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# The Normative Value of Ramayana in Contemporary Public Policy and Administration

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## ABSTRACT

*The Ramayana is one of the greatest epics of the Hindu, set in the Treta Yuga. It is widely known, read and heard, unconditional of the actuality of the receiver- intellectual or illiterate. The theology of the chronicle focuses on the pertinent values of bravery, loyalty, and truthfulness. Such perpetual political principles bound to remain of strict relevance as the contemporary society confronts its daily challenges for a better survival. The everlasting appeal of these treaties still govern to an exceptional extent, the cultural life and behaviour patterns of crores of Indians. Behind the fascinating narration, the fanciful description of event, the exquisite charms and splendour- there is a beautiful delineation of the real picture of the ancient Indian society and statesmanship. The main purpose of this paper is to acknowledge the normative values of both Ramayana in the contemporary realm of public policy and administration.*

**Keywords** – Ramayana, Indian Society, Theology, Political principles

## I. INTRODUCTION

“The word Ramayana, like the name Rama, has a world of significance and conveys in a compact and concise form the purport of the work Ramayana. It is a compound word formed with the combination of two component words – Rama and Ayana. Rama is the main character in the composition and ‘ayana’ (meaning March, movement or abode) is the characteristic feature of this pivotal personality.”<sup>2</sup>

Ramayana is relevant because the story embodies timeless values and inspires us to broaden our consciousness from “me” to “we”. Contemporary culture largely glamorizes the “me” paradigm, which impels people to seek their personal gratification without being considerate about its cost for others. Along these lines, the “me” worldview, in spite of its intuitive intrigue to our conscience, is tragically myopic.

A very popular Indian television channel- Doordarshan became the highest-watched channel in India last week, due to the glory of shows like – “Ramayana” and “Mahabharata”. The shows

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<sup>2</sup> Kautilya, V.C. The Arthashastra, New York: Penguin Books (1992) (4th Century BC), Accessed on 12th June 2020.

kept audiences glued to the channel, resulting in an unprecedented spike in viewership. Both the epic are an integral part of every Indian's psyche, worship and their everyday life.

The delineation of the ideas of an "ideal state" or statesmanship are not at all fabrication of the poet's ingenuity, rather these ideas to all intents and purposes existed even before the composition of these sagas. The narrations of state administration, duty of monarch, defence, diplomacy, expedition, and war (as written in the Arthashastra) remain topically epithet for the science of polity in the Indian context. The Hindu political institutions were based on very sound principles which adapted themselves to changing circumstances from time to time while retaining their basic tenets. For example, while the ancient Hindus have tried various political experiments from time to time, including absolute monarchy, constitutional monarchy, republican forms of government and democracy, the basic objective has always been the greatest good of the people and efficiency in administration.

The political institutions of the Ramayana epoch, the source relied upon is the Ramayana of Valmiki. There is no other literary work describing the political conditions of this age. The political history of the period has been constructed from various passages found scattered in the poem. As Valmiki was a contemporary of Rama, the polity described may be considered to be reflective of the age. a good description of the way in which the ancient Hindus lived during the early epic period; their habits, customs, dress, ceremonies, beliefs, castes, tribes, forms of government, the status of women, education, science, commerce, industry, navigation, etc. Thus, the Ramayana throws considerable light on the state of ancient society in India.

The system of government, the central administration, the assemblies, ministries and the permanent officials, existed as they do in the today's world. Alongside the revenue systems, elections, local administration, justice and law were important aspects of the kingdom of Rama-Rajya. The Rama-Rajya was considered to be an ideal kingdom, for there existed pure democracy, equality and true freedom of expression. Thus, the Ramayana throws considerable light on the state of ancient society in India.

## **II. POLITICAL ETHICS AND VALUES IN RAMAYANA**

The Dharmasastra and Arthashastra occupy a prominent place in Sanskrit literature. Different branches of the state administration, including the duties of a monarch, defence and diplomacy, civil and criminal laws as well as the art of warfare and other topics, fall within the domain of Arthashastra, a characterization for the science of polity in Indian context. The story of the Ramayana reveals the conquest of good over evil. It speaks to the people, about how important it is to have a system where there persists - equality. An epic like Ramayana is all about ethics

and values which have been existentially important since time-immemorial. The political rights and the cultural life that belonged to the people of Ayodhya have been depicted to be a utopian concept.

