

BLOCK IV:
MARXIST AND SOCIALIST DISCOURSE

UNIT 1

Marxist and Socialist Discourse in India

Unit Structure :

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Background of Marxist and Socialist Tradition
- 1.4 Marxist Political Thought of India
- 1.5 Features of Marxist Thought in India
- 1.6 Summing Up
- 1.7 Reference and Suggested Readings

1.1 Introduction

Marxism is one of the important ideologies of the world in the political and economic areas. In paper I, we have already studied Marxist Ideas and its importance. Marxian philosophy and political theory has influenced the entire world. Lenin adapted Marxist ideas to the conditions of Russia and established a socialist State in Russia. Mao-ze Dong following the ideas of Marxism and Leninism established Communist state in China. In India too, there were a number of thinkers who believed in Marxian philosophy. Russian revolution has made a significant impact on Indian media and people became aware about the Marxian ideology through it. The Bolshevik ideology of Right to Self-determination focused in the print media like newspapers, and magazines inspired many at that time. As a result of this during the freedom movement of India, a section of leaders were deeply influenced by Marxian and Socialistic principles. In this unit we shall try to deal with the emergence of Marxist and socialist thought in India.

1.2 Objectives:

Marxism and Socialistic philosophy has influenced Indian intellectuals in the British period and also acted as a guiding principle in the freedom movement of India. Reading of this unit will help you to

- Discuss the background of Marxist and socialist tradition
- Analyse Marxist thought in India

- List the features of Marxist thought in India

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1.3 Background of Marxist and Socialist Tradition

Lenin stated in 1908 that the Indian proletariat has already matured to wage a class conscious political mass struggle. Moreover, there was an increase in the number of factories in India. While there were 815 factories in India in 1894, in the time of independence its number went up to 14071. According to R. Palme Dutt, the steady increase in the number of factories as well as the wage labourers provided the base for socialism in India.

Hence we can say that Indian Marxism grew with Indian Nationalism. Some journals advocating Marxian philosophy were published in the year 1921-23. They were----

- Vanguard, edited by M. N. Roy
- The Masses of India and the Socialist edited by S.A. Dange
- Janavani edited by Muzaffur Ahmed.

While analyzing the growth of Marxian thought in India we must remember that it did not develop only because of external factors. It is true that Russian Revolution or Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had been influential in the development of Marxian philosophy in India. The revolution has inspired the workers of India to fight against the injustices meted out to them by the employees. Bombay where a huge number of industries of India located witnessed an upsurge of workers movements and strikes at that period. It must be noted here, Bolshevik revolution not only inspired the workers of India only. It influenced different sections of society such as activists, writers artists and public intellectuals. This has led to the richness of art and literary works of India. Political thinkers like M. N. Roy, Nehru and writer like R. N Tagore were inspired by the Revolution. Moreover, the two extremist leaders, Bipan Chandra Pal and Bal Gangadhar Tilak had admiration for Lenin and the revolution. In 1939, the Bolshevik Party of India was formed by N. Dutta Mazumder in Nagpur. The ideology of the party was Communism, Marxism and Leninsm. The party played important role in the trade union movement of West Bengal. It had also got representation in the State government in 1969. However, later it failed to play significant role in Indian Politics.

Regarding the growth of Marxism in India we must understand that the

Bolshevik revolution is not the sole factor. The widespread poverty had also significantly contributed towards its growth. We all know that, the First World War already damaged the internal economic situation of India which affected the socio-political scenario. It thus, created the ground for the growth of communism in India.

Before the First World War, the industrial sector was dominated by the cotton and Jute industries. During the war period, because of several reasons there was growth of these industries. Indian manufacturers also started taking interest in different industries and they entered in the fields of engineering, iron and steel, paper, cement etc. Thus number of registered companies increased from 356 in 1914 to 1039 in 1920-21. As a result, in the post First World War period new industrial groups begun to emerge. Again in the period of 1929-1930, because of great depression, the imperialist economy got a severe blow. It also boosted the capitalist class of India.

With the increase in the number of capitalists as well as the working class, there were greater political mobilizations among them too. To agitate against post war inflation and price rise the working class started strikes in India. Such agitations and strikes were slowed down because of decrease of employment in the mid of 1920s. However, class-consciousness among the working class continued to increase. In such a scenario, All India Trade Union Congress was formed in 1920. Through this organization, workers started to fight economic battles. Besides, the economic struggles, the working class also took part in Political struggles like non-co-operation movement as well as Simon Commission.

1.4 Marxist Political Thought of India:

The most of the modern thinkers of India were influenced by Liberal political philosophy. During the British period, India had witnessed the rise of intellectual because of their exposure to Western Liberal thinkers like Locke, Mill, Bentham and Spencer. While on the one hand, they developed a rational and secular political outlook based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, on the otherhand, they sincerely believed in slow and orderly progress through peaceful constitutional methods. However, at the same time some thinkers developed following Marxist and socialist principles. They emphasized more on actions and political activity than on intellectual activity. Among the Indian Marxist and socialist thinkers we must mention the names of M. N. Roy, Ram Manohar Lohia and Joy Prakash Narayan. In the following units of these Block we shall

discuss the ideas of all these thinkers in detail. Now Let us have a look at Marxist Thinkers in India.

Manavendra Nath Roy (1886-1954): M. N Roy is a scholarly thinker of modern India. His concept of Radical Humanism or New Humanism which is a great contribution to modern Indian political thought. He was one of the extremists in the freedom struggle of India for quite some time under the influence of communism, but later on he changed his ideology and fought for India's independence even from the platform of Indian National Congress. His notion towards India's problem was quite different and unique from others. This radical activist and political theorist is also known as the father of Marxism in India.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-1967): Dr. Lohia is a well known political thinker of Modern India and the founder of the Socialist Party of India. He was one of the founders of Congress Socialist Party. In 1936, he was given the responsibility as the secretary of the foreign department of the Congress on the recommendation of Jawaharlal Nehru. He was also the editor of the periodical 'Congress Socialist'. In 1938, he was included in the executive committee of the Congress Socialist Party and he began to develop his own political ideas.

Jaya Prakash Narayan (1902-1979): J. P. Narayan was a leading socialist of modern India. He played an important role in the formation of Congress Socialist Party, a left wing group within the Congress party. In 1934, he founded Bihar Congress Socialist Party. Jaya Prakash Narayan was a great socialist as well as a true nationalist. He started his political journey as a Gandhian Non-cooperator and a disciple of Bhagavad Gita. Jaya Prakash wanted to establish both political and economic democracy. In the later period of his life, Jaya Prakash Narayan suggested the idea of Total Revolution, specially during Bihar Movement. He called for mass upsurge against the widespread corruption and centralisation prevailing in Indian democracy

Stop to Consider

Bolshevik Revolution :

Bolshevik revolution was guided by Lenin who was inspired by Marxian ideology. The Revolution is also known as October Revolution since in October 1917 the Bolshevik Party seized power in Russia. Various factors have contributed towards the Revolution. They are ----

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- i). Autocratic Rule of Russian emperor Tsar Nicholas II
- ii). Economic condition of the peasants as most of them were landless agricultural labourers.
- iii). Industries were owned by private industrialists and the condition of workers were pathetic.
- iv). Widespread inflation and food shortage in the country.
- v). Militarily the country became very weak because of inadequate supplies of weapons etc.

As a result of this revolution, the farmlands were distributed to the farmers and factories of workers. Banks were nationalised and a council was set up at national level to run the economy of the country. Moreover, Russia also withdraws itself from World War II after the treaty of Bret-Litvsk.

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1.5 Features of Marxist Thought in India

The Marxist and Socialist thinkers of India had given a new dimension to Politico-economic thinking in India. As already mentioned, though influenced by external factors, Indian Marxism grew out internal conditions. Following are the main features of Marxist Socialist tradition of India:

- i). Efforts were made to reconcile nationalism with internationalism. The communism urges all workers to unite and thereby talks about proletarian internationalism. Indian Marxism as a product of imperialist or colonial rule however was guided by Nationalistic principles. Therefore, they believed in reconciling nationalism with internationalism.
- ii). The Indian Marxist thinkers were conscious about the stages of social development in India. According to them, the Indian capitalist class has also taken the colour of imperialist rulers and therefore they were not in a position to fight against the colonial rule.
- iii). After analyzing Indian society, the Indian Marxists have emphasized the need to have an alliance between the working class and peasantry, mainly the landless peasants. It would help in establishing true democracy in India.
- iv) The Indian Marxists also believed that as in the West, the Marxian theories of Historical Materialism and Class Struggle could also be applicable to Indian scenario.

- v). Equality, Democracy, social justice, anti-communalism etc. are the guiding force for which Indian Marxists carried out their policies and programmes.
- vi). In the post –independent period, the Communists regard India as a National Bourgeoisie Class.
- vii). They refused to accept India as an independent country as according to them , it continued to be semi feudal and semi-colonial in its nature. Therefore the major goal of Communist Party of India (ML) is complete eradication of Feudalism and distribution of land among landless labourers

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SAQ:

Do you agree with the Indian Marxists that the theory of class struggle is applicable in Indian Society ?

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Check Your Progress:

1. Discuss Briefly the Economic and Political background of Marxist Thought in India.
2. Write a note on Marxist Political Thought in India.
3. Analyse the Features of Marxist and Socialistic tradition of India.

1.6 Summing Up:

After going through this unit you are now in a position to discuss the emergence of Marxist and socialist tradition in India. You have understood that Marxism grew during the colonial rule in India. The increases in the number of factories as well as workers in the factories have significantly contributed towards the growth of Marxist and socialistic thinking in India. Moreover, the external influences like literature, the economic consequences of First World War and revolution like Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 etc. can also be cited as reasons for the emergence of Marxist thinking in India. From this unit you have also learnt the basic features of Marxist and Socialist tradition in India. In the following units of this Block we shall discuss at length the Marxist and Socialist thinkers

of India like M. N. Roy., Ram Manohar Lohiya and J.P. Narayan. The reading of the whole block will give you a holistic idea of Marxist and Socialistic thinking in India.

1.7: Reference and Suggested Readings:

1. Bipan Chandra: Nationalism and Colonialism In India , Orient Longman, 1981, New Delhi
2. BipanChandra (ed): Indian Left : Critical Appraisal, Vikas Publications, 1983, New Delhi.
3. K. N. Panikkar (ed): National And Left Movements in India, Vikas Publications, 1980, New Delhi.
4. Dale Riepe Marxism in India in Social Theory and Practice, Spring 1970, Vol 1, No 1

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Unit 2**M. N. Roy : Radical Humanism, Critique of Marxism**

Unit Structure :

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Objectives

2.3 From Revolutionary to Radical Humanism

2.4 M. N. Roy's Radical Humanism

2.4.1 Ideas about Nature of Man

2.4.2 Views on Individual Freedom

2.4.3 Ideas about Materialism

2.4.4 Views about History

2.4.5 Views on Democracy

2.4.6 Criticism of M. N. Roy's Radical Humanism

2.5 Critique of Marxism

2.5.1 Impact of Marxism on Roy's Philosophy

2.5.2 M. N. Roy's Criticism on Marxism

2.6 Summing Up

2.7 References and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

The origin of the communist movement in India basically took place after Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917. Among those prominent leaders who got inspiration from Russia and took initiative in the growth of communism in India, Manavendra Nath Roy was the most successful. He is known as the "Father of Indian Communism".

Manavendra Nath Roy (1886-1954), who is a scholarly thinker of modern India is most popularly known for his concept of Radical Humanism or New Humanism which is a great contribution to modern Indian political thought. He was one of the extremists in the freedom struggle of India for quite some time under the influence of communism, but later on he changed his ideology and fought for India's independence even from the platform of Indian National Congress. His notion towards India's problem was quite different and unique from others. In this unit, you will come to know how Roy had changed his ideology from revolutionary to radical humanism as

well as the basic principles of his radical philosophy. This unit will also help you to understand M. N. Roy's critical analysis of Marxism.

2.2 Objectives

M. N. Roy is mostly known for his revolutionary role in Indian national movement and his great contribution towards the development of the concept of Radical Humanism or New Humanism. After going through this unit, you will be able to

- Discuss M. N. Roy's revolutionary role in Indian freedom struggle
- analyze Roy's contribution towards the growth of communism in India
- examine Roy's transition from Marxism to Radicalism and from Radicalism to Radical Humanism
- analyze critically Roy's idea of Radical Humanism and the basic principles of it
- examine the impact of Marxism on Roy's philosophy
- describe Roy's criticism of Marxism

2.3 From Revolutionary to Radical Humanism

M. N. Roy started his political journey as a revolutionary nationalist from his school days. When Bengal had been undergoing the tremendous agitation of Swadeshi period, Roy received his political illumination and began his revolutionary activities. He was inspired by the political ideas of Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Surendranath Banerjee as well as got motivation from the life of sacrifice and sufferings of V. D. Savarkar.

Stop to Consider

Life Sketch of M. N. Roy

M. N. Roy was born on February 6, 1886 in a village in 24 – Paraganas district in Bengal into a family of priests. His early name was Narendra Nath Bhattacharya. Roy was greatly influenced by the ideas and personality of Swami Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra, Swami Ramtirtha and Swami Dayananda Saraswati. It was after the partition of Bengal, Roy started his revolutionary journey and took active part in the Swadeshi Movement. He also worked with Yugantar and Anusilan Samiti – two revolutionary organisations operating in colonial Bengal. He was imprisoned several times by British government for his involvement in militant activities against British rule in India. He changed his name from

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Narendra Nath Bhattacharya to Manavendra Nath Roy in 1916 when he was in San Francisco, California.

