

## **The Relevance of Jaya Prakash Narayan's Political Ideas to Reform Indian Democracy for Development for All: An Analysis**

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### *Abstract*

*Jayaprakash Narayan's entire life was dedicated to establishing freedom and equality for all. He was not addicted to any 'ism' and never compromised with any injustice. JP worked as a socialist from 1932 to 1954. He had been the foremost leader and spokesman of Indian socialism. He used the concept of socialism blending with Gandhian Socialism for the Indian perspective. He gradually changed his political ideas to adjust to the necessity of the Indian polity. He became the torchbearer of Gandhiji's ideas of peace, non-violence, and Gram Swaraj. JP strongly talked against the serious defects of parliamentary democracy and party politics. He tried his best to establish communitarian democracy which was more and more decentralized so that people can take part more and more in the administration for their development. He tried to transform 'Rajniti' into Lokniti to set up participatory democracy in India. This paper would focus his ideas to remake Indian democracy for the development of all.*

**Keywords:** *Socialism, Gram Swaraj, Partyless Democracy, Total Revolution, Lokniti*

### **I. Introduction**

A galaxy of dedicated leaders played a crucial role to make Independent Mother India. Amongst them, Jay Prakash (JP) Narayan remains one of the most devoted leaders in India. As a nation maker, he never fixed him with any 'ism' or ideology and never compromised with the prosperity of the country. The meaning of his name 'Jayaprakash' is 'Victory to the light'. He was born at Sitabdiyara village in Bihar on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1902. JP was educated at universities of the USA, where he became a Marxist Devotee by his heart. On returning from the USA, he joined Indian National Congress on the call of Nehru to free the country from the grasp of the British Rule. Besides Gandhiji,

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JP was deeply influenced by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who called Indians to act fearlessly following the ideals of The Geeta.

He formed his mind to lead a simple life and work for the nation impressed by the Non-violent Movements of Gandhiji. As the first 'Jeevandane' of Vinoba Bhave's Sarvodaya Movement, JP fought for socio-economic justice for all up to his death.

## **II. Methodology**

This research study is based on secondary data mostly on the books and articles related to Jayprakash Narayan. JP's writings are an important source for this study. An attempt has been done to evaluate his thought about the reformation of the Indian political system. After understanding his thought and works, we will realize JP's role to modify the political system for better inclusive democracy in India.

## **III. Objectives of the Study**

- A) To understand the significance of JP's concept of Partyless democracy.
- B) To know the relevance of JP's criticisms about Party politics.
- C) To understand JP's concept of People's Socialism.
- D) To know the relevance of Total Revolution.

## **IV. JP's Views on People's Socialism**

In the history of the Indian socialist movement, JP worked as a socialist follower from 1930 to 1954. During that time, he was the foremost leader, propagandist, and spokesman of Indian socialism. In an article entitled *Kranti Ke Adhunik Prayog* (translated in English), published in *Janata* in 1941, Gandhiji accepted JP as the greatest source of authority on Indian socialism. In this article, Gandhiji expressed that, "He not only took the initiative in the formation of the Indian Socialist Party in 1934 but also showed a remarkable

genius in popularizing the party and its various agendas.”<sup>2</sup>In another article entitled *Relevance of JP to Our Time*, published in *Janata*, in 1970, M.L.Sen, the then Chairman of the Radical Humanist Association (Bihar Unit), wrote: “In 1940, JP was of the view that even if Marxism was not renounced, violence and dictatorship could not be accepted as the inevitable conditions for the success of socialism. JP was aware of the evil effects of the dictatorship of the then Soviet regime but his faith in Marxist ideology did not disappear. Though his faith in Marxism remained intact, he, at the same time, held the view that Soviet planning was based on over-centralization and suppression of individual freedom.”<sup>3</sup>However, Erich Fromm’s *The Fear of Freedom* strongly influenced JP and in this respect, he particularly welcomed Fromm’s prescription of democratic socialism for safeguarding and honouring human values, where he placed the individual at the centre of attraction, to yield the fruits of socialism in India.<sup>4</sup>Later on, in his book entitled *Dimension for Double Revolution*, published in 1970, JP wrote: “While working for the total establishment of a socialist society in India, due attention must be paid not only to the material aspect of life but also to the human aspect. I also emphasize that there could be no socialism without the proper flow of democracy and I want such a society where the cherished human values would be duly honoured.”<sup>5</sup>

While building his dream of Indian socialism, JP regarded this philosophy as a complete theory of socio-economic reconstruction. According to Jayaprakash “socialism is a theory and technique of widespread planning. It involves a technological reconstruction of the total aspects of society. Between 1929 and 1946, I was an ardent believer in Marxian socialism.