#### **(A) The Rama-Rajya**

Justice was instantaneous and explicit; it could be accessible to even the most impoverished and was granted to all the marginalised sections of the society too. The dominion of ruling was set out to be based on principles of truth, non-violence, and moral principles. The government aimed to uphold truth in all their actions and expected same from the citizens. Respect and tolerance towards all faiths without discrimination was the Ram-Rajya's way to prosperity, dharma and happiness.

According to Ram Rajya, a leader is expected to look after everyone who needs help and support instead of accumulating wealth for himself. His focus should be on public welfare coupled with self-austerity. It represents righteous and ethical conduct. "A true leader must act as a role model for others. Leadership and governance should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it with a view to accomplishing universal welfare".<sup>3</sup>

"The real value of the Ramayana is that it presents, in stark outline, the difficult public policy choices faced by people, nations and leaders. While some choices are easy to make, like helping the needy when state resources are adequate to do so, in many other situations, the choices are difficult".<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, respect and tolerance towards all faiths without discrimination was the Ram-Rajya's way to prosperity, dharma and happiness.

### **III. NATURE AND SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE**

#### **(A) System of governance**

There were numerous forms of government in India amid the Vedic period, such as Monarchy, Oligarchy, and Republics, but within the course of time Monarchy succeeded in for all intents and purposes replacing all the other forms of governments. "There were many forms of government in India during the Vedic period, such as Monarchy, Oligarchy and Republics; but in the course of time Monarchy succeeded in practically supplanting all the other forms of

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<sup>3</sup> Oja V Sumedha, *Why Ramayana is Relevant In Today's Age*, *Daily O*, Volume 1, Pp 3-5, <https://www.dailyo.in/arts/how-ramayana-is-relevant-is-todays-age-hindu-ravan-sita/story/1/13712.html> (2016) Accessed on 30th April 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Jagannathan. R, *What Happened In The Streets And At Homes When Ramanand Sagar's Ramayan Was Telecast First*, Westland, *Book Excerpt*(2020) Accessed on 8th June 2020.

government. The form of government during the Ramayana period was a limited monarchy. People believed in a firm government by a constitutional monarch".<sup>5</sup>

### **1. In the absence of a sovereign**

In a kingless state, individuals might not carry on their occupations in peace. There would be disappointment of rain and resulting agrarian trouble. Ladies and riches would not be secure. There would be no truth of genuineness within the exchange of the individuals. The Brahmans would not perform penances because of fear of interference by evil and untamed individuals. Prosecutor would not get equity. Affluent individuals would be anxious of keeping the entryways of their houses open, for fear of thugs. Officers would not care to hone arrow based weaponry. Dealers would not travel distant in security with overwhelming loads of stock. The roads would not be filled with property. The learned disputations of researchers within the woods and forests would terminate.

The rulers were all Kshatriyas. The Brahmins acknowledged their failure to run the show. The Vaishyas completely involved with exchange and farming, were fulfilled with the right of choosing the ruler. Kings were innate as a ruler. But the modern kinds might not succeed as a matter of right. They had to be formally chosen by the people's assembly. The kinds succeeded one another by the law of primogeniture. But the new ruler had to be begin with assigned by the ruling Ruler and the Cabinet of Ministers and after that chosen by the Sabha or the Prevalent Assembly. Divinity of Kings would be that in spite of the fact that the rulers had to be chosen by their subjects through their agents, the office of the ruler was considered divine.

### **2. Duties of the King-**

Rulers were anticipated to lean toward the public interest and the welfare of the subjects, to individual thought supposition. Ruler, the defender of the domain, the ruler was considered to be the defender of all his subjects. The King ought to hone Dharma, by the right administration of equity. It was the obligation of the king to see that all the four varnas performed their particular obligations. Charity, benevolence, respect to the devout and the meriting, straightforwardness, and unbiased equity, were anticipated from a ruler. It was held that kings would achieve their moksha by the right organization of equity. The bliss of the rulers comprised within the welfare of his subjects and himself, his friends and relations, within the success of foes and within the due execution of religious customs. Kings do not take off the kingdom without making legitimate courses action. The ruler might not take off the kingdom

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<sup>5</sup> Krishnan, V.R. *Transformational Leadership and Vedanta Philosophy*, ECONOMICS TIMES, Volume 1 (Pp.7-9). <http://www.geocities.com/rkvenkat/1990et.html>. (1990) Accessed on 1st June 2020.

without, making satisfactory courses of action for the conduct of organization.