Creativity was the biggest weapon of Roy. He wrote many important books, edited and contributed articles in various journals. Some of his important books are: *Scientific Politics* (1942), *New Orientation* (1946), *Beyond Communism* (1947), *India in Transition* (1922), *India's Problem and Its Solution* (1922), *One Year of Non-cooperation* (1923), *The Future of Indian Politics* (1926), *Historical Role of Islam* (1939), *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (1946), *New Humanism: A Manifesto* (1947), *Beyond Communism* (1947), *Materialism: An Outline of the History of Scientific Thought* (1951), *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* (1952) etc. Roy died in Dehradun on January 25, 1954.

In 1910, Roy was sentenced to imprisonment in connection with the Howrah Conspiracy Case during First World War, the German revolutionaries along with the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin came to the conclusion that one of the effective means of checking British resistance was to create internal troubles in British India. They therefore decided to smuggle arms and ammunitions to India to help the Indian revolutionaries. M. N. Roy went to Java in search of arms but got disappointed because the ship carrying arms did not reach Java. In 1915 he again went to Java to receive arms for Indian revolutionaries but again failed in his mission. Roy was again arrested in 1915 because of his connection with a political dacoity in Calcutta¹. In the same year he visited Dutch Indies and later went to Japan, China, U.S.A., Mexico, Germany and Russia. In late 1915, he met Indian revolutionaries and Indian students in San Francisco who were working there for Indian freedom struggle. There, he also came in contact and worked in collaboration with Lala Lajpat Rai. Roy changed his name from Narendra Nath Bhattacharya to Manavendra Nath Roy during that period. He already had started to study Marxist literature when he was in New York.

In Mexico, he founded the first Communist Party outside Russia and became its Secretary General. It was at this stage Roy came in contact with Borodin, a Russian favourite of Lenin, who introduced Roy to Hegelian Dialectical Ontology. After Bolshevik revolution he was invited to Russia by V. I. Lenin. Roy reached Russia in the beginning of 1920 and became the advisor of Bolshevik Party on colonial problems. There, he attended the Second Congress of the Communist International and had a difference of opinion with Lenin. Roy prepared a different thesis from that of Lenin and revealed

¹Varma, V. P. Modern Indian Political Thought. P. 482

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the drawbacks of resolutions sponsored by Lenin. Roy's views were more realistic and even Lenin was highly impressed by his analysis.

In 1922, Roy made a sociological study of contemporary India and stated his views in his book *India in Transition*. He predicted that the future Indian nation was going to be shaped by the 'inexorable evolution' of the progressive forces latent in Indian society. The Indian transition was a consequence of the movement of social forces which were struggling for the replacement of the old bankrupt decadent socio-economic structure. In 1922 Roy went to Berlin to organise Indian revolutionaries there. There he started his journal the *Vanguard of Indian Independence*. For the spread of communism in India, Roy believed that, there should be a separate Communist Party of India which would have an independent role. He also pleaded to form People's Party with a revolutionary character, though he was not successful in his mission. In 1922 his book 'India's Problem and Its Solution' was published where Roy criticised the medievalism and conservatism of Gandhian social ideology. He suggested that revolutionary people's party would stimulate dissatisfaction against the existing political and economic system of the country. It would also intensify discontent in those places where it did exist. In 1923, Roy published another book 'One Year of Non-cooperation' from Ahmedabad to Gaya where he praised the saintly personality of Mahatma Gandhi. He acknowledged the sacrifice and efforts of Gandhi to mobilise common people from 1919 to 1922. At the same time Roy also mentioned a number of shortcomings of Gandhism i.e. lack of economic programme in Gandhism, inclusion of all sections of Indians-exploiters and exploited, vacillation of Gandhism etc.

SAQ

Discuss M. N. Roy's contribution towards the expansion of communism around the world. (80 words)

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Gradually M. N. Roy got dissatisfied with communist organisation and in 1928, he even did not attend the Sixth Congress of the Communist International. In 1930, Roy came back to India and attended the Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress. In July 1931, he was arrested in connection with the Kanpur Conspiracy Case and imprisoned for 6 years. After his release in 1936 he became a member of the Indian National Congress. He wished to form Indian National Congress on revolutionary

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basis. Differences arose between Roy and officially dominant groups of Congress during the period of World War II. Indian National Congress wanted to boycott war efforts by Indians for British government; but Roy was of the view that England was fighting war against Nazism and Fascism and hence every Indian should help British government by contributing money and material to stop the spread of Nazism in the world. He also condemned Gandhism. Roy left Indian National Congress in 1940 and then founded a separate party known as Radical Democratic Party. In 1944, he formed Indian Federation of Labour. In 1948, Roy dissolved his Radical Democratic Party and in its place founded Indian Renaissance Movement. He was elected as the vice president of “International Humanist and Ethical Association” in Amsterdam. Thus, Roy transformed himself from Marxism to Radicalism and from Radicalism to new scientific humanism. Roy’s political journey—from revolutionary to Radical Humanism—allowed him to conceptualise radicalism in different perspectives.

He believed that political independence is not the ultimate solution to solve the problem of poverty and to attain development. Rather he had deep faith on individual’s freedom. He was very critical of all those theories and perspectives which did not take individual as the focal point of analysis. According to him, state and society should come later and individual first in all social, political and economic arrangements. Hence, individual freedom should not in any way be hampered either by religious dogmas or like concepts such as dialectical materialism. M. N. Roy was a great rationalist and judged everything by the yardstick of reason and rationality.

Check your Progress:

1. Fill in the blanks:
 - a) In 1916, Roy changed his name from _____ to Manavendra Nath Roy.
 - b) M. N. Roy founded Radical Democratic Party in _____.
2. In which country Roy founded the first Communist Party outside Russia?
3. Write a short note on Indian Communism.

2.4 M. N. Roy’s Radical Humanism

Although M. N. Roy was under the great influence of Marxism in the first half of his life, but later on he realised that communism provided no solution to individual liberty. His faith on individual freedom started to increase and

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in the last years of his life (1947-1954) Roy developed his own philosophy what he called as 'Radical Humanism' or 'New Humanism'. He claimed that his notion of radical humanism is distinct from the humanist versions of other thinkers. Prior to M. N. Roy, there were also humanist trends in the writings of Protagoras, Erasmus, More, Buchanan and Herder. According to Roy, though the humanists of 19th century emphasised on man and individual liberty, but they could not get away from the erroneous belief of subordinating man to some super-natural forces and super-natural powers. For Roy, the advancement of science is a factor for the liberation of creative energies of individuals, because science has emancipated man from the dominance of superstitions and trans-terrestrial fears. Roy explained 'New Humanism' as a 'philosophy of freedom based on modern scientific knowledge'. Regarding the basic principles of new humanism of M. N. Roy, we can summarise his philosophy like follows:

2.4.1 Ideas about Nature of Man

M. N. Roy believes the notion of evolution of man. Man is the product of physical universe as well as an integral part of it. Because of his emergence from this physical harmonious universe, man is rational by nature. Everything in man that deals with biological evolution is thus distinguishable and noticeable. As soul or atman cannot be noticed and traced, there is no such thing like soul or atman, to radical humanists. In the philosophy of radical humanism, there is no place for supernatural things or factors like soul and God whose existence cannot be scientifically proved. Any person, who thinks that God has created the world and everything is determined by fate or God's will, can never become a radical humanist. The religious ideas, supernatural and superhuman powers are worthless to a radical humanist.

M. N. Roy believed that man is rational by instinct and above all other living beings. Rationalism is the most essential and basic standard of human being. Each individual has the thinking capacity. Roy believed that the advancement of science has enhanced the creative energies of man and liberated him from the dominance of superstitions and trans-terrestrial fears. According to him, humanist ethics is built on the foundations of this natural rationality of man and conscience is the spontaneous effect of rationality. Thus, reason is not an innate metaphysical entity but is an emergent in the process of biological evolution. Man is an ensemble of social relations and hence morality

¹Varma, V. P. Modern Indian Political Thought. P. 498

springs as an answer to man's search for social harmony and beneficent social accommodation. Man is governed by laws inherent in the physical universe. It is the rationality of man which discovers these natural laws by making themselves familiar with the law governed character of this universe.

2.4.2 Views on Individual Freedom

M. N. Roy was a great lover of individual freedom. For him, individual is an end in itself and every other organisation in the society was simply means to an end. He kept individual freedom above everything else. Roy subordinated everything, even religion, morality or other supernatural powers, to individual freedom. Society is the creation of man. Roy argues that human beings derive all their virtues and abilities from their creative achievements in unscrambling the mysteries and partial conquest of nature. If man can move out of the circumference of nature, then how can he be subordinated to something supernatural and man-made creation which itself is very enough to be undone time and again. He believed that individual had always been struggling for protection and preservation of their freedom. He was categorical in propounding that 'Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor class; its concern is man; it conceives freedom as freedom of the individual'. Individual will not attain full freedom unless the society is organised on rational basis. The more rationality ensures greater freedom for individual.

2.4.3 Ideas about Materialism

M. N. Roy essentially believed in the basic doctrine of historical materialism as propounded by Karl Marx but he was differed from Marx in details. Roy considered that Marxian doctrine of materialism was dogmatic and unscientific and neglected the creative role of human subject. He took the idea of scientific method of Marx in his philosophy of radical humanism, but explained it in a different way. 'Matter' was real and independent to him and he revised the whole concept of matter with the latest scientific knowledge. Roy believed that 'matter' is not made up of hard and massy stone like atoms as in traditional 'mechanical materialism'. He said that there was no difference between organic and inorganic matter. All living bodies were created out of certain chemical matters and their combination resulted in the creation of other matters. Mind was the product of matter at high stage of development. Hence, there is a close relationship between mind and matter. Our bodies, our

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sense organs, the brain, the nerve system, the cognitive apparatus; all have grown out of the background of inanimate matter.

2.4.4 Views about History

According to M. N. Roy, human history is nothing else but a record of struggle for freedom. History is the witness that people had always been struggling either for their political, social or economic freedom. Hence they created society to attain freedom as well as state for peace and security. Roy also criticised Karl Marx's notion of history as a dialectical process governed by the economic forces only. Apart from economic there were many more other factors and forces of individual's life which also determined the course of history. Social, political, cultural as well as ideological factors also played important role in the process of history. He believed that history was not only study of an economic aspect of life but something broader and wider.

SAQ

How M. N. Roy's materialist philosophy was different from Karl Marx?
(60 words)

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2.4.5 Views on Democracy

M. N. Roy was not satisfied with the present form of democracy. According to him, the current democracy fails to protect individual freedom and sacrifices individual freedom for the interest of collective freedom. Roy desired that the individual in society should be able to enjoy economic adequacy and security as well as live in social psychological atmosphere that would be free from any kind of cultural regimentation. It will help in the development of individual's rationality and potentialities. Roy pleaded for an organised democracy based on decentralisation. Individual liberty is possible only in a proper democratic set up.

Stop to Consider

M. N. Roy's concept of Organised Democracy

M. N. Roy was opposed to parliamentary democracy based on party system. In this regard, he was very similar to Jaya Prakash Narayan. According to Roy, parliamentary democracy could not ensure individual

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freedom and brought regimentation in political life. In its place, he proposed the concept of organised democracy based on decentralisation and party less system. Ultimate sovereignty was to be vested in the hands of people. The whole structure of the system will be based on local democracies. But for success of organised democracy, Roy felt that certain pre-requisites were essential. He said that first and foremost, the people should be made educated to realise their responsibilities. Also, people should have high moral character and high standard of intelligence. Until and unless people attain high moral and intellectual standards, there should be elective as well as selective democracy in the initial stages. Roy also prepared a draft constitution which was to be a model of his organised democracy.

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2.4.6 Criticism of M. N. Roy's Radical Humanism

A critical evaluation of M.N. Roy's philosophy of Radical Humanism reveals certain drawbacks of his ideas relating to humanism.

Although Roy condemned Marxism on several grounds and identified himself as a radical humanist yet he could not totally get rid of Marxism. He denounced Marx's notion of dialectical materialism without giving any satisfactory alternative to it. Because he failed to give any logical reason as to how the matter was capable of producing living bodies.

It is said that M. N. Roy's philosophy of radical humanism is entirely based on the concept of rationalism. According to him, man is rational by nature and everything should be decided by reason. But unfortunately he has failed to clearly and precisely define the term 'reason'.

Critics claim that M. N. Roy's radical humanism was not something new. Prior to Roy, many political thinkers in both East and West had talked about the cause of individual freedom. Roy only tried to give a new outlook by freeing human beings from all other social compulsions. But in reality, no one can deny the role of marriage and society in individual's life.

Likewise, M. N. Roy also condemned religion as a hindrance towards individual's freedom and development. But critics are of the view that religion is a part of human life and it plays a very crucial role in our cultural and intellectual development.

Roy also failed to narrate precisely how human urge for freedom will not result in clashes. Because while struggling for individual freedom there is bound to have its impact on collective freedom resulting clashes among individuals.

Check your Progress

1. Write 'True' or 'False'.
 - a) A true radical humanist believes that the world is created by God.
 - b) M. N. Roy was in favour of partyless democracy.
 - c) M. N. Roy subordinated individual freedom to society.
2. 'Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor class; its concern is man; it conceives freedom as freedom of the individual' – Discuss.
3. Critically analyse M. N. Roy's notion of Radical Humanism.