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<sup>2</sup> AICC Papers, File No.G-10 (Part 3) / Subject: Resolution of All Ceylon Buddhist Student’s Union (dt. 15 September, 1946) ; Inter-Asian Relations Conference decision (dt. 18 September, 1946) and other matters/Period: 1946-62, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>3</sup> AICC Papers, File No. G-23/Subject: Papers relating to the Party/ Period: 1934-62, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>4</sup> AICC Papers, File No. G-30/Subject: Working Committee member’s correspondence regarding the resignation of certain members like M.K.Gandhiji, C.Rajagopalachari, Sardul Singh, N.A.Ansari and Others/Period: 1933-59, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>5</sup> AICC Papers, File No. G-32/ Subject: AICC AND PCC address /Period: 1932-40, NMML, New Delhi.

But at no stage, I was attracted to the Indian or the Russian Communist and at that time, regarded socialism as an economic principle.”<sup>6</sup> In another book entitled *The Objective of Socialism: What the Socialist Party Strives For* (Speech delivered at the Kanpur Socialist Party Conference, 1947), published in 1962, JP discussed that the aim of socialism should be to eradicate the economic inequality prevailing in Indian society and emphasized to stop the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. In this book, while talking about his idea about the trajectory of Indian socialism, he wrote: “There would be social ownership of the means of production. This is my picture of socialism; It is a society, in which all are workers—a classless society. It is a society, in which human labor is not subject to exploitation with an interest of the private property, in which all wealth is truly national—in which there are no unearned incomes and no large economic disparities in which human life and progress are planned and where all live for all.”<sup>7</sup> In this same book, he said that it was in 1934 that he realized socialism could be the real basis of India’s freedom and highlighted the resolution submitted in the Ramgarh Congress held in 1940, where he advocated for collective ownership and total control of all large-scale and heavy production and emphasized that the state should nationalize heavy transport, shipping, mining, and the heavy industries.<sup>8</sup> This conviction on socialism by JP showed the impact of the imported ideas of American and British socialists.

Later, JP, in another book entitled *Is Violence an Alternative?*, published in 1973, expressed his bitter-sweet experience of working with the then Communists in the CSP as well as the role and impact of the Soviet Union, which had a lifelong effect on his mind. Moreover, he also said in this book that such facts and incidents led him to question, for the first time, some of the basic postulates of Marxism and at the end, he wrote: “The most striking feature was

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<sup>6</sup> AICC Papers, File No. G-81, / Subject: Tripuri Congress General Secretary’s Report, Report on the Orissa Ministry’s Work, Bihar Government’s Work/Period: 1938-58, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>7</sup> AICC Papers, File No.G-99/Subject: Haripura Congress Reports and Resolution, J.Nehru’s Note on Cotton Committee Report, S.C.Bose’s Notes/period: 1938-60.

<sup>8</sup> AICC Papers, File No.G-103/ Subject: Haripura Congress, PCC Resolutions/Period: 1938-54.

that still my faith in Marxism remained intact and unbroken and I claimed to be a Marxist.”<sup>9</sup>

Finally, while clarifying his moral philosophy of Democratic Socialism, JP in the same book, wrote: “Socialism which Marx pictured was the socialism which we are trying to describe by the term democratic socialism. Only that socialism can bring about, the emancipation of toilers and no other.”<sup>10</sup>

Like Marx, JP believed that “Material forces affect the individual and social institutions and dialectical materialism provided the basis of a socialist’s inquiry into the causes of inequality.”<sup>11</sup> Later on, in a book entitled *Communitarian Society and Panchayati Raj* (ed. by Brahmanand), published in 1970, he re-examined the basic postulates of Marxism and their practical application by the so-called Communists in India. In the post-independence period, like a true Gandhiji, and based on his personal experiences about Marxism in practice, where he felt that in society it was possible for the people to bring about social change in Indian society by democratic means, and, simultaneously, it would be counter-revolutionary to resort to violence. In the same book, he further mentioned that socialism could not exist, nor be created, in the absence of democratic freedom and as a logical corollary, he rejected the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which in effect meant ‘the dictatorship of a bureaucratic oligarchy.’<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> AICC Papers, Microfilms at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, Rusch, Thomas A., Role of Congress Socialist Party in the Indian National Congress, 1931-42, University of Chicago, Thesis, 1955.