### **3. Negative Loyalties of the King-**

Kings not to entrust insider facts to ladies. Kings ought to not trust privileged insights to ladies, they ought to not believe the ladies or rest certainty in them. Kings ought to continuously have an eye on atheists as they would be beyond any doubt to redirect the people's consideration from the ponder of the sacred writings (which lay down the ethical standards and make the individuals resist the ethical laws) advanced within the course of numerous ages by the most shrewd sages. Indecencies to be dodged, kings ought to maintain a strategic distance from the fourteen indecencies, which were scepticism, untruthfulness, outrage, inattentiveness, hesitation, the locate of non virtual individuals sluggishness, need of control over the facilities, choice without interview, system of government meeting with absurd insensible priests, moderate activity in things once settled unquestionably, need of mystery, exclusion of favourable ceremonies, and battling a number of foes at the same time.

## **IV. CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

Beneath and ideal organisation, by a fair king the country was anticipated for being affluent. The following portrayal of a well governed kingdom. Each citizen was favoured with bounty of great things, corn, dairy animals, riches and steeds. The decked themselves with laurels, gems, aromas and ate great wealthy nourishments. Individuals were not one, or the other lustful, nor atheistically. Men and ladies were of great character free from underhandedness, ugliness, and infidelity. Individuals took Rama, the ruler as their ultimate own as pointed out by Rama himself his subjects abstained from debate, civil as well as criminal and ensured each other on account of the fear of the noble and strict organisation of equity. The assembly was counselled on all critical questions of organization, such as the decision of the ruler or the Crown Ruler affirmation of war, abandonment or kings. Countersign was vital to ferment a King to resign from office. The assembly members had the right to appoint their powers of elect.

### **(A) Revenue**

Taxes, tributes and eminences were the main source of income generation within the Ramayan. The rulers went through their riches or penances and other devout ceremonies, in nourishing the Brahmanas and visitors, in keeping up their families and companions and in reinforcing the armed force. "The tax collection was not overwhelming and was not collected with meticulousness. It did not surpass one-sixth. There's no reference to visit modification of tax collection within the prior portion out-prior the tax collection was particularly light within the case of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas. The Sudras likely paid the assess within the frame of unpaid

work or visit. Rulers of Ayodhya must likely have gotten tribute as grains, cash, woollen merchandise and pearls.”<sup>6</sup>

### **(B) Justice and law**

Law always concerns to impartiality, equity and justice either it's a matter current time, Ramayan period or former times. There have been different variables of justice under the laws made by different communities from time to time.

#### **(a) Rajadharma: Principles of Justice**

The administration of Rama was concurring to Rajadharma, set up by tradition. Well-defined standards of equity guided the antiquated rulers in their administration in their administration of equity. It was a well-observed rule that the blameless ought to not be punished without a trail, as the tears of the innocent, when rebuffed, would devastate the progeny and the success of the rulers. It was the obligation of the lords to see that the denounced were not punished without an examination by competent judges. The essential protest of a king's rule was to do justice to his subjects. It was similarly his obligation to see that the blameworthy did not elude discipline, on account of corrupt judges or other causes. Kings had to require care that their priests and judges managed justice fair-minded in debate between capable –worthy and the defenceless destitute. The riches of blameless individuals might not one or the other be reallocated by the government nor by the ruler.

#### **(b) The Supreme Court :**

The Regal Court of Justice was within the Audience Chamber which was moreover the Assembly Hall of the Sabha. All the subjects, men or ladies who had to favour a complaint before the King, had the correct of free group of onlookers when the king sat on his judgement situate each morning. The chief trade, Administration of Law and Equity executed within the Court was to get and consider the petitions of the individuals in regard to their grievances. It likely too released the capacities of the final Court of Appeal within the State.