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2.5 Critique of Marxism

M. N. Roy was a born revolutionary. When he was in USA he came under the influence of Marxism and became a known person in the Marxist world. Like other revolutionaries, Roy was also highly impressed by the doctrines of Karl Marx. He even began to think that the only solution to existing Indian problems lay in Marxism. Roy was the first Indian who founded communist party outside Russia for the first time. In Mexico, the Mexican Communist Party was founded by M. N. Roy in 1917. First it was named as Socialist Workers' Party and in 1919 the party was renamed as the Mexican Communist Party. It was because of Roy's interest in Marxism, he became very close to Lenin and other eminent communist leaders of the world. But slowly Roy got frustrated with the subtle characteristics of the Marxian philosophy.

2.5.1 Impact of Marxism on Roy's Philosophy

No doubt Roy accepted and applied some principles of Marxism in his new humanism. Like Marx, Roy was also a thorough going materialist. Regarding materialism, Roy stated that "it represents the knowledge of nature as it really exists, knowledge acquired through the contemplation, observation and investigation of the phenomenon of nature itself... It simply maintain that the origin of everything that really exists is matter, that there does not exist anything, but matter, all other appearances being transformations of matter, and these transformations are governed necessarily by laws inherent in nature." According to Roy, matter is real and independent. All living bodies were created out of chemical matters and mind was the product of matter at a high stage of development. He applied scientific method of Marx in his radical humanism. Similarly, M.

N. Roy also believed that all knowledge had its roots in the physical universe. According to him, sensations and perceptions are the sources of knowledge. Like Marx, Roy also criticised the capitalist system of economy and he was of the view that industry should be controlled by people themselves.

Even though Roy was highly impressed by Karl Marx’s ideas, differences arose between Roy and Stalin and Roy lost his faith in Marxism. He realised that communism cannot provide any solution to worldly problems. The genesis of the concept of New Humanism lies in the frustration of Roy with the subtle characteristics of the Marxian philosophy.

SAQ

“Like Marx, M. N. Roy was a staunch materialist” – do you believe it? Give arguments in favour of your answer. (80 words)

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Stop to Consider

M.N. Roy on Marxism :

“Marx’s proposition that consciousness is determined by materialist metaphysics being placed on a sound scientific foundation. His subsequent thought, particularly sociological, however, did not move in the direction indicated by the significant point of departure. Marxism, on the whole, is not true to its philosophical tradition. In sociology, it vulgarizes materialism to the extent of denying that basic moral values transcend space and time. With the impersonal concept of the forces of production, it introduces teleology in history, crassly contradicting its own belief that man is the maker of his destiny. The economic determinism of its historiology blasts the foundation of human freedom, because it precludes the possibility of man ever becoming free as an individual. Yet, contemporary sociological thinking has been considerably influenced by the fallacious and erroneous doctrines of Marxism which do not logically follow from his philosophy.”

----- M. N. Roy (Reason, Romanticism and Revolution Vol. II, pp. 216-217)

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2.5.2 M. N. Roy's Criticism on Marxism

M. N. Roy provided a thorough criticism on Marxism.

First, Roy condemned Marx for his denial of individual liberty. According to him, there was no place for individual liberty in Marxism. Marx did not pay adequate attention to the worth and significance of the empirical individual. As Roy had noticed that there was complete regimentation in communism where party bosses expected the masses to act according to their instructions. Hence, he demanded for revolt against fatalism implicit in the prophetic sociology of Marx. Under the influence of Hegel's theory of moral positivism, Marx had rejected the liberal concept of individualism and marginalised the role of individual as well as the concept of freedom.

Secondly, Roy was of the view that Marxian notion of materialism was dogmatic and unscientific. Roy said that the movement through thesis and antithesis is a characteristic of logical argumentation. But it is not acceptable that matter and forces of production move dialectically. To quote Roy, "The dialectical materialism of Marx, therefore, is materialist only in name; dialectics being its corner-stone, it is essentially an idealistic system. No wonder that it disowned the heritage of the eighteenth century scientific naturalism and fought against the humanist materialism of Feuerbach and his followers."

Thirdly, M. N. Roy criticised Marxism for its overemphasis on the economic interpretation of the history to the substantive. History cannot be interpreted only with reference to materialistic objectivism. Marx had neglected the intelligence of human beings and their cumulative actions while interpreting history. It means that in the Marxist philosophy of history the role of ideas was minimized. Roy stated that in the history of mankind we find that there were several activities apart from economic, wherein people found satisfaction. Roy said, "History does not follow the Marxian pattern of dialectics, but is a movement from homogeneous masses to the evolution of distinct individualistic experimenting in various forms of harmonisation between themselves."

Fourthly, Roy criticised Karl Marx for his prophecy about disappearance of middle class. According to Roy, if we study history we find that the middle classes emerged as a powerful factor that had been influencing in moulding national policies and programmes. Even, the number of middle class increases with the expansion of the economic process.

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Fifthly, M. N. Roy criticised Marxism for its weak ethical foundation because of its dogmatic and relativistic nature. Marx believed that in the process of struggle man changes his own nature. In other words, Marx was of the opinion that there is nothing stable in human nature. But according to Roy, Marx never acknowledged the eighteenth century materialism which opined that human nature is constant. In opposition to Marxism, Roy believed that there is something stable and permanent in human nature which is the basis of duties and rights. Moral consciousness or morality is not the product of economic forces. If a man is subordinated to the overwhelming dominance of the forces of production it will neutralize his autonomy and creativity. Roy emphasised on humanist ethics that gives importance to sovereignty of individual and beliefs in freedom and justice. Thus, Roy believed that there is something stable in ethical values which were neglected by Marxism.

Sixthly, Roy was also critical about the notion of class struggle. Of course, there had been different social classes in history. But along with social struggle and conflict between them, there had certainly been operative a social cohesive bond.

Lastly, Roy believed that there is an element of voluntaristic romanticism in revolutions. As revolutions are collective representations of emotions heightened to a pitch, the idea of revolution exalts human efforts to remake the world. Revolutionary romanticism is contradictory to the concept of dialectical materialism of Marx.

Thus, M. N. Roy criticised several notions of Marxism, though he did not enter into the technicalities of Marxian economics. After he got dissatisfied with Marxism as well as the activities of the leaders of Communist Party, Roy made the final move of propounding a theory rooted in integral scientific humanism which he called as the 'New Humanism' or 'Radical Humanism'.

Check your Progress

1. Write 'True' or 'False'.
 - a) M. N. Roy developed his idea of Radical Humanism because of his frustration with Marxism.
 - b) M. N. Roy was in favour of capitalist system of economy.
 - c) M. N. Roy supported Karl Marx's theory of class struggle.
2. Write two similarities between Marxism and M. N. Roy's Radical Humanism.
3. How did Roy attack Marxism? And why? Discuss in details.

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2.6 Summing Up

After going through this unit, now you have come to know that there are two distinctive phases of M. N. Roy's life and his philosophy. First was the revolutionary period and the second one was the period of radical humanism. As a militant activist from his school days Roy played a very active role in the freedom struggle of India. His love for Marxism was so deep rooted that he was the first Indian who founded communist party outside Russia. He was the torch bearer of Indian communism and was a renowned personality in the Marxist world. If he wished he could have take the chance to secure a high position in the Marxist world. You are now in a position to analyse why Roy changed his ideology in the later period of his life and became a pronounced critic of Marxism as well as communist theory and practice.

This unit is also helpful for you to know about the most important contribution of Roy i.e. Radical Humanism. His political views are founded on reason and morality, not on any dogmas. He emphasised on the primacy of freedom, knowledge and truth. So he wanted the state to be free from religion and other supernatural ideas. Roy believed that matter was real and independent he reanalysed the whole concept of matter with the latest scientific knowledge. After reading this unit, you can now have an idea about Roy's idea of organised democracy. He believed in partyless system and made a draft constitution as a model of his organised democracy.

2.7 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit 3

Ram Manohar Lohia: Caste, Class Democracy

Unit Structure :

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Political Journey of Ram Manohar Lohia
- 3.4 Ram Manohar Lohia's Views on Caste and Class
 - 3.4.1 Lohia's Cyclical Theory of History
 - 3.4.2 Oscillation between class and caste
 - 3.4.3 Criticism
- 3.5 Ram Manohar Lohia's views on Democracy
 - 3.5.1 Four Pillar State
- 3.6 Summing up
- 3.7 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-1967) was a well known political thinker of Modern India and the founder of the Socialist Party of India. He played an important role in the independence movement of India and had to go to jail several times. He was a prominent leader and is regarded as the most original thinker of the socialist movement in India. Ram Manohar Lohia fought against inequalities and injustices throughout his life. He raised his voice for common people and strived for liberation from oppression and exploitation. He was an advocate of internationalism and pleaded for true international unity. In this unit, we will discuss about Ram Manohar Lohia's political journey as a socialist leader, the cyclical theory of history as well as Lohia's ideas on caste and class, Lohia's views on democracy and economic decentralisation etc.

3.2 Objectives

This unit is an attempt to make you familiarise with political, social and economic thought of Ram Manohar Lohia. After going through this unit you will be able to

- Define Lohia's contribution to the socialist movement in India
- Examine the cyclical theory of history put forwarded by Lohia

- Discuss his ideas on caste and class
- Examine Lohia's views on democracy
- Describe how Lohia fought to bring about political and social change in India.

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3.3 Political Journey of Ram Manohar Lohia

Lohia was one of the founders of Congress Socialist Party. In 1936, he was given the responsibility as the secretary of the foreign department of the Congress on the recommendation of Jawaharlal Nehru. He was also the editor of the periodical 'Congress Socialist'. In 1938, he was included in the executive committee of the Congress Socialist Party and he began to develop his own political ideas. He criticised the Gandhian leadership of the Congress as well as the communists who were in CSP. During the period from 1938 to 1946, Lohia was actively involved in the freedom struggle of India and he was imprisoned several times. Lohia, along with other leaders of Congress Socialist Party was not happy with the way in which the Congress leaders dealt with communal situation in India after independence. The Congress Socialist Party removed the prefix 'Congress' from its name and became independent Socialist Party. In 1952, when Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party merged with Socialist Party, the party emerged as Praja Socialist Party. Unhappy with the new party Ram Manohar Lohia led a split from it and formed Socialist Party in 1955. He was elected to Lok Sabha in the by election in 1963. He reported to parliament about the widespread problem of starvation among agricultural labourers and raised his voice for the improvement of the condition of poor people of India.

Stop to Consider

Life Sketch of Ram Manohar Lohia

Ram Manohar Lohia was born on March 23, 1910 in a middle class Marwari family at Akbarpur in Uttar Pradesh. Lohia's father, Heera Lal, was a teacher as well as businessman by profession and was a nationalist by spirit. Lohia came into contact with the freedom struggle of India early in his life through the influence of his father. As his father was very much impressed by Mahatma Gandhi's thought, Lohia also got attracted to Gandhi's ideas from his early age. Though he did not accept blindly every notion of Gandhi, but Gandhian thought had a great impact on his social, economic and political ideas. Ram Manohar Lohia even left the school to join non-cooperation

movement of Gandhi. Lohia got his education in Bombay and Calcutta. He went to Germany after his graduation and attended Frederick William University (today's Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany) and got his Ph.D. When he was in Germany, he witnessed the rise of Hitler and Nazi chauvinistic racism. The climate of Germany on the one hand and political ideas of social democracy on the other shaped him as a thorough democrat and a believer of civil liberties. After coming back from Germany, Lohia associated himself with the nationalist politics of India and basically with the activities of the newly formed Congress Socialist Party.

Lohia believed that neither communism nor European tradition of socialism is relevant in the existing socio-economic realities in the third world countries. Because Marx did not sufficiently take into account the peculiar and specific conditions of the third world. Lohia was of the view that in order to succeed Indian socialism must develop on its own lines. He was a great advocate of freedom and individual liberty. Lohia was deeply influenced by different ideas of Karl Marx though he was not a blind follower of Marx. Lohia's ideas and thinking on socialist thought and movement came to be influenced by Gandhian teachings and techniques. Gandhi's concept of 'Satyagraha' had a strong impact on Lohia's thought. He advocated for the attainment of socialist ideals through Satyagraha. Lohia was very inspired by Gandhi's ideas of small machine technology as well as decentralisation of power.

Lohia was known as the champion of social justice. He vigorously worked for the emancipation of the suppressed sections of Indian society. He was also a great internationalist. He criticised Nehru's Non-alignment policy. Ram Manohar Lohia believed that India should have solid friends abroad. He also emphasised on formation of world parliament.

Some of the significant works of Ram Manohar Lohia are "Aspects of Socialist Party" (1952), "Fragments of a World Mind" (1953), "Wheel of History" (1955), "Will to Power" (1956), "Towards the Destruction of Castes and Classes" (1958), "Guilty Men of India's Partition" (1960), "Marx, Gandhi and Socialism" (1963), "India, China and Northern Frontiers" (1963), "The Caste System" (1964) etc.