<sup>10</sup> JP Papers, Files Consulted at the National Archives of India, New Delhi, Files of Government of India, Home Department, Political( Internal), File No. 37/34/40-Poll (1) Year: 1940/ Subject: Proscription by Government of Bihar any document containing in part or whole the speech delivered by Baby Jayaprakash Narayan at Town Maidan at Jamshedpur on the 18 February 1940.

<sup>11</sup> JP Papers, File No.154/40-Poll (1) Year: 1940/Subject: Question of taking steps to prevent publicity being obtained for prejudicial statements made by the accused in courts, case of Jayaprakash Narayan, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>12</sup> JP Papers, File No.22/1/46/Poll (1) /Year: 1946/Subject: Legislative Assembly Questions regarding conditions of detention of Security Prisoners Jayaprakash Narayan and RammanoharLohia, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

While substantiating his viewpoint and recapitulating his old impressions about Marxism and the Soviet Union, JP, in another book, published in 1956, entitled *From Socialism to Sarvodaya*, wrote: "...the home of Communism; The Russian revolution had started as a people's revolution that had the active support of the broad masses of Czarist Russia, but Lenin converted it into a minority revolution when he forcibly dissolved the Constituent Assembly in which he was in a small minority and seized power with the help of rebel soldiers and the urban working class. The subsequent miscarriage of the revolution and distortion of socialism to my mind was the direct result of a forcible seizure of power by a minority."<sup>13</sup>

In 1936 JP, in another book, titled *Why Socialism?*, methodically analyzed the class organization in Indian society and wrote: "The Indian bourgeois could not lead the anti-imperialist movement. I state that, they had always been in league with and compromise with British imperialism".<sup>14</sup> On the need to popularize the socialist movement and experimenting with the mass forces in India, he wrote that, "The masses are the only classes in India, which are uncompromising anti-imperialist. They alone stand for the complete independence of the country. Others either openly ridicule and oppose the idea or only pay lip-service to it."<sup>15</sup> Thus, as a core Marxist, JP stood for overall social and economic equality in Indian society and reiterated that "socialism to me is also a theory and technique of comprehensive planning for the betterment of the country. It involves a technological re-construction and re-enactment of the total aspects of

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<sup>13</sup> JP Papers, File No. 3/64/43-Poll (1)/Year: 1943/Subject; Publications entitled "A.B.C. of Dislocation and Instructions-sabotage of Communications" Legislative Assembly Questions regarding conditions of detention of Security Prisoners Jayaprakash Narayan and RammanoharLohia, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>14</sup> JP Papers, File No.44/29/44Poll(1)/ Year:1960/Subject: Correspondence of Security Prisoners-letters of condolence from Jayaprakash Narayan to Mrs.Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>15</sup> JP Papers, File No.22/3/45-Poll (10 Year: 1950/Subject: Legislative Assembly Questions regarding the circumstances of the arrest of Jayaprakash Narayan and the alleged torture of Jayaprakash Narayan and RammanoharLohia, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

society. Its aims are the harmonious and well-balanced growth of the whole society.”<sup>16</sup>

At the same pace, JP strongly criticized the inadequacy and failure of the Karachi Congress of 1931 ‘Resolution on Fundamental Rights.’ JP, like M.N.Roy, stood for the reduction of land revenue, the limitation of consumption- expenditure, and nationalization of all the industries in Indian society and this viewpoint was evident through a book entitled *From Behind the Prison Bars in Independent India*, published in 1976, where he wrote: “The most important economic and social task in India, according to me, was to eliminate the rural land heartless exploitation of the masses. This could be achieved only if the people control their economic and political affairs.”<sup>17</sup>

