intake of a calorie, and therefore people in India are unequal because They consume different amounts of... Le gallery. So those kinds of, considerations of equality, I disagree with. I don't think... They are in conformity with the idea of a Swarajan diversity. Because.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

Read that sentence, hold it.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

No, no, I... Just, I will have to just... I will have to go to my article, so let me...

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Just one minute. Just one minute. I'll read it out. Wait, wait a minute.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

Girish Ken, I cannot do two things simultaneously on the computer.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Is it in the main article? I've read that, I think it... no, it was in the response, I think.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

No, no, it, it may be in the response. Because.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Wasn't a rejoined, or I think.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

Oh, that's what I remember.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Just one minute, let me... Ira...

**Krishna Gandhi:**

Go ahead, go ahead. So... Hierarchy means there is comparability. There is some kind of idea of a comparability. It implies a comparability. And opposite of the hierarchy, I was saying that it can be interpreted in two ways. Hierarchy can be interpreted... opposition of a... negation of hierarchy can be interpreted in terms of equality, of the Western type of equality, Western civilizational idea of equality. Or we can say that... Hierarchy... negation of hierarchy means people are not comparable, so we cannot put them in a hierarchy.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Yeah. Let me, let me read that, let me read that. The sentence is: "In nature, absence of hierarchy manifests as diversity and incomparability. Not homogeneity or equality. If at all equality exists, it is because every being is unique and irreplaceable." That is the sentence.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

That is the sentence, yes. This is a concept of equality totally different from the Greco-European tradition. Completely different. It is different from the French concept, it is different from the concept in Enlightenment and so on.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay, GSR? You want... you wanted to leave by 6, so, it is close ... it's already 5.50. Yeah, GSR?

**Sivaramakrishnan G:**

I don't have much to immediately say, except that, maybe I will. take note of what both Budet and Gandhi have said, Elder... maybe, again, think of. Some response of what can be seen as something common between us, etc. Our understanding works for our yodi. the new political imagination. I mean, but it will... I will have to first digest what they have said. And see how I respond, you know. Not immediately.

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay. Vijay ji.

**Vijay Jawandhia:**

नहीं ... मैं अभी सुन रहा हूँ ... समझाने कि कोशिश कर रहा हूँ ...

**Girish Sahasrabudhe:**

Okay. Krish? So, ... brief comments?

**Krishnarajulu:**

Yeah. You see this, I think, There is a general agreement among all of us. that, this, diversity. Is a characteristic of... Bahujan. Fundamental characteristics. And... that when we talk about Swaraj, we are talking about this what is it? Independent? Autonomous... Development or evolution of... this diversity. The diversity does not in play. Either hierarchy or inequality in the sense that You don't. Is generally referred to. the European Western sense of equality, etc. All right, but having said that, I think we are all in sort of agreement with that. I don't think anyone really Has any E. arguments against that. But, you see, there's one thing, I mean, I'd like to refer to, that is what Suresh said in his remarks. You see, I think, for example, we are...

When we were talking about, Swaraj and... this. then, the question was... the question was, can we look at the Changanpat data? So that it gives us an idea about the fiscal arrangement. Of those times. Etc. And, okay, so GSR gave us some valuable inputs. And a very elaborate kind of an explanation based on that data, and so on, which is not very useful. You see. What strikes me is, by looking at these commentaries, historical commentaries, you might say, It's not that, via... Trying to get stuck with some method of analysis or anything like that. But what we recognize is that this diversity has been there all along. At least in the Indian subcontinent. And... it... I mean, this diversity has, in a sense, been sustained. In the sense that See, the absence of a very strong central authority time and again, unlike, say, Chinese history, as Bude pointed out. It tells us that You know, this diversity effectively existed all along. I mean, there was no... attempt. Not by an external power, but by people themselves to homogenize themselves. You see, society. the diversity was sustained. I mean, if you look at it some way, you can say this caste system has always existed for thousands of years. And all Manu was doing was the different Manus, if there's many of them. They were just making a commentary of that, diversity. Whether it's, Occupational... knowledge-based occupational diversity, or whatever it is. Or... Yeah... you know, you say that it is a duty-based diversity and adherence to that kind of a karma or something like that, but it doesn't matter. What I'm saying is that this has been sustained, this is what we observe.