SAQ:

Why did Ram Manohar Lohia oppose to communism and European

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tradition of socialism? Give two arguments. (60 words)

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3.4 Ram Manohar Lohia’s Views on Caste and Class

Ram Manohar Lohia wanted to free individual from all kinds of ignorance, backwardness, superstitions and unfairness. He constantly opposed to any kind of despotism and coercion in society. Lohia rejected Marx’s theory of class struggle, because it projects European history as the history of mankind. He stated that Indian Marxists were always inclined to view Indian society in terms of class structure. But the true fact was that Indian society is basically a caste-ridden society. Here, the Marxian notion of class structure cannot be established, as said by Lohia.

According to Lohia, the problems of Asian nations must be analysed from different perspective. In this region, civilisation had emerged after centuries of old despotism and feudalism. He said that the combination of rigid dogmas and political conventions results in narrow-mindedness as well as communalism. Very often terror becomes the part of politics in this region because of absence of any stable democratic system. In such a situation, the development of bureaucracy and technocracy gives rise to a new class of leadership which start to play with the sentiments of common people. So, Lohia suggested that socialists in Asia need to develop an original social philosophy that could deal with all these distinctive problems of Asian nations. He opined that caste structure in Indian society was a legacy of feudalism; so, in order to pave the way for the emergence of class structure it is necessary to smash caste structure at first.

3.4.1 Lohia’s Cyclical Theory of History

Ram Manohar Lohia made a distinction between class and caste in his famous book “Wheel of History”. According to Lohia, history moves like a cycle. The entire human history is nothing but an internal oscillation between class and caste and an external shift of power and prosperity from one region to another. This internal oscillation and external shift are inter-related to each other. Lohia stated that the ingredients of a total historical situation at any time were class and caste on the inside

and a rise or decline in power on outside. A society went up to power and prosperity only as long as it kept improving its technical and organisational ability in one critical dimension. After a point, the society hit the limits of one dimensional growth, became stagnant and fell into the trap of rigidity of caste system. Then the global centre of power and prosperity shifted to another society. In this context, Lohia mentioned about a third aspect of life i.e. physical and cultural approximation, in order to put an end to the external struggle among nations and the internal struggle among classes. He was of the view that higher physical and cultural intermingling of races, civilization and societies as well as reduction of social inequality could lead us towards unity of mankind through conscious and intelligent designing. The new civilization would attempt to overcome class, caste and regional shift.

3.4.2 Oscillation between Class and Caste

According to Ram Manohar Lohia, class is mobile caste and caste is immobile class. While the idea of caste represents the evil forces of conservatism, ancient affinities; the idea of class is the beholder of the virtues of dynamism and social mobilisation in society. However, the true fact is that these two forces keep on changing sides resulting in caste fragmenting into classes and classes occasionally metamorphosing into castes. Caste is a rigid system. He argued that caste restricts opportunity and restricted opportunity constricts ability. This constricted ability again restricts opportunity. Thus, there is slow swing between caste and class. Lohia said that there had always been a tussle between caste and class. Lohia observed that since class is a dynamic force, a society which is at the centre of the world is characterised by class division. On the other hand, a society which has lagged behind in its struggle for supremacy in the external world develops caste system.

Lohia considered the rise of Buddhism as a movement opposed to the caste system and a shift from caste to class. Under the impact of it, there was some loosening in castes which was accompanied by political strength, economic prosperity, improvement in agriculture, upward mobility in the case of artisans and traders and growth in national income. Lohia pleaded for internal approximation between different groups, classes and castes in society.

Ram Manohar Lohia was against caste hierarchy. He believed that the empowerment of all deprived and underprivileged sections of the society

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including Shudras as well as Dalits is necessary in order to attain progress. Lohia observed that caste system has stratified Indian society. In order to remove it, the backward castes and groups should be given preferential opportunities for two or three or four decades, if necessary. He also pleaded that preference should be given to backward castes and classes in matters of land distribution, employment and educational sector. Lohia believed in social revolution for uplifting the conditions of the backward castes and classes and thus to abolish it. He argued that without destroying the caste system, Indian society cannot be reconstructed. For abolishing caste system on both social and political aspect, he emphasised on to create awareness and to change the mental attitude of the people. So, he pleaded for free and compulsory education specially for scheduled castes, tribes and other poorer sections of the society. Lohia put forwarded the idea of “roti and beti” which means that people would have to eat together and allow marriage of their daughters with other castes in order to break the caste barriers.

Stop to Consider

Sapta Kranti or Seven Revolutions

Ram Manohar Lohia came with the idea of Sapta Kranti or Seven Revolutions to introduce a new sense of dynamism in Indian social system. According to him, these seven revolutions require independent revolution. The attainment of one does not necessarily lead to the attainment of others. These seven revolutions are for:

- Equality between man and woman
- Abolition of inequalities based on skin/colour
- Abolition of inequality based on caste system
- National freedom or against foreign enslavement
- Economic equality and planned production
- Protecting the privacy of individual life from all unjust encroachments
- Satyagraha and against weapons

Lohia was an advocate of equality, social justice and individual freedom. He wanted to have an egalitarian society where all individuals would get equal opportunities to develop their capabilities and potentialities. Individual liberty could not be achieved in the absence of equality. By equality, he not only meant economic equality but also spiritual equality coming from innate feeling of the individuals that they all are equal in the society. Lohia also demanded for immediate replacement of English language by Hindi and other regional languages in public institutions. He

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felt that in the garb of English language a tiny minority section of the society had been imposing their domination over more than 95 percent population of India.

3.4.3 Criticism

Lohia was against the caste system and he advocated for empowerment of lower caste in the national mainstream and emphasised on reservation for lower castes in various sector in order to bring them up. Critics point out that his style of working led to the strengthening of caste structure itself. Lohia's notion about caste is also criticised on the ground that it promoted an attitude of caste-based pride, contrary to its original goal. Again, Lohia's efforts to mobilize backward castes and classes to uproot the Congress rule, led to the coalition between socialists of various shades with certain communal elements which caused communal tension in India.

Check Your Progress

1. Write a short note on the role of Ram Manohar Lohia on the formation of Socialist Party.
2. How did Ram Manohar Lohia differentiate between caste and class?
3. Do you think that the socialist ideas of Ram Manohar Lohia would be able to establish social equity in Indian society? Give arguments in favour of your answer?
4. Write 'True' or 'False'.
 - a) Ram Manohar Lohia was not satisfied with the formation of Praja Socialist Party in 1952.
 - b) According to Ram Manohar Lohia, caste is a dynamic force.

3.5 Ram Manohar Lohia's views on Democracy

Ram Manohar Lohia was opposed to both capitalism and communism. According to him, none of these were suitable for India. Since capitalism is based on the idea of profit, it leads unemployment, selfishness and war which are opposed to social equity and prosperity. Likewise, communism depends upon social ownership of the means of production and alerts only the capitalist relations of production. Lohia stated that "Capitalism cannot even fulfil its primary function of providing capital to mankind... Communism inherits from capitalism its technique of

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production; it only seeks to smash the capitalist relations of production. Communism claims to be the continuator and developer of capitalist technology, when capitalism is no longer able to do so.” He said that the contemporary world was in the grip of capitalism as well as communism that resulted in poverty, war and fear. He also said that the European socialism were irrelevant in the existing socio-economic realities of India. During that period, he observed that, European socialism was mainly bound by ethnocentric considerations that took into account the interest of the European countries only. Hence, he put forward his idea of new socialism. He sought to establish a socialist society in India after independence. Lohia said that the pace of socialism will have to be changed according to changing circumstances. Regarding socialism, Lohia said that it was the best way to achieve equality and prosperity. In this regard he praised Gandhiji’s some ideas and actions that may act as a filter through which socialist ideas would flow. He emphasised on greater incorporation of Gandhian ideology to socialist thought though he was not a blind follower of Gandhi. Lohia wanted to combine socialist principles with Gandhian ideas like satyagraha, end and means principle, small machine technology and political decentralisation. The core of socialism envisioned by Lohia drew its spirit and substance from the Gandhian principles of socioeconomic and political reconstruction of the Indian society.

Stop to Consider

Lohia’s New Socialism

Ram Manohar Lohia pleaded for a just social order based on equality, decentralisation and individual dignity where individual will be free from ignorance, injustice, backwardness as well as all kinds of prejudices. In respect of the creation of a new human civilization, he rejected both capitalism and communism. Lohia also criticised European socialism for its dogmatic and doctrinaire nature. He firmly believed that if socialism were to lead Indian people to development and prosperity, it must be framed in Indian context. He imagined socialism as ‘New Civilisation’ that we can also term as new socialism. Lohia emphasised on to give socialism a global outlook. In association with Acharya Narendra Dev, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Ashok Mehta and other contemporary socialist leaders, Lohia developed his own socialistic ideology. His idea of socialism mainly aimed at establishing a free and decentralized society by eliminating centralised power. Lohia cited his original thesis of socialism in the

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Pachmarhi Conference of socialists in May, 1952. He put forward a six point plan for his New Socialism. These are:

- Maximum attainable equality, towards which nationalization of economy may be one essential step;
- A decent standard of living throughout the world, and not increasing standard of living within national frontiers;
- A world parliament and government elected on adult franchise with beginning, towards a world government and world army;
- Collective and individual practice of civil disobedience so that the unarmed and helpless little man may acquire the habit to resist tyranny and exploitation civilly;
- Four-pillar state – the village, the district, the province and the centre;
- Evolution of technology, which would be consistent with these aims and processes.

Lohia had faith in democracy as government of people, but he opposed the tendency of democracy to lead on elitism. In India, there is so much of poverty and caste distinction. Therefore, Lohia stated that, if such type of democracy based on elitism prevails in India, it would increase the power of the upper class and it would have no meaning for common people. He was in favour of guaranteeing basic fundamental freedoms of the people so that the basic needs of each and every citizen would be fulfilled. Democracy must be constructed in such a way that nobody remains without securing the basic minimum needs of life. Like Laski, Lohia also believed that political democracy has no meaning without economic democracy. Increased production and effective distribution are very important for the success of democracy. According to Lohia, within the framework of social democracy, it is possible to achieve both India's freedom as well as the need to provide bread for all.

Ram Manohar Lohia said that the form of democracy prevailing in west was not suitable for solving problems in India. People's participation in the political process and widespread decentralisation are important requisites in a true democratic system. Only creation of a parliament in a country does not mean that it is a democratic country. Democratic values must be adopted as a way of life. So, Lohia stated that every Indian citizen must play active role in public life so that they can raise their voice against any kind of injustice that they face. He realised that we must ensure maximum participation of citizens in governance through the mechanism of decentralisation. It thus stakes democracy from the

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elite to the masses.

According to Lohia, as far as possible, the total affairs of a country have to be cut up in small and yet smaller quantities in order to ensure common people’s participation in the economic, political and administrative process of a country. Sovereign power must not reside alone in centre and federating units. His notion of decentralised socialism emphasised on things like small machine, cooperative labour, village government and decentralised planning.

SAQ:

How was the idea of New Socialism of Ram Manohar Lohia different from European Socialism?

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3.5.1 Four Pillar State

Ram Manohar Lohia proposed to replace parliamentary democracy by a decentralised democratic system. He named his proposed state as “Four Pillar State” also called the “Chaukhamba Model” where he made an attempt to synthesize two opposite concepts i.e. centralisation and decentralisation. In his four pillar state, functional federalism will be at four levels, namely - the village, the mandal (the district), the province and the central government. According to Lohia, district magistracy will be abolished in this system, because it represents centralisation of power. All these four autonomous organs will be equipped with equal authority in the process of legislation and execution of policies and will be linked to each other. Lohia’s four pillar state is the manifestation of decentralisation of political and administrative power and based on immediacy in democracy. It is only through decentralization, a truly non-violent society can be achieved. Lohia said that socialism in Asia must increasingly become the doctrine of maximum attainable equality through redivision of land and social ownership over industry. Its political structure must arise out of the decentralised state and it must seek its technological framework in the small machine. Lohia also emphasised on operationalisation of the concept of “permanent civil disobedience” in his model state which would act as a perpetual remedy against any kind of unfairness. The core of his Chaukhamba model was his views on

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socialism and emphasis on economic, political and legislative decentralisation. As a true internationalist, he modified his idea of four pillar state to include world government in it as fifth pillar. He even established World Development Council and made an effort to create world government to maintain peace throughout the world.

Stop to Consider

“Democracy can bring warmth to the blood of the common man only when constitutional theory starts practising the state of four limbs, the village, the district, the province and the centre. Organically covered by the flesh and blood of equalities; this constitutional selection of the four-pillar state can infuse democracy with joy..... The central limb of the state must have power enough to maintain the integrity and unity of the state and the rest of it must be fragmented.”

– Ram ManoharLohia, (“Fragments of a World Mind” 1953)

In his four pillar democratic system, Lohia provided a structure and a way in which sovereign power is to be diffused and each little community is to be so organised that they could live the way of life that they choose. Lohia was of the view that economic planning must be done at the grass roots upwards. Collective control over the means of production is necessary. Because while there will be check on increase in private property, the collective property on the whole will also increased. Therefore, according to Lohia, a decentralised economy would be more efficient as it would be based on willing participation of the workers. In the words of K. G. Pillai, “Lohia hoped that only through such a decentralisation in planning, decision-making, giving freedom to small communities the country can rise above the issues of regionalism and fractionalism.”