According to JP, “socialism is not opposed to the dominant values, which have been cherished in the Indian culture.”<sup>18</sup> Consequently, he stood for village reorganisation and restructuring, and being a Marxist follower, he believed that socialism was impossible without democracy. Like Narendra Deva, JP mentioned that “the ideology of democratic socialism is the combination of economic and political democracy. But my ideological stand differed from a Marxist, in the sense that Marx failed to make a class approach to the core issue. Lenin also made it clear many times that the reorganization of the society on a socialist basis requires workers’ revolution. To Lenin, nothing could be more democratic than that.”<sup>19</sup><sup>18</sup> Pragmatically speaking, in the post-independence

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<sup>16</sup> JP Papers, File No.22/1/46/Poll( 1) Year: 1946/Subject: Legislative Assembly Questions regarding conditions of detention of Security Prisoners Jayaprakash Narayan and RammanoharLohia, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>17</sup> J P Papers, File No.722/30/46/Poll (1) /Year: 1946/Subject: Sri Satya Narain Sinha’s Starred Question in the Legislative Assembly regarding the release of Jayaprakash Narayan and other detenus in Bihar and Ban on Socialist and Forward Block Parties, The National Archives of India, New Delhi.

<sup>18</sup>T.K.Oommen, *Charisma, Stability, and Change: An Analysis of the Bhoodan-Gramdan Movement in India, Socialist India*, New Delhi, Vol.XIII, No.V, July-August, 1971, pp.1920.

<sup>19</sup>J.S.Bright, *The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha, 1929-42: A Study of the Indian Peasant Movement, Everyman’s Weekly*, New Delhi, Vol.III, No.1, September-October, 1984, p.III.

period, JP deviated from his earlier Marxist stand and also asserted that violence and dictatorship could not be expected to usher socialism in India.

JP concluded in favour of democratic methods and at the same breath, realized the complete need for economic decentralization under Gandhijian influence. As a true Gandhijian, he also felt that the means must be morally consistent with the ends and interpreted socialism in the context of Indian needs and the impact of dominant values in the then Indian culture.

While reiterating his arguments in favour of dominant values of Indian culture, in a book published in 1936, titled *First Things First*, JP wrote: “As a socialist, I believe in the urgency of economic problems of the country, and therefore, stress the need for solving the rampant economic problems of the country first. I am not opposed to the dominant values of Indian culture. I suppose the organized economic doctrines of socialism have been formulated in the West, but its fundamental idealism is a part of Indian culture also. Socialism for me was always a way of life. It represents a set of values to which I owe allegiance voluntarily, and which I tried to put into practice in my lifetime.”<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, in another article entitled, *The Transition to Socialism*, published in *Janata*, in 1962, JP continued to describe his theme as democratic socialism and also talked of democratic methods to establish a socialist society within India.<sup>21</sup><sup>20</sup>In this article, he also mentioned that the greater the freedom, the higher would be the level of socialism. This outlook of JP was reflected in his report as General Secretary at the Patna Conference of the Socialist Party, held in 1963 he stated in the report that, “Marxism was itself a confluence of three streams of ideas, that is, Classical Economics of Britain, Revolutionary Socialism of France and Philosophy of Germany. Consequently, I plead to combine the Marxian thought with the thought and practice of Gandhiji and want to achieve a synthesis of their own.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Durgachand Sinha, *Why Total Revolution, People's Democracy*, New Delhi, Vol.III, No.II, March-April, 1962, p.184.

<sup>21</sup>J.Thakur, *Operation of Total Revolution, Point of View*, New Delhi, Vol.10, No.4, JanuaryFebruary, 1975, p.13.

<sup>22</sup>J.Thakur, *Operation of Total Revolution, Point of View*, New Delhi, Vol.10, No.4, JanuaryFebruary, 1975, p.13.

In the post-independence period, immediately after the General Election, held in 1952, the Kirshok Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) led by J.B. Kriplani and the Socialist Party merged completely together and finally came into existence as Praja Socialist Party (PSP). Following this, in 1953, Nehru wrote a personal letter to JP for basic cooperation between the Congress and the newly emerged PSP in the fields of national reconstruction and development of India. During that time, a change in JP's mindset was evident as reflected in his outlook towards Gandhiji and he wholeheartedly pleaded for ethical politics and moral conduct in the then party-politics of India.