#### **(c) The Police**

As police officers, the only training required was to imbibe the thought that all crimes occurring within our jurisdiction are to be pursued with the passion as though they have occurred to oneself and with the professionalism demanded to investigate crimes. Police helped maintain the peace and directing the activity. There is a few proofs for the business of the Police, within the thoroughfares to keep arrange. Hanuman saw within the roads of Lanka, in

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<sup>6</sup> Blucke, Fr. C. 'The Ramayana Tradition in Asia', [https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/20478/5/07\\_chapter%201.pdf](https://sg.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/20478/5/07_chapter%201.pdf) (2009) Accessed on 3rd June 2020.

expansion to the officers carrying different damaging weapons and arms. Evidently Dandayudhadhara just refer to the Police or the Military employed on police duty “Dandayudhadharas or men carrying truncheons or stick. When the troopers were all given with shocking dangerous weapons there was no need to arm others with Dandas or sticks. Apparently they fair suggest to the Police of the Military utilized on police obligation”.<sup>7</sup>

#### **(d) Intelligence Department**

The rulers depended exceptionally on the information of spies, for the organization of the kingdom. The spy was supposed to be an extra eye of kings. The work of spies was perceived and suggested by old Indian political scholars. Dutas played an important portion in interstate relations. “Serene Measures were attempted as to begin with through ministers to maintain a strategic distance from as much as conceivable pointless battling. The two ordinary international safe havens depicted within the Ramayana are those of Hanuman and Atigada”(,Balakrishnan, 2007).

### **V. RELEVANCE OF RAMAYANA IN CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION-**

The Ramayana could be a palimpsest of cultural, social, religious, philosophical and other driving forces of the Indian society. One cannot get away from the story, the characters, the beliefs spoken to within the content and the society that the epic talks about. Ramayana is an integral part of each Indian’s mind, worship, duty, and in their way of life. Ramayana respects Dharma, one’s obligation as more critical than ones feelings. Sacrifice in relationships, forgiveness, protecting the frail, the uniformity o race and statement of faith, kindness, all inclusive brotherhood are the exceptional values, required within the world nowadays, including every era. Values and ethics which were used to govern the citizens must be used even today, as people crave to be treated with equality. Instant and true justice is necessary at every stage of human life from decades of generations across generations. “The relevance of the Ramayana is self-evident - every child in the country knows of its story, the relevance seems even more pertinent, because most of the people are not being able to handle the crisis that the people of are experiencing. Currently the spread of such literature that has thus sustained the culture of our country”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Dey, Sitanath, *A Reflection to our Cultural Heritage through Sanskrit Studies*, Kolkata Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar(2009) Accessed on 7th June 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Swami Chinmayananda, *The Advaitic Meaning In The Ramayana*, Bold Sky, Volume 1,Pp172 <http://www.boldsky.com/yoga-spirituality/spiritual-masters/swami-chinmayananda/ramayana-advaitic-meaning-rama-rajya-240309.html>, ( 2009) Accessed on 30th April 2020

Four concrete administrative principles which the government followed in the ancient period need to be followed in contemporary times are:

- 1.) Provide a concrete vision to followers
- 2.) Treat all people equally
- 3.) Stand courageously in the face of great adversity
- 4.) Follow a code of ethics and be ready to sacrifice to follow it.

It can be said that the relevance of Ramayana cannot be undermined in present times due to the political and administrative values that can be extracted from this ancient text. In contemporary times the values of governance and diplomacy cannot be negated for the proper functioning of country's administrative system.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

From the glimpse of the paper it can be highlighted that the political life within the Arthashastra discover that the general features of administration within the present age were essentially like those of the prior periods. Such elaborate frameworks of administration as depicted within the Arthashastra did not emerge all of a sudden these institutions must have evolve as a result of progressive development and advancement. Ramayana is a great administrative book. The character of Shri Ram is culminate, ethically high, relentless, powerful, stoical, courageous, brave individual who has patience in every troublesome time and never veer off from his track. The character of Rama is really sort of a hardliner king in case of following rules and laws of the kingdom. That's why he is additionally known as "Maryada Purushottam". In contemporary times it would concur that it is a sign of a great ruler who not only executes laws and regulations legitimately in his kingdom but moreover not consider himself above law. The Government of Shri Ram was a perfect one. Rama-Rajya as Shri Ram's rule may be constrained elucidation while Ram Rajya is not fair based on Ayodhya but in order to urge the more extensive view it should be examined based on lord Rama's point of view on different viewpoints and how he managed with all through the journey of his life. It is the spread of such literature that has supported the culture of our country. The framework of administration amid the Ramayana period if examined is shockingly found to compare favourably indeed with the foremost modern concepts of administration. The Ramayana polity will demonstrate that the old sagas are still an imperative guide to handle the present crisis.

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