Lohia said that no precise list of federal or state or district or village or concurrent subjects could be drawn up. He argued that experience and time and perhaps the next Constituent Assembly of India could make precise allocations. But he was of the view that one fourth of all governmental and plan expenditure should be through village, district and city panchayats. In his four pillar state the armed forces might be under the control of centre, the armed police under province, but all other police might be controlled by district and village. Industries like

M. Arumngam: Socialist Thought in India – The contribution of RammanoharLohia. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1978, p-113

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railway or iron and steel might be controlled by the centre, but the small and cottage industry of the future might be under district and village. As far as possible, the nationalised sector like agriculture, industry and other property will be possessed and administered by village, district and city panchayats. The post of collector must be abolished and in its place various bodies in district will work on matters like revenue. Lohia was very sympathetic towards the poor Indian farmers. He felt that the conditions of poor farmers can be uplifted only with the abolition of land revenue on unprofitable holdings. Price fixing might be a central subject, but the structure of agriculture and the ratio of capital and labour in it might be left to the choice of the district and the village. The district, village and city panchayats will work on policies and welfare functions.

Ram Manohar Lohia believed that his four pillar state would meet the requirements of socialism as well as of democracy. He was in favour of cottage industries and was against European model of development based on large scale industries. He wanted to develop technology which would be amiable and beneficial to Indian economy and environment. That is why he emphasised on to develop small unit machine that would suite Indian needs and environment. In this regard, Lohia was very much inspired by Gandhi's condemnation against heavy industrialisation. From Asian perspective, Lohia put forwarded the concept of 'small unit machine' as an alternative to capitalist and communist mode of rationalisation. According to him, requirement of less capital and maximum utilisation of labour power is possible through incorporation of small machines. Moreover, when small machinery will be available, people at grassroots level will have the opportunity to involve themselves with the processing and manufacture of raw materials available in their locality. According to him, the principle of small unit machine will lead India towards economic development as well as modernisation and prosperity. He was of the view that economic decentralization along with political and administrative decentralisation, may be brought about through maximum utilization of small machines. Lohia did not refuse the importance of heavy industry. He said, "This is not to deny altogether the heavier machine in steel works or in river-training projects, but emphasis must heavily rest on the small unit machine."

Stop to Consider

Thirteen Point Plan

In a paper entitled The 'Farmer in India', Ram Manohar Lohia formulated a Thirteen Point Plan to end the rampant poverty in

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India. These are:

1. Lowering of prices on the basis of parity between agricultural and industrial prices.
2. Austerity and sacrifice to be shared by all so that no income or salary exceeds Rs. 1000 a month.
3. Industrialisation with the help of small-unit machines, the invention and manufacture of which to be promoted by the state.
4. Any factory running below capacity to be taken over by the state, and immediate nationalisation of basic industries.
5. Anti-corruption commissioners in every state and at the centre with departments independent of the government.
6. Land to the tiller and redivision of lands – 121/2 acres minimum and 30 acres maximum. Correction of wrong entries in Patwaris' registers.
7. Cultivation of 1 crore acres of new land by a state-recruited food army.
8. Decentralisation of administration and of economy so as to achieve the four-pillar state. Repeal of discriminatory laws including the criminal tribes Act.
9. Housing programmes and other economic activity to provide full employment.
10. Establishment of polytechnic schools and people's high schools and centres for youth and women for cultural activities.
11. Immediate adult franchise elections in unrepresented areas, that is, merged states and unions.
12. Pursuit of a positive policy of world peace through promoting full freedom and right for all nations; social and economic equality among people and between nations, and a peace bloc which can dictate truce to warring power blocs.
13. Volunteer bands for agriculture, irrigation, road making and the like.

(Fragments of a World Mind, pp. 79-80).

Source: Varma. V. P. Modern Indian Political Thought. Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra, 1961, pp. 539-540

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Lohia wanted reformation in the judicial system so that common man

can have justice at minimum cost. He also suggested constituting a committee to reconsider the existing laws and to provide remedial measures to remove the undemocratic elements from those laws. He wanted single High Court and single Public Service Commission for two or three states so that the number of courts and public service commissions could be reduced and their jurisdiction could be expanded for more efficiency.

Check Your Progress

1. How did Ram Manohar Lohia apply the concept of decentralisation in his Four Pillar State? Discuss.
2. Do you think that Gandhi's ideas had a great reflection on Ram Manohar Lohia's notion of democracy? Give arguments in favour of your answer.
3. Ram Manohar Lohia's concept of democracy has still its relevance in contemporary India. Justify it.
4. Write 'True' or 'False'.
 - a) Ram Manoha Lohia was a supporter of western democracy.
 - b) Lohia's Four Pillar State was an attempt to synthesize the opposed concepts of centralisation and decentralisation.

3.6 Summing Up

After going through this unit, now you have come to know that Ram Manohar Lohia was more original in his ideas as compared to other socialist thinkers of his time. You can realise how Lohia had challenged capitalism as well as Eurocentric socialist assumptions and tried to find out an alternative to solve socio-economic problems of south Asian nations. While dealing with any problems, he emphasised on the need of original thinking and initiative on the part of Asian socialists. You have also learnt from this unit that Lohia was a true Marxist as well as a great socialist. Gandhian thought had a great impact on him from early age and on his ideas. So he always gave emphasis to Gandhi's ideas and advocated that Gandhism alone could provide the suitable base for socialism in India.

After reading this unit, you have also come to know how Lohia had made distinction between caste and class and analysed history through his cyclical theory. Lohia opposed the caste system and was in favour of giving preferential treatment to the people belonging to lower or

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scheduled caste. He was against all kinds of inequality and discrimination based on gender, colour, birth etc. So, he put forward the idea of Sapta Kranti to fight against inequality and injustice. Now, you are familiar with all these ideas.

This unit is helpful for you to understand that Lohia was essentially a man of action and of vision. He always kept himself aware about the latest developments in the world of ideas and thoughts. Lohia championed the idea of “Democratic Socialism” and was a social democrat in true sense. In order to achieve true socialism, he put forward his concept of Four Pillar State. You have also come to know how Lohia made his four pillar state a structure as well as a way so that each little community living in it can choose the life that they want. Lohia also emphasised on to reform Indian economy in order to remove poverty and to uplift the socio-economic conditions of poorer and farmers of India.

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Unit 4

Jaya Prakash Narayan : Critique of Parliamentary Democracy

Unit Structure :

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Objectives

4.3 Political Journey of Jaya Prakash Narayan

4.4 Jaya Prakash Narayan as a True Democrat

4.5 Critique of Parliamentary Democracy

4.5.1 Jaya Prakash Narayan's Concept of Participating Democracy

4.5.2 Critical Analysis

4.6 Summing Up

4.7 References and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

Jaya Prakash Narayan (1902-1979) was a leading socialist of modern India. He played an important role in the formation of Congress Socialist Party, a left wing group within the Congress party, in 1934. Before that, he founded Bihar Congress Socialist Party. Though J. P. Narayan began his political life as a Gandhian disciple, but later he came in contact with left wing intellectuals in U.S.A. and went under the influence of Marxism. He played an active role in the Quit India Movement in 1942 and was imprisoned several times for his involvement in India's struggle for independence. J. P. Narayan started to lose his faith in Marxism because of its denial of individual liberty. He also became a great critic of communism. He tried to bring reform in Indian society through non-violent and peaceful methods. He realised that unless socialism was transferred into Sarvodaya, people could not enjoy freedom, equality and brotherhood. He also wanted to have more co-operations between the congress and the socialists. After his failure to bring reform in Socialist party, he completely broke away from communism. J. P. Narayan became a follower of Gandhism and worked in close association with Vinoba Bhave. As a passionate lover of individual freedom throughout his life, he wanted to build India on the basis of Sarvodaya thoughts. He was a great critic of the parliamentary democratic set up. Instead of it, he wanted to have a partyless democracy in India. In this unit, you will come to know about J. P. Narayan's political journey as well as his critique of parliamentary democracy.

4.2 Objectives

J. P. Narayan is mostly known for his immense effort to bring reform in Indian political system. After going through this unit, you will be able to

- Know J. P. Narayan's role in Indian freedom struggle
- Examine his contribution towards the growth of socialist movement in India
- Analyse J. P. Narayan's political journey from Marxism to a true follower of Gandhism
- Evaluate J. P. Narayan's criticism against parliamentary democracy
- Explore his suggestions to bring reform in the present day democratic set up.

4.3 Political Journey of Jaya Prakash Narayan

Jaya Prakash Narayan was a great socialist as well as a true nationalist. He started his political journey as a Gandhian Non-cooperator and a disciple of Bhagavad Gita. When he went to the U.S.A. in 1922, he came under the influence of Marxism and some socialist intellectuals of East Europe. He was also impressed by the writings of M. N. Roy basically his book India in Transition. After he came back from the U. S. A., Jaya Prakash Narayan discovered that truth is a relative concept and no single theory could hold true to all times and circumstances. He started to re-examine his faith in Marxism in the context of then India. He began to lose his faith in Marxism because of its denial of individual freedom and party regimentation. J. P. Narayan founded Congress Socialist Party in 1934 and involved the communists too. When he found that the communists were not very sincere to the socialist dogmas, he turned them out. In 1940, at Ramgarh, J. P. Narayan openly denounced the Popular Front of Communists and became a great critic of the authoritarian regimentation of Russian Communism.

He was actively involved in Quit India Movement and imprisoned for 4 years. Jaya Prakash managed to escape from Hazari Bagh Central Jail and organised underground struggle against British rule, but he got arrested again. He was opposed to Cabinet Mission Plan. After released from jail, Jaya Prakash along with other socialist leaders planned for mass revolt. He also tried to convince the national leaders that the social base of the independence movement needed to be broadened so that more workers and peasants could actively participate in it. He dreamt of a Socialist India where political and economic democracy would be established in true sense of the term; where people would be free to express their opinion; where all sections of

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the society would get opportunities to develop themselves to their full moral stature. In 1946, he formulated Thirteen Point Scheme of constructive work for Gramraj where Jaya Prakash emphasised on making each and every village of India self governing and self sufficient unit.

Stop to Consider

Life Sketch of J. P. Narayan

J. P. Narayan was born on October 11, 1902 in a progressive middle class family in Sitabdiara village in Bihar. After attending primary school in his village, he went to Patna for further education. During that period, political questions concerning India's struggle for independence stuck his mind and became a spirited nationalist. His growing interest in Bhagavad Gita as well as the influence of Mahatma Gandhi had made him a swadeshi in his thought and action. He was highly impressed by Gandhian non-violent weapons like Satyagraha. He even left his studies at Patna College just before examination being influenced by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's speech to give up English education. Then he joined the Bihar Vidyapeeth, a college run by the Congress. In 1922, J. P. went to the U.S.A. for higher education. There he did different kind of work like mechanic at garage and at slaughterhouse, washed dishes, worked at factory to his education fee. He got Master Degree in Sociology. In the U.S.A., J. P. came in contact with many socialists and was influenced by Marxist philosophy. But later he lost his faith in Marxian ideology. He played a very important role in the growth of socialist movement in India. He was an active leader in Quit India Movement. There has been major transition in the political and philosophical notion of J.P. in different stages of his life. His life and philosophy can be analysed from different perspective i.e. as a great nationalist, democratic socialist, lover of individual freedom, phase of Sarvodaya and reconstruction of Indian polity, phase of total revolution etc.

Some of the major works of J. P. Narayan are 'Why Socialism' (1936), 'Towards Struggle' (1946), 'In the Lahore Fort' (1970), 'A Plea for the Reconstruction of Indian Polity' (1959), 'From Socialism to Sarvodaya' (1959), and 'Swaraj for the People' (1961).

Jaya Prakash was popularly referred to as "Lok Nayak" that means the people's leader.

In 1953, Jaya Prakash proposed to Jawaharlal Nehru for more co-operations between Congress and the socialists, though he failed. He, along with some socialists, prepared Fourteen Point Scheme suggesting reform in Indian

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administration, reform in Indian economic system as well as constitutional amendment. Jaya Prakash Narayan tried to build the socialist ideology to highlight constantly on national struggle for independence against imperialism and on social revolution. He pleaded for reconstruction of Indian polity based on inner swaraj and realised that unless socialism was transformed into Sarvodaya, people could not be ensured freedom, equality and brotherhood. Mahatma Gandhi considered him as the greatest Indian authority on Socialism. Jaya Prakash resigned from Socialist Party (during that period, it was known as Praja Socialist Party) in 1954 and devoted himself to the Sarvodaya Movement of Vinoba Bhave.

Gandhi's death had a profound impact on the transformation of Jaya Prakash Narayan's political and social thought and turned him from socialist to sarvodaya. He wanted to build up Indian democratic set up according to Sarvodaya thought. He urged for decentralisation of power. Jaya Prakash appreciated the techniques of Bhoodan Movement regarding it as fair and effective alternative to Communist revolution. He joined Bhoodan Movement and worked closely with Vinobaji. Jaya Prakash criticised the parliamentary democracy of India and wanted to reform it. During this phase, he basically tried to remove the defects of modern democracies. He believed in people's self rule to do away with the defects and failures of western democracy.

Stop to Consider

Sarvodaya Movement

The term "Sarvodaya" is basically a compound of two Sanskrit words "Sarva" that means all and "Udaya" that means uplift. So, Sarvodaya means uplift of all. The term "Sarvodaya" was first used by Mahatma Gandhi as the title of his Gujarati translated book of John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. Gandhi used the term as the ideal of his own political philosophy. Gandhi was of the view that the good of the individual is contained in the good of all and a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's. The Sarvodaya Movement had the target to transform each and every village of India into a self supporting and self dependent unit and thus to establish a network of such village communities. It believed in decentralisation of power and replacement of Rajniti by Lokniti.