Now. You see, What we were... and apparently, the... the idea of Swaraj, comes about, What happened which allowed this autonomous the diversity... You know, to evolve through time. The society is still stable. What characterizes the Indian... Well, let's say civilization. the subcontinent. Is that there is a continuity. And there seems to be some kind of stability. I mean, you didn't have collapses of civilizational orders in the Indian subcontinent. We don't hear of it. It's been one, and people say 5,000 years, 10,000 years, 2,000, 5... it doesn't really matter. But at least a few thousands of years, as far as we have some recorded history, etc. That this diversity has been there, there's been a continuity, there's also been stability. Okay. Now, on this question of equality, I will just, you know, quote from Dharumparal, Himself. In his, essays on tradition, recovery, and freedom. He says something about the data. That, you know, juggle pit data. And what he says, I'll just read it out. An elaborately worked out system of sharing of the produce of the region. Also seems to have ensured fairly equal distribution of economic and cultural prosperity. Among the various communities and occupational groups that inhabited that region. Okay. You see, there's a different connotation of equal, in the sense that sustainability of this harmonious diversity Was maintained through this physical system. This is one thing. This is what we see, that... Bahujan Samaj is going to continue... is going to be... I mean, is going to continue to be a diverse... Characterized by diversity. Sustainability. mutual sustainability, Seems to be the core component. of... the working of society. Social relations, your economic relations, even political relations, let's say. You see, this... A thing against any kind of homogenization, or, you know, imposing a certain sense of cultural identity, equality, or anything, doesn't seem to be the order of the day. I mean, historical interpretations. I'd like to quote one... one more thing. Which, I mean... also struck me as being simpler. That is the... Ideas that sustain every diverse component of society. Diverse social groups, communities. They need to be sustained. And the organization of society And when I say organization, I mean, well, in every sense, culturally, politically, economically, socially. Which define what we would probably say is Swaraj or Swaraj consciousness. this... Sustainability seems to have been, A component part of... this, diverse, let's say, evolution over to it. the Autonomous Revolution, Swaraj. In the years 1773, to about 1775. I mean, the dates may be plus or minus 1 or 2 years, I don't know, I stand for correction. But I know it's in that... the first half of that decade. Warren Hastings was the Governor General. Nope. there was a big famine in Calcutta, in that Bengal region. And the people had no food. This was a natural famine. It wasn't like the famine. You know, almost 150, 160 years later, which we know all about. Now, this famine, what happened was that a large number of Farmers, that is, peasants or tillers, whatever you say, call them. couldn't till their land. I mean, there was a drought and some things like that, and... They were just... and they were dying. Nope. There was a... the community of... say itself, they called it the moneylenders. The rich people of that region. who used to even give loans to the East India Company. You know, for the various trade operations, etc. Now, what Warren Hastings recorded was, he noted that these community of people. who were, I mean, out to make profits. They would lend to the company so that, like modern-day bankers, or whatever it is. But what they did was... they hired... boats. Which went up to Varnasi, Banaris. Bought rice and other grain. There, from the merchants or traders or whoever was there, and shipped them all the way to... this Bengal region, Calcutta, And distribute it to the farmers, Free of charge. Warren Hastings was absolutely surprised. I mean, this is what he notes. He was absolutely surprised by, what are you guys doing? you spend money, or give us money in loans, and, you know, so that we pay you more, we pay you interest, and things like that. You make your... I mean, you generate your wealth by that. But what

