



Jai Prakash Narayan: Philosophy of Socialism

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Jaiprakash Narayan was a prominent leader, propagandist and spokesperson of Indian socialism. While Jaiprakash Narayan, an advocate of the humane and democratic form of socialism, made his best identity as a leading spokesperson and thinker of socialism, he has contributed significantly to the country's independence as a freedom fighter. He was also a true watchdog of democracy. This was the reason that when Indira Gandhi declared emergency, he felt that democratic values were being violated in India and came forward to stop it and made the anti-emergency movement successful under his leadership.

Jaiprakash Narayan is identified as a politician and political thinker who strongly supported the ideas of Sarvodaya. In this regard, he said that development cannot be talked about without the upliftment of every group of the society. He spoke of converting socialism into Sarvodaya. He said that to achieve the main goals of socialism, freedom, equality and fraternity, it is very important to connect with Sarvodaya, without this there is no justification for socialist democracy. Gram Swarajya is the last attempt towards the establishment of Sarvodaya society. Unless socialism is converted into Sarvodaya, the objectives of equality, freedom, fraternity and freedom from exploitation will not be achieved.

Jaiprakash Narayan wanted to establish democratic socialism in place of revolutionary socialism. The aim of his socialism is the integrated development of the society. Cooperative agriculture will be encouraged in his socialism and big industries will be nationalized. He was of the opinion that economic and social reconstruction would be emphasized for the establishment of a socialist society. The basic premise of his socialism is a decentralized economy in which capitalism would be opposed. Jaiprakash Narayan has supported the Bhoodan movement for the establishment of blind socialism and emphasized on self-reliance. He was of the view that we can

establish socialism while preserving the values of Indian culture. Considering freedom and equality as the basis for the establishment of a socialist society, he has supported the minimum work assigned to the state. On coming close to Vinoba Bhave, he had expressed his desire to end the state and establish Sarvodaya society because only Sarvodaya can fulfill the goals of his socialism.

Keywords: Democracy, Sarvodaya, Anti-emergency, Socialism, Exploitation, Fraternity, Equality.

I. Introduction

Loknayak Jaiprakash Narayan was a great thinker and visionary politician. He is one of the prominent figures of modern India who profoundly influenced the politics of India. Gandhi ji had done the work of giving freedom to the country and Nehru ji had laid the foundation stone of modern India. Jaiprakash Narayan fought for the establishment of a just social order in India. His thoughts are relevant even today to solve the burning social, economic, political, educational and cultural problems of our country. Jaiprakash Narayan a great socialist and ardent supporter of social justice. Jaiprakash Narayan's strength as a socialist thinker was that he had a clear understanding of the economic underpinnings of politics. Mahatma Gandhi considered him the greatest Indian scholar of socialism. Jaiprakash Narayan was greatly influenced by Marxism and other socialist ideas. He had done a deep study of socialism, as a result of this study, he had expressed his views on socialism. The socialist ideas of Jaiprakash Narayan were mainly the product of India's special circumstances. Indian culture has considered this ideal paramount that things should be shared and used. There was no Marxist fanaticism in Jaiprakash Narayan's views. He described socialism as the principle of economic social reconstruction so that the integrated development of the society could take place. Their main premise is the socialization of the means of



production so that the unequal distribution of wealth and the evils arising out of exploitation can be removed. To bring about such socialism, it is necessary for the socialists of India to participate strongly in the freedom struggle. Jaiprakash Narayan's socialism is not against Indian culture. Many features and values of Indian culture are based on socialism. Indian culture has considered this ideal paramount that things should be shared and used.

Being a socialist, Jaiprakash Narayan has made it clear that the main reason for the prevailing inequality in the social and economic fields is that some people have a lot of control over the means of production and the majority of people are deprived of them. He urged the society that the society should make such a system that the economic obstacles that frustrate the power and capabilities of man can be removed. He was a supporter of social and economic equality. Socialism can be established only by socializing the means of production. Only socialism can put an end to the cruel process of economic exploitation of the vast masses of the people. According to Jaiprakash Narayan, socialism is not against the core values that Indian culture nurtured. Indian culture has considered this ideal paramount that things should be consumed together.

Jaiprakash Narayan studied Karl Marx and other socialist thinkers in America during his stay abroad. When he returned from America in 1929, he had become a full-fledged socialist leader. In 1934, he laid the foundation of Socialist Congress Party separate from the Congress Party and spread its program. Together with other socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia M.N. Roy etc., he tried to strengthen socialism in India. After attaining independence, he founded the Praja Socialist Party and for the all-round development of India, he told the path of socialism. The main socialist ideas of Jaiprakash Narayan are as follows-

Jaiprakash Narayan was in favor of establishing socialism through peaceful means. He was of the view that after Karl Marx gave the idea of revolutionary socialism, democracy gained a lot of power. Socialism must be established through democratic means. According to Jaiprakash Narayan, the basis of the present socialist states is violence, love of the individual. Socialist rulers oppress the people using violent means. Socialism brought by violence is not permanent, people can uproot it as soon as they get a chance. In order to establish socialism in a peaceful manner, Jaiprakash gave importance to elections so that people who are in favor of socialist ideology can be sent as their representatives and they can establish a socialist

society. Jaiprakash Narayan had strong faith in democracy and wanted to establish socialism in a democratic way.