After Gandhi's death, his disciples continued working to promote Sarvodaya Society that Gandhi dreamt. A Sarvodaya Samaj was established after Gandhi's assassination under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave with an aim to establish a classless society. It would be based on truth and non-violence. The society of such imagination found its expression in Bhoodan Movement

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led by Acharya Vinoba Bhave. This movement was against the improper distribution of land and was an appeal to the landlords to donate some land to the landless cultivators. Other Sarvodaya workers were Jaya Prakash Narayan, Dada Dharmadhikari, Ravishankar Maharaj, Dhirendra Mazumdar, Shankarrao Deo who were closely associated with Vinobaji and aimed at establishing a coercive free society.

Jaya Prakash Narayan is popularly known for his concept of Total Revolution too, which he conferred in the last phase of his life. It was towards the end of 1973, he realised that it was the youth of the country who could take initiative to reconstruct the socio-economic structure of Indian society. He formulated a scheme of seven fold revolutions -social, economic, political, cultural, ideological, educational and spiritual. Jaya Prakash wanted the revolutionaries to proceed with courage and discipline without resorting to violence at any stage. He even had to go to jail during the emergency period in 1975.

SAQ

Do you think that Jaya Prakash Narayan was the pioneer in the growth of Socialist thought in India? Discuss. (60 words)

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4.4 Jaya Prakash Narayan as a True Democrat

Jaya Prakash Narayan was a passionate lover of individual freedom. His love for freedom makes him a true democrat. His democratic judgments were based on Sarvodaya philosophy. Jaya Prakash always believed in inner swaraj. All the time when he became leader of the Congress Socialist Party, the Praja Socialist Party and the Sarvodaya movement, his main concern was how to make India independent and help to establish a social, economic and political democracy. He was against the policy of centralisation in political and economic system. So, he was not satisfied with the present democratic set up of India and wanted to reform it throughout his whole life. Jaya Prakash placed moral and spiritual values above everything else. According to him, “Unless the moral and spiritual qualities of the people are appropriate the best constitutions and political systems would not make democracy work.”

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By democracy, he talked about self government of the people.

Jaya Prakash suggested some qualities so that accuracy of democracy can be ensured. These are:

- concern for truth,
- hatred for violence,
- love of liberty and courage to resist oppression,
- the spirit of co-operation,
- toleration for opinions of others,
- the sense of responsibility,
- belief in human quality and
- ability to lead a simple life.

Jaya Prakash believed that a democracy must have spiritual basis. When people practising democracy would believe in truth and non-violence, then only the spirituality could be achieved. People must be ready to face all oppressions with courage and confidence. He said that in an adequate form of democracy, the people who are conscious and aware of their own responsibilities should be satisfied.

Jaya Prakash wanted to establish both political and economic democracy. These two could not be separated from each other, he believed. So he said, “In this democracy, man will neither be a slave to capitalism nor to a party or the state. Man will be free.” Jaya Prakash pleaded for participatory democracy through decentralisation of authority. In his book ‘Swaraj for the People’, he wrote, “What I have in mind is what Gandhiji often used to emphasize namely, that as you proceed from the bottom level of government to the top, each higher level should have less and less functions and powers.” Panchayati Raj System was the foundation of Jaya Prakash’s views on democracy. He believed that this system would make the government available at the door step of the people and every individual would be able to participate in it. He said that power should be vested in the hands of people and only that much power need to be transferred to the higher levels of authority which would have been unavoidably required.

He always wanted that the representatives should always give importance to people’s interest rather than on their own interest. In March 1977, Jayaprakash Narayan led all Janata Party M.Ps to the Samadhi of Gandhiji and asked them to follow the Gandhian path of serving the nation and its people without any selfish motive. This effort showed his deep concern for democracy and service.

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Check Your Progress

1. Write two main principles envisioned for the Sarvodaya society.
2. What do you mean by “Inner Swaraj”?
3. Write “True” or “False”.
 - a) Jaya Prakash was a thoroughgoing Marxist.
 - b) Jaya Prakash gave importance to moral values for proper working of democracy.
 - c) Jaya Prakash was opposed to Quit India Movement.
4. Briefly discuss Jaya Prakash Narayan’s transformation from socialism to sarvodaya.
5. Analyse Jaya Prakash Narayan’s political thought as a true democrat.

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4.5 Critique of Parliamentary Democracy

Jaya Prakash Narayan was a great critic of parliamentary democracy. He felt that the present democratic system is highly defective. He studied the structure and functioning of democratic government of various European countries as well as of Indian democratic system after the implementation of the new constitution. After independence, majority of Indian had the positive faith on the adoption of the constitution that it would result into translating the high aspirations of national movement. But Jaya Prakash and some others got disappointed with the working of the democratic polity in India. He found that one basic defect of the democratic structure in most European countries and India was the increasing concentration of powers at the higher levels of government. As a true democrat, he always believed that power should be vested in the hands of people only. The higher authority should be given only that much power what would have been unavoidably needed. He has written and given speeches several times about the limitations of parliamentary democracy.

Firstly, Jaya Prakash Narayan stated that the most serious defect of present parliamentary democracy is its highly centralised nature. The government becomes so strong that people cannot take any active part in the functioning of democratic institutions. Jaya Prakash was of the view that people could cast vote only at the time of election. Powers were actually concentrated in the hands of a small, dominant group. The people were ruled much in the same manner and by same kind as the British used to do during colonial period.

Secondly, according to Jaya Prakash, in the present parliamentary system of democracy, the authority started from the above that made its base very

narrow. It is like an inverted pyramid that stands on its head and wants that it should made to stand on its base. He always believed that in a true democratic set up, the authority should be started from down below.

Thirdly, Jaya Prakash had no faith in written constitution, division of powers etc. He said that it would hardly be able to guarantee freedom to the people. These are meaningless until and unless moral values and spiritual qualities develop in the public.

Fourthly, Jaya Prakash criticised the role of the political party in the present parliamentary democracy. Political parties got engaged with corrupt and undemocratic practices in order to come to power as well as to retain in power. He rejected parliamentary system of democracy in India based on party politics. Moreover, the control of the party leader is so rigid that it again results in centralisation in party system too. Jaya Prakash stated that those who could speak well dominated politics and managed to come to power irrespective of all considerations whether they were sincere about their duty or not.

Fifthly, Jaya Prakash was of the view that along with the political party the election system was another defect in the present democratic set up. Election was wastage of time and money for him. He stated that it creates rifts within the ranks of political parties as well as rivalry between competing elites. Political parties use some sensitive issues like casteism and communalism in order to win in the election.

Stop to Consider

Jaya Praksh Narayan's Rejection of Party System

His arguments in favour of his rejection of party system are:

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

Jaya Prakash Narayan, Towards Revolution, Every man's Vol. XXVII, No.XIV, March-April, 1969, p.144.

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Sixthly, Jaya Prakash also pointed out the defects in legislative assemblies in parliamentary democracy. According to him, in actual practice, it is the minority that rules over the majority. From his practical experience Jaya Prakash stated that in any constituency so many candidates contest in the election and that candidate who get more votes than his other opponents win the election though he may not get more than fifty percent of the total votes. Likewise, the majority party in the legislature may not have got majority of the total votes polled in the election. Even in the cabinet meetings it was seen that only a few powerful ministers took the decisions as experienced by Jaya Prakash. That is why he said that the present day legislative system resulted in the rule of minority over the majority.

Lastly, according to Jaya Prakash, the western parliamentary democracy sought to combine political liberalism with capitalist economy as well as some features of welfare state. This type of democracy was undoubtedly unfit to implement true socialism. Western democracy, he felt, ignored the organic nature of the society and in this society, greed led to conflict and bureaucratic oligarchy. He was of the view that dominance of private corporations and bureaucracy led to the centralisation of power. Bureaucracy has grown very powerful and overburdened with more than enough work. Jaya Prakash noticed oppression in every form of bureaucratic administration.

Thus, Jaya Prakash was very disappointed with the centralizing tendency of parliamentary system of democracy and felt that it could not have been the best of models of government for India. He wanted the reformation and reconstruction of Indian political institutions to make them more democratic and put forwarded the idea of communitarian democracy or participating democracy.

Stop to Consider

Jaya Prakash's views of Indian Democracy

A basic flaw discovered by Jaya Prakash in the democratic structure prevailing in India after independence was increasing concentration of powers at the higher levels of government. According to him, the politics of party and power had corrupted Indian democracy and defeated its basic values of human freedom, equality and cooperation. Regarding Indian democracy, Jaya Prakash said, "Parties backed by financial organisations and the means of propaganda could impose themselves on the people, how people's rule became in effect party rule, how party rule in turn, became the rule of a caucus of coterie;

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how democracy was reduced to mere casting of votes; how even this right of vote was restricted severely by the system of powerful parties, setting up their candidates from whom alone, for all practical purposes the voters had to make their choice; how even this limited choice, was made unreal by the fact that the issues posed before the electorate were by and large incomprehensible to it.” By renouncing the corrupting agents of democracy, i.e. party-politics and power-politics, he sought to realize the dream of withering away of the state, which both Marx and Gandhi had visualised long back. He advocated for Sarvodaya democracy based on non-violence. This kind of system would not need any police and army for protection and would not consist merely of formal institutions. It would replace centralization of power, the majority principle as well as the existing party system by welfare society, decision by consensus of opinion and partyless democracy etc. He also advocated that if the people felt that their representatives had proved incompetent, they would have the right to ask for their explanation and recall them. It was a supreme democratic right, he believed. He believed that the constitution of free India had failed to include this right in its ambit. So, he proposed a system for India based on partyless democracy, which would involve greater political consciousness, social and economic equality, faith in purity of means, indirect election, nonviolent dispositions, etc. He also extended the idea of organization of the local bodies free from party politics.

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SAQ

“Jaya Prakash Narayan was a true democrat” – Give two reasons in support of this statement. (60 words)

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4.5.1 Jaya Prakash Narayan’s Concept of Participating Democracy

Jaya Prakash Narayan called for the replacement of the present parliamentary democracy of India with what he called as “Communitarian Democracy” or participating democracy based on decentralisation of power. As he realised that the party politics had been destroying the very roots of democracy. So

he felt that the whole system should be changed. There would be a partyless democracy and decentralisation of authority. He adopted the idea of participating democracy from Yugoslavia. He saw that in Yugoslavia, the people's committees managed the local affairs and enjoyed enormous powers. Jaya Prakash observed that it was the only country in Europe where maximum participating democracy as well as maximum participating socialism could be found. So, he took the idea of participating democracy and wrote his book 'A Plea for the Reconstruction of Indian Polity' in 1959. In this book, he explained his concept of participating democracy or communitarian democracy.

The notion of communitarian democracy as advocated by Jaya Prakash was much different from parliamentary democracy. He suggested that co-operation and co-sharing would be the core values of communitarian democracy so that the interest of all individuals could be articulated in the decision making of the country. Therefore, he emphasised on moral and ethical qualities of democracy and for he was of the view that moral regeneration should be brought about by different means like service, sacrifice and love of voluntary workers. Jaya Prakash mentioned some methods to introduce communitarian Democracy.

First, he pleaded for a decentralised, participatory and grass root oriented political order that we can see in the panchayati raj system as existing in the country since ancient period. He tried to broaden the base of local level of government in order to ensure active and more participation of people in the decision making. He called it as "swaraj from below". He recommended five levels of decentralised polity i.e. village level, block level, district level, provincial level and central level. At each level, there would be selection of members through community consensus instead of election and the principle of majority would be replaced by unanimity. It would help to keep the political system free from party politics. The Gram Sabha, to be formed at village level, would act as the backbone of grass roots democracy. In such a decentralised and federal structure only, the true spirit of democratic governance could be inculcated to the masses.

Another method of communitarian democracy, according to Jaya Prakash Narayan, was reconstruction of economic system. He was opposed to the exploitative and competitive economic structure as prevailing in capitalist system. He pleaded for decentralised as well as village oriented planning system in India. Jaya Prakash argued that at village level development plans should be planned with increasing consolidation at block and district levels.

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The provincial and central levels should provide only technical and logistical support to formulate and execute such planning at village level.

Jaya Prakash Narayan also wanted to have a Sarvodaya society in order to execute his concept of participating democracy. The Sarvodaya society would be free from party politics and all people would dedicate themselves to the service of the society. He expected all the political parties to co-operate in the establishment of Sarvodaya society. There would be no possibility of class struggle in Sarvodaya society as it believes in brotherhood. Like Gandhi and Vinobaji, Jaya Prakash also emphasised on rational theory of social good and harmony. He was of the view that Sarvodaya society would bring dynamic changes to Indian democracy through truth, love and non-violence.