are you doing now? You seem to be spending money to feed these people, and there is no profit involved in it. In fact, you're actually undergoing some kind of economic loss. So what those traders said is, sir, If those people are not alive. Next year, there will be no farming activity in this region. That is, the community of farmers will die, and there will be no agriculture. That went on to continue agriculture, in a sense. That is, if you want to put it in our terms, that this community of agriculturists knew farming, they had the knowledge. They practiced it, that was their livelihood, etc. And what this community of traders, let's call them that, was doing. Was doing whatever it could in order to sustain The knowledge and practices of that community that was involved in agriculture and food production in that region. So, it was nothing to do with the profit and loss and this and that. It was everything to do with the sustainability of the diversity. Sustainability of the knowledge, sustainability of Lokavidya, and livelihoods based on Lokovithya. Sustainability of that community. Now, I'm saying this. When Tarampal says. That about 200 years later, or whenever. Well, not 200, sorry, maybe 100-odd years later. Whenever it was. In Changan Pet also. Not later, maybe contemporary. Jagalpet also, I'm that region. Where the survey was carried out, that the produce was such that It helps sustain. The knowledge and practices of these diverse communities. We are not talking about equality. There's no attempt to, you know. equal wages, or equal... nobody's talking about this. It's just that... sort of relative equal amount of, say, prosperity, or whatever you want, cultural and other... you know, that is, they continue their diverse cultural economic lives. the way they have been doing. That's... that stability. So this... Stability and the need to sustain the diverse Development, or whatever it is, in a stable way, so that the... the entire society, the entire Bahujan, you know, goes on through the ages. Without, collapse. In any sense. It's only in the modern times that we now hear That, languages are dropping out. That, certain cultural practices are dropping out, certain food habits are dropping out. I mean, lots of things are being lost, they say. I mean, lost in the sense that, yeah. And there are people who are writing books about inheritance of loss. Anyway... You see, so... This element of... Thing seems to have characterized what... Into my mind. we are trying to, call Swaraj consciousness. And so... The... looking at these historical records, or the interpretations of the data, is useful. It gives us some insights into the workings of that society. That diverse society. mutually, Harmonious evolution. This is what. I mean, there's no conflict involved. There is no pillage and plunder and this and that, and no Robin Hoods and... Or even... You know, other modern-day heroes. Che Guevara's and all that. Okay, so, so, there is something which... in which the society is self-sustaining. As it changes, We're talking about histories of a few thousands of years, and I mean. If you can get records of the early thing. But this seems to be the case. So I think... It is useful. To keep looking at these things. And, you know, look at the commentaries and see what they can... What they can tell us. How we can be informed about those kinds of inputs. Especially about pre-British India, because we... we do say that the advent of British rule and everything else, British modes of production, distribution, control, authority, etc, etc. Has changed something fundamentally. in... in and for Bahujan so much. So, if you're talking about Swaraj consciousness, we try to look for the elements of Swaraj consciousness, which are also reflected in the Historical records and the data that, have been provided to us. And Dharmpal, to my mind. He sees this. He seems to be able to see this. I mean, in many instances, I've been able... I mean, when I read his things, I see that, yes. And now I understand what... I mean, I sort of feel... understand what he probably meant by saying, write a story of India. You know, he's trying to say that what is it that kept this sub... community in the subcontinent, this diverse. collection of communities, this entire Bahujan Samaj. Goy. what

sustained? it. So I think, this is useful, and yeah, if we can shed... some of our preconceived notions, the things that... the way we've been taught to look at things and all our things. Then, of course, it'll be ridding us of that kind of slavery that we have been voluntary or involuntary subjected to. But I think this is useful, and every bit of insight That, such historical commentaries or things about society. And the relationship between the diverse communities, If we get hold of that. It's helpful in our... Formulation of what we mean by Swaraj consciousness, or Bahujan consciousness, or whatever it is. That's it, Amos.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

Girish cannot hear for some reason. But we heard the entire thing. Kisak 2.10. Okay, today, we used to say... To go and do. Who will be that? Who is supposed to speak? It is not clear whether Girish is hearing anything at all. Girish is not in the audio circuit at all. millionaire.

**Krishnarajulu:**

In fact, I think he's, no, Zoom, yes.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

Completely out. He was not there earlier also once. He has a problem with his connection.

**Krishnarajulu:**

He can get onto... on his phone.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

He has sent a message on our group. That his connection is not stable.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

And he can't hear.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

So I think, we can wind up for today... Unless, we have some, thing to... discuss next time. We can decide what to... what to do.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

That Girish can take up later ... There needs to be a clear... information... On who all will be here. on Farraj Panchay at 7, 8, 9 October, 2025. please send messages on WhatsApp or email. About your coming or not coming here, for whatever reason. We want more and most people, as many as possible of this group to come, of course, it is obvious. But if some people can't make it, Let us know too. I don't know who can end the meeting.

**Krishna Gandhi:**

I think, we can end it ...

**Abhijit Mitra:**

Somebody can try to call Girish. Whether he can listen, he should take up the phone and get the call.

**Sunil Sahasrabudhey:**

You should have sent .... . So, give me a... Aap meeting ke bahar hogay. So, what should we do? ....  
Girish says that we can all leave the meeting.

**డా॥ జక సురీశ్ :**

Okay, we'll do that. Thank you. Okay, thank you, bye.

**Vijay Jawandhia:**

सबको नमस्कार! बाय.