Jaiprakash Narayan used to say that socialism can be established only by socializing the means of production. Socialization of the means of production is necessary to prevent economic exploitation. Means used for personal interests create a sense of deprivation in social life. He was of the opinion that as long as the means of production are used for personal interests, there can be no talk of equality with the society. The means of production will be used for the society, the society will control and regulate them.

Jaiprakash Narayan was in favor of reorganization of rural life. They wanted villages to be made autonomous and self-supporting units, for this there was a need to reform land related laws. Jaiprakash Narayan supported cooperative farming. Personal agriculture encourages capitalism because it is concerned with personal interest. In this, the control of a few persons is established on the agricultural land and they exploit the agricultural laborers. These few people take away a major part of the produce and the agricultural laborers get only that much through which they can survive. Such a system gives rise to inequality in the society. Efforts should be made to remove all those selfish elements who exploit the laborers tilling the land in any form.

Jaiprakash Narayan had strong faith in democracy. He had full faith in democratic institutions. They did not understand the current parliamentary system properly and were dissatisfied with the role of the parties. They did not understand the current parliamentary system properly and were dissatisfied with the role of the parties. Political parties raise only those issues which serve their political interests. He personally experienced that Indian politics is becoming a victim of principle less corruption, communalism, political instability, political immorality, criminalization and castiesm. He mainly held political parties responsible for such a state of Indian democracy. Due to this disappointment, he presented the concept of party less democracy.

Being a socialist, Jaiprakash Narayan gave priority to economic problems. That's why he urged that the economic problems of the country should be solved immediately. There is no direct and essential relationship between economic system and cultural life, but it is also true that cultural creativity is impossible without the fulfillment of basic economic needs. Therefore, Jaiprakash Narayan was in favor of creating conditions in which the ideal of equal opportunity could be achieved. Attainment of



minimum economic level is essential for the flourishing of culture.

Jaiprakash Narayan was of the opinion that the economy of a socialist society should be decentralized. The establishment of socialism is impossible in Asian countries due to the large scale concentrated economy. For this, domestic industries and small industries should be established all over the country. The ownership of the means of production and industries should not be in the hands of the central government only, but there should be decentralization to village panchayats and municipal bodies. It is also necessary for economic decentralization that wealth should not be concentrated in the hands of a few persons and such an economic system should be made by which wealth can be distributed equitably among all the people.

Jaiprakash Narayan strongly criticized the capitalist system. He realized that the capitalists exploit the workers a lot. Due to this exploitation mutual animosity increases between the capitalists and the workers which promotes the struggle. The struggle later takes the form of a violent revolution which causes great loss to the human race. Jaiprakash Narayan wanted to overthrow capitalism by non-violent means. He had told Bhoodan movement to be the best way to eradicate capitalism. He was of the view that in the capitalist system, capital is concentrated in the hands of industrialists and landowners, under which there is immoral exploitation of man by man. Jaiprakash Narayan has opposed capitalism seeing the defects of capitalism.

Jaiprakash Narayan supported the Bhoodan movement for the establishment of socialism. Jaiprakash Narayan's intention with the Bhoodan movement was that the role should be donated for public interest. In such a system, there will be no personal ownership of any one person on the arable land, but the land will be collectively owned by the village and all will cultivate it together. Jaiprakash was of the view that in other countries the problem of land has been solved by them through coercion or violence. Jaiprakash was of the opinion that the problem of land in other countries has been solved by them through coercion or violence, due to which bitterness and hatred has spread. He was of the view that through the Bhoodan movement, the ownership of land has been handed over to the villages for the collective benefit without any revolution or coercion. Like the Bhoodan movement, the capitalists should hand over the control of their industries, trade etc. to the country for public

interest so that all round development of the people can be possible.

Jaiprakash Narayan has emphasized on self-reliance. He was of the view that India can become self-sufficient now if we all sacrifice our personal interests. The goal of our socialism is to make India self-sufficient in economic, social, political, cultural etc. Jaiprakash Narayan said that in ancient times the villages of India were self-sufficient and at that time transactions were done through barter. Due to the development of industrialization and capitalism, this system was hurt and transactions started being done through capital, due to which the self-reliance disappeared from the villages. Due to the development of industrialization and capitalism, this system was hurt and transactions started being done through capital, due to which the self-reliance disappeared from the villages. So we have to try that we have to make the villages self-sufficient as before, then it will be implemented all over India.

Jaiprakash Narayan was of the view that socialism is not antithetical to Indian culture. We can establish socialism while preserving the values of Indian culture. World brotherhood and mutual cooperation were given an important place in India since ancient times. Indian culture has considered this ideal paramount that things should be shared and used. India's rural establishment has been socialist since ancient times. Signs of socialist liberal tendencies are visible in the joint family system. Hence the allegation that the theory of socialism is borrowed from the West is baseless. There is no doubt that the systematic economic principles of socialism were formulated in the West, but its basic idealism is also a part of Indian culture.