Stop to Consider

Jaya Prakash Narayan's views on Panchayati Raj

Jaya Prakash opined that introduction of Panchayati Raj system is the only way to realise participating or communitarian democracy. He emphasised on reviving and reinvigorating the panchayati raj system or what he called as 'swaraj from below'. Jaya Prakash suggested five levels of decentralised polity consisting of village, block, district, provincial and central levels. He proposed that the basic and lowest unit of political organisation would be the Gram Sabha (village assembly) consisting of all the adults of the village. They will meet once in a month to discuss about the village matters. The members of Gram Sabha will choose the members of Gram Panchayat, which shall be the executive organ of Gram Sabha. In similar pattern, the members of Gram Panchayat will select members of Panchayat Samiti. The Panchayat Samiti would be the middle level of panchayati raj, located at the administrative unit of block. Finally, the apex of the panchayati raj was conceptualised in terms of District Panchayat or Zila Parishad. The members of Panchayat Samitis would choose the members of Zila Parishad. After District Panchayat, there would be Provincial Panchayat and then Central Panchayat. Jaya Prakash also highlighted that difficulties may arise in the establishment of such a system. So, he laid down some conditions to overcome any difficulties. He suggested that people should be given proper education. Political parties should not interfere in the activities of various institutions of Panchayati Raj. Effective powers and real authorities as well as financial autonomy should be given to these institutions. The village authorities should have control over civil servants working under their jurisdiction.

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Jaya Prakash considered that economic decentralisation is equally important along with political decentralisation for the effectiveness of Panchayati Raj System. He emphasised on small machine and labour intensive economy for full utilisation of local and regional resources. Village industries must be integrated with village agriculture.

Jaya Prakash’s concept of participatory democracy was based on the excellence of the political and economic institutions of ancient India. In order to reconstruct Indian polity he also emphasised on concepts like individual freedom, social collaboration, gramdan, administrative efficiency, free from any kind of oppression as well as free from any differences based on caste, creed and religion.

SAQ

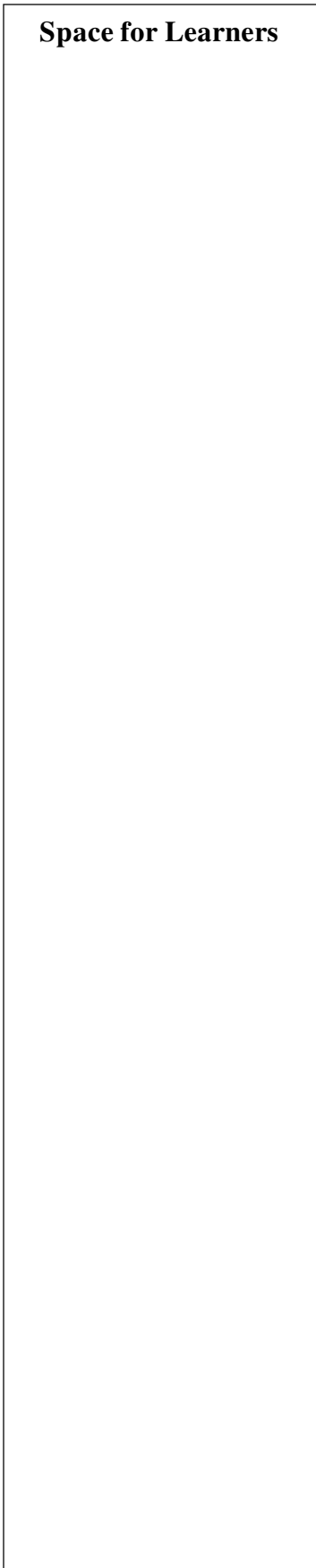
Do you think that Jaya Prakash Narayan’s concept of participating democracy can reduce political violence in India? Give two arguments in favour of your answer. (60 words)

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4.5.2 Critical Analysis

The political and social ideas of Jaya Prakash Narayan as well as his contribution towards India are undoubtedly praiseworthy. However, his scheme for the reconstruction of Indian polity has been criticised by some scholars. Critics are of the view that Jaya Prakash’s idea to reform the political system is based on imagination only and regard him as utopian. His idea of partyless democracy is criticised on the ground that the method of consensus or indirect nomination for choosing members for provincial and central legislature is not workable in a vast country like India. Another criticism against Jaya Prakash’s notion of participating democracy is that it is not easy to persuade all the political parties with different political ideologies to cease party belongingness and to work together in the establishment of Sarvodaya samaj. Even if they work together, there will no end to their differences. Critics also find that in partyless democracy, there will be no contact between the common people and the members of the provincial or central legislatures. Moreover, the disproportionate focus on Panchayati raj as the nucleus of the post-independent Indian polity appears absurd for others.

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Check Your Progress

1. Write "True" or "False".
 - a) Jaya Prakash Narayan was in favour of capitalist economy.
 - b) According to Jaya Prakash the Panchayat Samiti would be the middle level of panchayati raj in his partyless democratic system.
 - c) Jaya Prakash's participating democracy was based on decentralisation of both political and economic power.
2. Evaluate Jaya Prakash Narayan's political thought as a critic of parliamentary democracy.
3. Critically analyse Jaya Prakash Narayan's concept of partyless democracy.
4. How did Jaya Prakash Narayan want to bring reform in Indian democratic system? Discuss.

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4.6 Summing Up

After going through this unit, now you have come to know that Jaya Prakash Narayan was a indomitable personality as well as a heroic leader of India. During his student life, the philosophy of Bhagavad Gita and Gandhiji's ideas influenced him a lot. When he was in U.S.A. he came under the influence of Marxism, but that did not last long. He lost his faith on Marxism because of its denial of individual liberty.

You have also come to know about the role played by Jaya Prakash during freedom struggle of India, specially in Quit India Movement. He had even go to jail for his active participation in the movement. He was the main figure behind the formation of Congress Socialist Party in India and was involved with it till his resignation in 1954. After that Jaya Prakash closely worked with Vinoba Bhave in the Sarvodaya Movement. Throughout his life, he tirelessly worked for the salvation of the people and even suffered a lot. He always believed in individual freedom and tried to establish a society where people would be free from any kind of oppression and exploitation. After reading this unit, you are now able to know why Jaya Prakash criticised the parliamentary democratic system and was not satisfied with the present form of Indian democracy. He was always against centralisation of power and authority. That is why he wanted that the party system should be abolished. He emphasised on radical ideological programmes for the reconstruction of political, economic as well as social structure of the country and proposed the concept of Sarvodaya Samaj.

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Unit 5**Jaya Prakash Narayan : Total Revolution**

Unit Structure :

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Objectives

5.3 The Concept of Total Revolution

5.4 Causes of Jaya Prakash Narayan's Total Revolution

5.4.1 Jaya Prakash Narayan and Bihar Movement

5.5 Jaya Prakash Narayan's Concept of Total Revolution

5.5.1 Seven Fold Revolutions

5.5.2 Total Revolution – An Assessment

5.6 Summing Up

5.7 References & Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

In the previous unit of this block, we have already discussed about Jaya Prakash Narayan's journey from socialism to sarvodaya and his struggle to bring reform in India both in pre-independence and post-independence period. Dissatisfied with the present form of parliamentary democratic system in India, he projected communitarian or participating democracy to carry out sarvodaya based socialist programme. Jaya Prakash pleaded for decentralisation of political, administrative, economic as well as of judicial powers. Throughout his life, he worked for socio-economic reconstruction of India.

In the later period of his life, Jaya Prakash Narayan suggested the idea of Total Revolution, specially during Bihar Movement. He called for mass upsurge against the widespread corruption and centralisation prevailing in Indian democracy. Jaya Prakash wanted the youth of the country to protest without using any violent means. By the term "Total Revolution", he meant a new kind of evolution to bring change not only in the government, but also in the society and in individual. Jaya Prakash's journey from Marxism to Gandhism resulted in Total Revolution. He was highly impressed by Gandhi's thought on socio-economic problems and the techniques through which Gandhi wanted to bring reform in the contemporary socio-economic and political reality. Like Gandhi, Jaya Prakash also adopted moral values,

decentralisation of economic and political power as well as non-violent methods to achieve the goals of total revolution. In this unit, you will come to know about the concept of Total Revolution as well as Jaya Prakash Narayan's mode of action that propelled the movement.

5.2 Objectives

Jaya Prakash Narayan remained outside electoral politics for the whole life and worked as a social activist for reconstruction of Indian democracy. In the later years of his life he even led the youths of the country despite his ill health. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Conceptualise the terms “Revolution” and “Total Revolution”
- Explore the causes of total revolution
- Know the role of Jaya Prakash Narayan in the Gujarat Movement and Bihar Movement
- Analyse various plans and programmes formulated by Jaya Prakash for total development and socio-political and economic reconstruction of India.
- Assess the success and failure of Jaya Prakash Narayan's total revolution.

5.3 The Concept of Total Revolution

By the term “Revolution”, we mean a radical change in the established order through organised movement. A revolt is a challenge to political authority. A section or sections of society launch an organised struggle to overthrow not only an established government and regime but also the socio-economic structure which sustains it, and replace the structure with an alternative social order. The Greek philosopher Aristotle linked revolution to the desire for equality and honour. According to Plato, revolutions occur when institutions, such as the Church or the State, fail to instil a system of values and a code of ethics in the society that prevent upheaval. Some thinkers define revolution as a structural and institutional transformation in the existing social relationship and institutional bases of the society. According to Wilbert E. More, “Revolution is a type of change which engages a considerable portion of the population and results in change in the structure of government”. Thus, by revolutionary change, we may mean any element of change –may it be a change in the dominant values of the community or its social structure, institutional, leadership or elite component, or legal or violent change.

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The concept of Total Revolution was a further extension of Gandhian thought on social change. Gandhi believed that in order to bring change in the society, an individual must, first of all, change himself. By social change, Gandhi meant far-reaching and novel changes in the entire social organisation. The concept of total revolution was for the first time evolved by Gandhian disciple Vinoba Bhave during the 1960s. Vinoba's main objective was to articulate his desire for the need of a comprehensive movement in the country which would transform all the aspects of life in order to 'mould a new man ... to change human life and create a new world'.

He saw common man suffering from the maladies of unemployment, corruption and price-rise because of corrupted and authoritarian regime. He saw that power was being concentrated in Prime Minister's hand. He wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi questioning about fundamental rights of the citizen and independence of judiciary. He also wrote about corruption in administrative and political life. He wrote letters to all members of parliament, but he did not receive any response. Jaya Prakash became more and more determined on his belief that for reconstruction of the socio-economic structure of Indian society, there was no alternative rather than the practice of self discipline and the establishment of participating democracy. It was towards the end of 1973 at Paunar ashram of Vinoba Bhave that he felt an inner urge to give such a call to the people.

Jaya Prakash was very inspired by the peaceful revolution in Musehari sub-division of Muzzaffarpur, a stronghold of Naxalites in Bihar, and re-settlement of the Chambal Valley dacoits. Jaya Prakash's faith on the power of the people basically the students further strengthened by the Nav Nirman Andolan of Gujarat that resulted in dissolution of the elected government of the state. He realised that only the youth of the country could take up the work of bringing about total revolution in the country. Thus he finally arrived at his idea of total revolution. On June 5, 1974, Jaya Prakash raised his famous slogan Sampurna Kranti (Total Revolution), in a speech at a huge rally in Gandhi Maidan in Patna. His speech titled 'Towards Total Revolution' reflected his political passions. After the very beginning, he clarified that their struggle was not a movement, but a total revolution, because of which the protestors had to make sacrifice, undergo sufferings, face lathis and bullets, and had to go to jails.

Nav Nirman Andolan reached a peak point in Gujarat in 1974. Students' protests in Bihar had also started under the leadership of Jaya Prakash Narayan. Jaya Prakash incorporated various elements from different

philosophy in his total revolution. He combined the revolutionary ethos of Marxism with the inclusive approach of Gandhism for transforming the society. According to Jaya Prakash, the Gandhian method of passive resistance or Satyagraha would be the instruments of social change in total revolution. The concept of total revolution was an effort to bring into existence the Gandhian humanist version of an ideal society. It has been pertinently observed in a recent study that Jaya Prakash's Total Revolution was a continuation of the preceding movement for non-violent revolution through Bhoodan and Gramdan. He himself said, "There is hardly any difference between Sarvodaya and Total Revolution. If there is any, then Sarvodaya is the goal and Total Revolution the means. Total Revolution is basic change in all aspects of life. There cannot be Sarvodaya without this".

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Stop to Consider

The Nav Nirman Andolan

The Nav Nirman Andolan was a protest in Gujarat against corruption in politics and misgovernance of the Congress government. It was led by the students and middle class people who first raised their voice against increased price of food and Congress government's false promise to remove poverty from India. In 1971, India defeated Pakistan and Indira Gandhi was re-elected as the Prime Minister with her slogan "Gareebi Hatao". But soon people realised that the slogan "Gareebi Hatao" was changed to "Gareeb Hatao" as the government did not give any importance to the miseries of common people basically what they had to face after the 1972 famines in Gujarat. The movement started when the students of L.D. College of Engineering, Ahmedabad went on a strike as a protest against increased mess charge of food. The middle class people and industry labourers also joined with them and they formed Nav Nirman Yuvak Samiti. The opposition parties like Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Congress (O), SP, CPI (M) also supported the agitators. There were allegations of corruption against Chimanbhai Patel, the Chief Minister of Gujarat. They called for bandhs and dharnas demanding the resignation of the Gujarat ministry. It also resulted in violent activities between police force and common people. The government resigned and the President's rule was imposed on February 9, 1974. Jayaprakash Narayan visited Ahmedabad and admired the students for their effort. He even asked them not to stop their protest until their demands were fulfilled. Morarji Desai also started hunger strike on March 11, 1974 demanding the dissolution of the Assembly. Under immense pressure from students' community supported by

opposition parties, the government got frightened and dissolved the Assembly on March 15, 1974. Fresh election was held in Gujarat in 1975 where the Congress was defeated. Thus the Nav Nirman Andolan inspired other movements in the country in later period.

