



Gift of Dry Leaf, by Gandhi

A few weeks prior to Independence Day of India in 1947, an emissary of Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel was sent to Gandhi at Calcutta, who was working for peace and harmony among the Hindus and Muslims. The emissary reached at midnight. He said: "I have brought an important letter for you from Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel." "Have you taken your food?", asked Gandhi. When the emissary said "No", Gandhi served him food.

After food, Gandhi opened the letter from Nehru and Patel. They had written: "Bapu you are the father of the nation. 15th August 1947, will be the first Independence Day and we want you to come to Delhi to give us the blessings." Gandhi said: "How stupid!. When Bengal is burning, Hindus and Muslims are killing each other and I hear their cries of the agony in the darkness of Calcutta, how can I go to Delhi with the glittering lights?" These words are the heart-rending words of Gandhi. He said "I have to live here for the establishment of peace in Bengal and if need be, I have to give up my life for ensuring that there is harmony and peace."

The emissary started for his return journey in the morning. It was a moving sight, full of human touch. Gandhi gave the emissary a sendoff. He was standing below a tree. A dry leaf fell from the tree. Gandhi picked it up and put it on his palm and said: "My friend, you are going back to Delhi. What gift can Gandhi give to Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel? I am a man without power and wealth. Give this dry leaf to Nehru and Patel, as my first Independence day gift." And when he was saying this, tears came from the eyes of the emissary. And with a sense of humour Gandhi said: "How the great is God? He did not want Gandhi to send that dry leaf. He made it wet. It is glistening with laughter. Carry this leaf as a gift full of your tears."

-- Taken from www.mkgandhi.org [/www.mkgandhi.org]