In fact, from 1952 onwards, he stood fully and firmly for Gandhijism and persuaded others to believe that unless socialism was completely transformed and altered into *Sarvodaya*, the beacon lights of freedom, equality, and brotherhood, would remain beyond reach.

#### V. JP's Views on Communitarian Democracy

JP was deeply worried about the working of parliamentary democracy in India and criticized the role of the political parties to save their interest only. Political parties are only busy with their majority on vote accounts to win the elections. For the gaining ruling power of the country, parties followed corrupted practices also. JP's concept of participatory democracy was derived from the excellence of the political and economic institutions of ancient India. The goal of this democracy was so designed as to execute the Sarvodaya ideal, which came from ancient Indian philosophy and religion.<sup>23</sup>

JP in his book entitled *Studies in Socialism-Proletariat plus Philosophy*, published in 1958; he briefly questioned the efficacy and relevance of the existing party system in the then India scenario. In this book, JP explained that the ideological process on 'Communitarian Polity' was started from 1953 onwards, and by 1957, he had already rejected the system completely from his mind, on account of its inadequacy for the progress of the nation-building

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<sup>23</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan, *Time for Struggle: Not for Studies, Everyman's*, Vol. XX, No. VIII, July-August, 1971, p.27.

process.<sup>24</sup> He rejected the Parliamentary System of India based on party politics on the following reasons:

1. Through the principle of the individual vote, the individual became atomized and the State became the arithmetical sum of individuals;
2. A party came to power with only minority support where there were more than two parties;
3. The people were intensely subjected to manipulative mass media and thus they were often unduly influenced;
4. Political parties indulged in half-truths and outright lies and the real interest of the country was forgotten;
5. There was no proper link between the Government and the individual voter;
6. Elections were expensive.<sup>25</sup>

Though these arguments, JP wanted to get rid of the existing party system itself and wanted to substitute it with a partyless or participating democracy. In his book entitled *Small Community and Total Revolution*, published in 1980, while discussing the motto of the partyless democracy, he enumerated that, "But it cannot be understood without the awareness that what embodied the two cardinal aspects of my socio-political thought: my recoil from 'Statism', grounded my reading from the Soviet experience, and simultaneously my constant drive to find an immediately effective political means for a real transformation of the people's conditions in India which in the long run helped me to land up with the idea of participating democracy."<sup>26</sup>

For JP, 'party' was synonymous, on one hand, with the bureaucratic elitism of the Soviet Union and, on the other with corrupt place-seeking in India; and these two responses were expressed by me, with the full banality of cold war rhetoric, In 1952, in a *Sarvodaya* conference held in Gujarat, I mentioned that, in the

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<sup>24</sup>Dasgupta, Nitish, *The Social and Political Theory of JP Narayan*, South Asian Publisher, New Delhi, 1997.

<sup>25</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan, *Towards Revolution, Everyman's*, Vol. XXVII, No. XIV, March-April, 1969, p.144.

<sup>26</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan, *Why Total Revolution, Everyman's*, Vol. XXII, No. XIV, November/December, 1979, p.29.

kingdom of dialectical materialism, fear makes men conform, and the Party takes the place of God.”<sup>27</sup> His antipathy towards the then party system of India also reflected in a book titled *Dynamics of Socialist Ideals*, published in 1954, where he wrote: “Certainly, as far as the Indian experience is concerned, my uneasiness with the party system is comprehensible and logical. If by ‘party’ is meant the organized and principled expression of ideologically coherent socio-political interests and policies, it is arguable that post-independence ruling-class India has never had a party at all, only agglomerations.”<sup>28</sup>

## VI. JP’s view on Participatory Democracy

After Independence, JP understood the negative impact of party-dominant politics against people’s development. Party politics is always busy with the interest of leaders and political parties. He called partyless democracy. However, in JP’s conception of a ‘partyless democracy’ ‘partylessness’ was not the principal feature. Like Rousseau, subsequently, JP in his book entitled *Socialism in India: What It Means*, published in 1971, wrote: “I counterposed formal reprehensive democracy with what I sometimes called people’s democracy, a term characteristically borrowed from a Communist origin, but distinct from communist usage.”<sup>29</sup> Moreover, while discussing the objective and trajectory of the concept of Participating Democracy in India, JP wrote: “It denoted my sense that the former type of democracy, in its exclusion (except at times of elections) of true participation by the people and of accountability to them of their ‘representatives’, is largely an illusion. I believed that ‘government by consent... is not an adequate concept.”<sup>30</sup> While reiterating his viewpoint on Participating Democracy, in another article, titled *My Plea for Reconstruction*

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<sup>27</sup> Nageshwar Prasad, *Profile of the Men and Women behind the Bihar Movement: The JP Effect, Everyman’s*, Vol.XVI, No.VII, New Series, January-February, 1990, p.104.