Jaiprakash Narayan was of the opinion that the welfare of the poor is not possible through modern democracy. Arguing in favor of his opinion, he said that in a modern democracy, political power is limited in the hands of a few people. The mainstay of modern democracy is elections and elections cost crores of rupees. It is a distant thing for an ordinary person to contest elections in such a system, he cannot even imagine contesting elections. Political parties also prefer such a person as a candidate while giving party ticket, who can spend money like water in elections. When such a person wins the election, instead of making laws in the interest of the general public, he makes laws and works in the interest of such persons who helped him during the elections. In such a system, the interests of the general public are neglected and the matter of all-round development becomes nameless. This was the reason why Jaiprakash Narayan



rejected the idea of welfare of the poor under modern democracy.

Marxism and Gandhism were in favor of stateless society. Both Mahatma Gandhi and Karl Marx have considered the state as an institution based on power. Jaiprakash Narayan has also considered the state as an immoral institution like Mahatma Gandhi because such an institution cannot develop moral qualities in individuals. He believed that efforts should be made to reduce the scope and functions of the state as far as possible. Jaiprakash Narayan also believed that the government is best which governs the least. On coming closer to Vinoba Bhave, he expressed his desire to end the state and establish Sarvodaya society.

Jaiprakash Narayan wanted to achieve the holy purpose of Sarvodaya, for this he gave the slogan of total revolution. Explaining the ideas of complete revolution, he has written that the collective name of social, economic, political, cultural, theoretical and intellectual, educational and moral spiritual revolutions is complete revolution. Jaiprakash Narayan wanted to bring revolutionary changes in Indians individually and in Indian society and nation collectively. He collectively named those total changes as the total revolution. The whole revolution will start from the village and Indian youth will be the real power of the whole revolution. It will be based on non-violence and decentralization with special emphasis on ethics. Minimum work will be given to the state and there will be no political parties, all decisions will be taken by consensus.

Evaluation of socialist ideas of Jaiprakash Narayan

The socialist ideas of Jaiprakash Narayan have been strongly criticized by the scholars. History is witness to the fact that socialism has not been established through peaceful means in any socialist country, be it Soviet Russia or Communist China. The establishment of socialism by peaceful means is just a fantasy. The overall development of the society is possible not only in the socialist system but also in democratic countries. At present, the nature of democratic countries is welfare, in which emphasis is laid on the integrated development of the individual and he is provided with all-round opportunities for development. Socialization of means of production is possible not only in socialist states but also in democratic countries. Despite England being a capitalist country, big industries and banks were nationalized there. Economic and social reconstruction is happening even in democratic countries.

Jaiprakash Narayan has called the welfare of the poor impossible through modern democracy. His statement is not entirely correct. Although schemes and programs for the welfare of the poor were run in the socialist countries, but the overall development of the workers of those countries was much less as compared to the workers of the capitalist countries. Better programs and facilities were made available for the welfare of the poor in democratic and capitalist countries.

Jaiprakash Narayan strongly opposes capitalism and talks about its abolition. Jaiprakash Narayan has opposed capitalism and talked about its abolition, whereas at present the socialist system itself is going towards the end. Jaiprakash Narayan has opposed capitalism and talked about its abolition, whereas at present the socialist system itself is going towards the end.

Jaiprakash Narayan has considered the state as an unethical institution and has said that in the present state the all-round development of the individual is not possible. Critics are of the view that the state is not an immoral evil. The state is not an obstacle in the way of development of a person, a person can do his all-round development only by staying in the state. The state removes the obstacles coming in the way of development of the person and provides him opportunities for development.

After studying the above thoughts, we come to the conclusion that Jaiprakash Narayan's socialism was the product of his heartfelt desire to improve the pathetic condition of the poor. Jaiprakash Narayan's strength as a socialist thinker was that he had a clear understanding of the economic underpinnings of politics. Mahatma Gandhi considered him the greatest Indian scholar of socialism. He considered socialism as an important principle of socio-economic reconstruction. Being a socialist, Jaiprakash Narayan has made it clear that the main reason for the prevailing inequality in the social and economic fields is that some people have a lot of control over the means of production and the majority of people are deprived of them. Socialism can be established only by socializing the means of production. Socialism of Jaiprakash Narayan is compatible with the values of Indian culture. His vision of socialism is to have an integrated development of the society. Jaiprakash Narayan was in favor of establishing socialism through peaceful means. He has encouraged cooperative agriculture in his socialism and has emphasized on the nationalization of large industries. The welfare of the poor is said to be impossible through modern democracy because elections are held in democracy and elections have



become very expensive. In his socialist system, Jaiprakash Narayan has supported decentralized economy and opposed capitalism. Along with supporting the Bhoodan movement, he has also emphasized on self-reliance. Jaiprakash Narayan has considered freedom and equality as the basis for the establishment of a socialist society. On coming closer to Vinoba Bhave, he expressed his desire to end the state and establish Sarvodaya society. His goals of socialism can be fulfilled only through Sarvodaya. Jaiprakash Narayan wanted to establish Sarvodaya society and humanist ideal society through complete revolution. Socialism can be established through democratic methods and many socio-economic problems can also be solved.

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