<sup>28</sup> Nageshwar Prasad, *Vinoba’s Consensual Revolution: A Critical Appreciation*, Gandhiji Marg, New Delhi, Special Issue on Vinoba and JP, November-December, 1998, pp.21-22.

<sup>29</sup> Vasant Sathe, *An Open Letter to JP, The Illustrated Weekly of India*, New Delhi, Vol.XXI, No.XIV, July-August, 1974, p.35.

<sup>30</sup> David Selbourne, *State and Ideology in India: The JP Factor, Mainstream*, Vol.XIV, No.VII, March-April, 1980, p.27.

of *Indian Polity*, published in *Radical Humanist*, in 1972, he wrote: “Instead, as I put it in 1961 in my little book *Swaraj for the People*, brought as near the people as possible under the fold of Participating Democracy.”<sup>31</sup> In the same article, he further mentioned that “It was this latter idea which made me dangerous to entrenched power and vested interests. The people, I argued, had been left out of the democratic way of life. They had no stake in a representative democracy even though they had the vote, and though *Swaraj* came, it had not come to them, but only to the very thin layer of the educated middle class. It is not the abstract virtues of democracy that so excite us, but the concrete fruits of democracy in terms of the people’s welfare.”<sup>32</sup>

In 1972, JP suddenly during the Bihar movement demanded a partyless democracy and mentioned that his idea of Total Revolution was essentially well connected with his earlier ideas of partyless democracy. This outlook became amply clear, through a lecture delivered by him in 1974, titled *On National Integration*, where he said: “In my theory of Total Revolution there will be sufficient flow of people’s power everywhere in tune with the demand of participating democracy and there will be pre-selection of candidates not by any political parties but by active people’s committees, for the accountability of the elected electors, and for the right of the latter to recall the former. Furthermore, undercutting the forms and norms of bourgeois liberal democracy, I struggled in Rousseauist terms towards a ‘new convention’, and the future embodiment of the idea of the ‘general will’ in the proposition that all elections should be determined as far as possible by common consensus.”<sup>33</sup>

According to JP, democracy meant more and more social and economic justice, equal opportunity, and above all industrial democracy apart from political rights and people’s participation in government. At the same time, JP was very

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<sup>31</sup> For a detailed understanding of JP’s idea of a Partyless Democracy see, J.D.Sethi, *JP’s Road to Revolution Lies through the Hindu Heartland, Everyman’s*, Vol. XXIII, No. VI, January February, 1970, p.81.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.83-84.

<sup>33</sup> Ganesh Prasad, *Sarvodaya, and Partyless Democracy through the Prism of JP: A Critical Study, Indian Journal of Political Science*, New Delhi, Vol. XV, No. VIII, March-April, 1990, pp.14-15.

particular about moral principles and value systems. The idea of democratization was a prerequisite idea for JP's concept of a new society. JP was of the view that democracy in India must be built on the traditions of ancient India and the concept of *dharma* should be reinterpreted to suit contemporary needs. The new polity must be founded on the principle of self-government; i.e., self-sufficient, agro-industrial, urban-rural, local communities, etc. JP aimed at building up such a society through the means of the *Sarvodaya* movement. However, after about 20 years in it, he became completely disillusioned and dissatisfied with its primary operation and function. In his Inaugural Address at the Fifth Conference of the International Peace Research Association, held at Varanasi, from 5-8 January 1974, he mentioned that "The disillusionment began with my experiences, in 1970, at Musahari Village in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar. Vinoba Bhave separated politics from the rest of his efforts to transform society and thus made a basic departure from Gandhiji."<sup>34</sup>

In this Conference, he also said that "Bhave also moved on to *Gramdan* from *Bhoodan*. These defects shattered my hopes of achieving goals through the *Sarvodaya* movement. Once I was convinced that the movement was incapable of bringing about a non-violent revolution, I began to re-look for a new way."<sup>35</sup> Besides this, while justifying his losing faith in Vinoba Bhave's *Bhoodan* movement, JP in a book titled *Three Basic Problems of Free India*, published in 1974, firmly said: "The Indian freedom movement was a people's movement par excellence. It was not *rajniti*, politics of the state, but *lokniti*, politics of the people."<sup>36</sup> Thus for JP, the period from 1954 to 1974, which was known as the phase of *Bhoodan* and *Sarvodaya*, under the guidance of Vinoba Bhave.

JP's philosophy of "participatory democracy" was contra posed to electoral or "representative democracy." He was not just asking for electoral reforms, as

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<sup>34</sup> Monty Johnstone, *Socialist Democracy in India & its Impact under the Socialist leadership: An Appreciation, Marxism Today*, New Delhi, Vol. XXV, No. XIV, July-August, 1970, p.103.

<sup>35</sup> For details see, Bimanbehari Majumdar, *Socialism in India 1939-67, Open Forum*, New Delhi, Vol. XIII, No. VI, November-December, 1982, p.71.

<sup>36</sup> E.M.S. Namboodiripad, *The Congress Socialist Party and the Communists, The Marxist*, New Delhi, Vol. V, No. III, January-February, 1984, p.14.

frequently suggested, but arguing against what he considered a flawed system. As early as 1959, in an essay titled, “A Plea for Reconstruction of the Indian Polity,” he said: “The fundamental defect ...is that this form of democracy is based on the vote of the individual...the system is based on a false premise; the state cannot be an arithmetical sum of individuals. The people, the nation, the community can never be equated with the sum of individual voters.” On this tenet was based his ‘Total Revolution’ of 1974 which culminated (or reached its anti-climax) in the installation of the first-ever non-Congress, Janata Government in 1977.<sup>37</sup>

## VII. JP’s Concept of Total Revolution

His idea of Total revolution’ is a “combination of seven revolution – social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, education and spiritual”. This number, according to him, maybe decreased or increased. For instance, the Cultural Revolution may include education and ideological revolutions.

Likewise, the social revolution in the Marxian context covers economic and political revolutions and even more than that. This is how we can reduce the number to less than seven. We can also add to this number by breaking up each of the seven revolutions into different categories. Economic revolution may be split up into industrial, agricultural, technological revolutions, etc. similarly, intellectual revolution may be split up into two – scientific and philosophical.

The idea of ‘total revolution’ aims at bringing about a complete change in the present structure and system of Indian society. It may be regarded as a considerable development of the philosophy of Sarvodaya. Jayaprakash was a great humanitarian, and his socialism, gradually developed into the philosophy of ‘total revolution’ is not only a system of social and economic reconstruction of the Indian society, but it is also a philosophy of moral and spiritual rebirth of the Indian people.<sup>38</sup> JP’s exceptional role in Indian politics was to turn student movement into a continuous Total Revolution to meet the challenges against the development of the country. JP was deeply concerned with the existing troubles

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<sup>37</sup> News Paper article, The Hindu, J. Shri Raman, 10-06-2010.

<sup>38</sup> Brahmanand, (ed), Towards Total Revolution, Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1978,p.97.

of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and inefficiency of the bureaucracy. JP gave an interview that he would like to drastically change the system. As a result, he practiced the innovative ideas of the Total Revolution to reconstruct the nation after Independence.<sup>39</sup>

### **VIII. Conclusion**

With the help of a communitarian democratic system, Jayaprakash Narayan attempted to reconstruct the nation by the elimination of power centric party politics in the Government. He recognized the maladies of power centric party activities seriously to destroy people's rights. JP said that the total revolution would be permanent and continuous. It will keep on changing both the personal and social lives of the Indian People. JP explained how the total revolution would bring positive changes against all types of socio-economic evils. In the Post-Independence Phase, his political ideas brought a moral fabric, people-centric political culture, and a ray of hope to make people-centric democratic government. He devoted himself to the country to reconstruct the nation.

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<sup>39</sup> Prasad, Bimal, GANDHIJI, NEHRU AND JP, studies in Leadership and Legacy, PROMILLA& CO. PUBLISHERS, 1985, p.319.