SAQ

Define Revolution with example (Write within 30 words).

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5.4 Causes of Jaya Prakash Narayan’s Total Revolution

Though the idea of total revolution was the last intellectual contribution of Jaya Prakash, but one can find the roots of it in various plans, programmes and proposals prepared by him since his days began as the founder of Congress Socialist Party. In 1934, when Jaya Prakash was in Socialist party, he formulated Fifteen point programme of All India Congress Socialist Party that clearly indicated his progressive and reformative mind. He firmly stood for the reduction of land revenue, the limitation of expenditure as well as the nationalisation of industries. Likewise, the Thirteen Point Programme formulated by Jaya Prakash in 1946 was also a reflection of his constructive ideas for Gramraj. In 1953, Jaya Prakash and other socialist leaders prepared a Fourteen Point Scheme to serve as the basis of cooperation between the Congress and Praja Socialist Party. In this scheme also, he emphasised on establishing economic equality, progressive development of state trading, elimination of all restraints that hampered agricultural productivity and also on amendment of the constitution to bring necessary reforms. During the Sarvodaya phase, Jaya Prakash got more involved with Vinoba and pleaded for a Sarvodaya Samaj to be based on truth and non-violence. He emphasised on the reconstruction of Indian polity and economy through increasing decentralisation of power for the realisation of inner swaraj as well as improvement in the character of the individuals comprising it.

Jaya Prakash’s call for Total Revolution was a result of his dissatisfaction with the defects of the ongoing political, economic as well as social system of India. Some of them were:

- Jaya Prakash Narayan was not satisfied with the parliamentary form of democratic system in India and the party politics. Centralisation of

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power had resulted in the plentiful growth in the power of bureaucracy and people had hardly enjoyed the right to take part in the decision making. He was of the view that Indian democracy should be transformed into people's democracy and power should be in the hands of people in true sense.

- Jaya Prakash was opposed to the conservative caste system rampant in Indian society. He recommended the members of Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini to take lead to organise the Harizans and the other weaker sections of the society. He also pleaded for social change and reforms in social structure.
- Jaya Prakash was not satisfied with the condition of the Indian women in post-independence period. He witnessed lower literary rate among women, the sufferings and pain of women because of problems like dowry and untouchability. He wanted that the youth should protest and initiate struggle against such evils and women should have enjoy equal rights and freedom in the society.
- Even though Zamindari system had been abolished and measures had been taken for land reform, but still the living conditions of the small and marginalised landowners and agricultural labourers were not improved. The villages were still in the grab of higher castes and rich landlords. Jaya Prakash realised that even the Bhoodan movement failed to improve the condition of the poor and landless labourers and the agrarian unrest in Bihar. The zaminders and landowners distributed land to landless peasants. But later it was known that most of those donated lands were either government land that which later fell under the Zamindari Abolition Act or land that could not be used for cultivation or disputed land. Jaya Prakash got frustrated with these kind of fraudulent ways of Zaminders and landowners. So, he was sympathised with cause of Naxalite Movement and in 1969 at a conference in Delhi, he said, "I have ever sympathy for the Naxalite people. They are violent people. But I have every sympathy for them because they are doing something for the poor ... Thousands of sharecroppers are being evicted because the landlords have the right to resume the land; because these poor people do not have even chit to prove that the land was in their cultivating possession. They cannot prove it in a court law. Do you think that mere mantras of shanty to save the situation ... What India needs today on the political agenda is non-violent social revolution. Otherwise violence will grow."

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Stop to Consider

J. P. Narayan on Total Revolution :

“The movement of 1974 was not started to throw Indiraji out of power. I saw a distant dream beyond this movement. It gave me the vision of such a revolution that could have changed the society completely. The slogan of revolution was Total Revolution. It was about changing the whole life - all aspects of life of both man and the society i.e. the system of marriage, the caste relations, politics, economy have to be changed and that was the urge in it. 33 Again, he wrote, "This is a golden opportunity for changing the entire moral climate of the country and bringing about amoral revolution... It is idle to expect that the politicians and administrators will be reformed while the society remains as it is. The dishonesty that has permeated politics has percolated from the top into the entire social order. This disease is not confined to Bihar only.”

-----Jaya Prakash Narayan Total Revolution, pp.16-17

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- Jaya Prakash was dissatisfied to see the corrupt practices in politics and in administration. According to him, one of the main causes of underdevelopment in India was the widespread corruption in the political and administrative system. Jaya Prakash came to know about black marketing, hoarding and profiteering in the food grain distribution system. He said, “We have had enough bitter experience of the kind of controls imposed by the government We will catch hold of the whole sellers and the mill-owners if they are found to be indulging in corrupt practices.” He aimed at uprooting of corruption from political and social system in India.
- Jaya Prakash criticised higher techniques in production, heavy industrialisation, globalisation and technological encroachment. According to him, these were of no use for common people. On the contrary, these would increase state capitalism leading to corruption, wastage as well as inefficiency in administration. It would also create and increase the number of unemployment in the country as the general people had no role in public enterprise except as workers and consumers. The gap between rich and poor had been increasing day by day.
- Jaya Prakash wanted revolutionary changes in education system of India. He was of the view that the education system remained basically the same as it was under the British rule. The purpose of education should be to produce and organise people for the nation. So, he wished for

abolition of job oriented degree education. Rather he emphasised on introducing special, vocational and professional education in the country. Jaya Prakash stated that involvement of students in movement for social change was also an educational process. It strengthens their commitment and devotion towards the society.

At first, Jaya Prakash Narayan tried to make the people conscious about their situations and then he appealed to the leaders of political parties. But he did not get any positive response from them. Then he started to believe that only a powerful revolution could bring about changes in India and for that the youth of the country needed to be organised. He also prepared some plan and techniques for the revolution to save democracy.

5.4.1 Jaya Prakash Narayan and Bihar Movement

Earlier in 1974, Jaya Prakash became the leader of students' movement in Bihar that gradually transformed into a popular movement known as Bihar Movement. Though the movement started in March, 1974, but it was only a result of certain developments and events in different parts of rural and urban Bihar. It was a fight against government corruption, increasing price, unemployment, caste discrimination etc. In Bihar, it was seen that caste ruled roots in the state and even the parties were identified on the basis of caste. The dalit peasants demanded the urge for equity, respect for their women, payment of minimum wages, an end to the beggar system, implementation of the Land Ceiling Act, redistribution of land and the water bodies for agricultural purposes in favour of marginal farmers. The Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti (BCSS), a committee of non-communist students, was the central organisation of the movement.

On March 16, 1974, the Bihar Chhatra Navjawan Sangharsh Morcha (BCNSM) organised processions at several places like Patna, Muzaffarpur, Begusarai, Sahebganj, Motihari against increased price. Their slogan was "Bihar bhi Gujarat Banega" means the situation of Bihar was also going to be like Gujarat where the Nav Nirman Andolan was at peak point during that time. They became aggressive when the government did not respond to their demands, and organised militant struggle. On March 18, several hundred students gathered near Raj Bhavan and the State Assembly preventing the Governor from attending the assembly. It resulted in direct clash between police and the protestors.

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Jaya Prakash had already raised his hope on students' community basically from students' agitation in Gujarat. He addressed the youth of the country at Kanpur in 1974 and said, "The country is fast heading towards a new revolution. There is another 1942 movement in sight to change the course of history". It was during the movement, Jaya Prakash called for peaceful total revolution. On June 5, 1974 Jaya Prakash gave speech at Patna rally to organize a protest at the Bihar Legislative Assembly. It resulted in the arrest of 1600 agitators and 65 student leaders by July 1, 1974. Although the rally wanted the dissolution of Bihar Assembly, their main aim was to achieve that freedom for which thousands of the country's youths made sacrifices. Jaya Prakash said, "Educational institutions are corrupt. Thousands of youths face a bleak future. Unemployment goes on increasing. The poor gets less and less work. Land ceiling laws are passed, but the number of landless people is increasing. Small farmers have lost their lands." In order to succeed in achieving the goals of total revolution, Jaya Prakash formed "Chhatra Yuva Sangharsha Vahini" with some fully trained and devoted workers. The Bihar movement turned into a mass demonstration in 1974 and people demanded for immediate changes in the political, social and educational systems. At that time, Jaya Prakash also asked people of Bihar as well as of India to have unity among themselves in order to bring full transformation in Indian political framework.

The movement used non-violent methods like dharna, gherao, silent protests, demonstrations, processions in order to bring down the state government. Throughout the first half of 1975, Jaya Prakash travelled all over India to mobilize masses against Congress. He was able to capture people's sentiments through anti-corruption speeches. The most important occurrence was that almost all the opposition parties came under a common cause of "anti-Congress" despite their differences in ideologies.

On 25th June 1975, JP announced a nationwide movement demanding Indira Gandhi's resignation because she was found guilty by Allahabad High Court for violating electoral laws in 1971 general election campaign. Opposition parties led by J.P. Narayana organised a massive demonstration in Ram Leela grounds on 25 June 1975 for resignation of Indira Gandhi. He announced a nationwide satyagraha for her resignation and asked the military, police and government employees to disregard unconstitutional and illegal orders. Indira Gandhi declared emergency on the midnight of June 25, 1975 and on 26th June, Jaya Prakash was arrested.

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Check Your Progress

1. Write “True” or “False”.
 - a) The phase “Sampoorna Kranti” was related to Nav Nirman Andolan.
 - b) The main objective of total revolution was to remove Indira Gandhi from power.
 - c) Jaya Prakash Narayan was sympathetic towards the cause of Naxalite Movement.
2. What do you mean by Jaya Prakash Narayan’s concept of Total Revolution?
3. Write two reasons behind the students’ movement in Bihar.
4. What are the main causes of Total Revolution? Discuss
5. Write a note on Nav Nirman Andolan

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5.5 Jaya Prakash Narayan’s Concept of Total Revolution

According to Jaya Prakash Narayan, Total Revolution or Sampoorna Kranti was a combination of seven revolutions, the main aim of which was to bring about a transformation in the existing society in accordance with the Sarvodaya ideals. These seven revolutions were: social, political, economic, cultural, educational, spiritual and ideological or intellectual. To quote Jaya Prakash, “I have been saying that total revolution is a combination of seven revolutions – social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual. This number may be increased or decreased. For instance, the cultural revolution may include educational and ideological revolutions..... Economic revolution may be split up into industrial, agricultural, technological revolutions etc. Similarly, intellectual revolution may be split up into two – scientific and philosophical. Even spiritual revolution can be viewed as made up of the moral and spiritual or it can be looked upon as part of the cultural and so on.” The idea of total revolution reflected Jaya Prakash’s commitment towards socialist and humanistic ideals.

5.5.1 Seven Fold Revolutions

Though Jaya Prakash had mentioned about seven revolutions, but he was of the view that the number may be increased or decreased as per demands of the social structure in a political system. However, we can summarise his

idea of seven revolutions as follows:

Economic Revolution : According to Jaya Prakash, emphasis should be given on reduction of grossly disproportionate inequalities in the economic system. Economic revolution includes curbing price rise and inflation, full employment, improvement in agriculture and agricultural labourers and increasing the wages of the industrial workers. He pleaded for self governing rural based industry. Jaya Prakash suggested that the small rural industries would manufacture goods for domestic use. The planning should be at grass root level and the concept of social ownership might be applied to the large industrial establishments.

Political Revolution : Jaya Prakash was determined on reforming the existing democratic system in India. He wrote that “corruption is eating into the vitals of our political life. It is disturbing development, undermining the administration and making of mockery of all laws and regulations. It is eroding people’s faith and exhausting their proverbial patience.” He wanted a system where people can vote in an incorruptible manner with their free conscience. Jaya Prakash said that there would be no political parties. The People’s Committees would set up candidates for election rather than imposed by the central or state parliamentary boards. Political officeholders would be in their duty for minimum two years and all incumbents of high posts in legislature, government, universities and private sector should declare their assets periodically. According to Jaya Prakash, the legislators who betray the trust of the voters should be recalled and government process should be based on discussions of and deliberations upon issues, demands and policies. He wanted the army and the police not to obey unconstitutional and illegal orders of the government.

Social Revolution : According to Jaya Prakash Narayan, unjustified and irrational customs, conventions and practices must be removed from society. He considered caste as the symbol of vocational rigidity and social stratification. So he said that encouragement to inter-caste marriages should be provided. Moreover, there should be only one caste – the human caste. Jaya Prakash emphasised on abolition of all kinds of discrimination from the society. He also laid out plan for creating consciousness among people about various social evils such as dowry system, caste conflicts, communalism and untouchability. One of the important objectives of Jaya Prakash’s total revolution was to change the society as well as individual’s outlook towards the society. He asked

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the workers of the country to prepare themselves for the long struggle for achieving the objectives of Sampurna Kranti. Jaya Prakash and Sarvodaya workers envisaged a Sarvodaya society that would be non-exploitative, casteless and classless in nature.

Cultural Revolution : According to Jaya Prakash, the aesthetic and ethical values of culture should be imbibed by the people. He emphasised on cultural assimilation and was of the view that people were to be taught to respect the culture of others.

Educational Revolution : Jaya Prakash proposed that educational planning should be linked with economic planning. He always pleaded for vocational education instead of job oriented degree course. Jaya Prakash witnessed worst forms of nepotism and corruption in the universities. He was of the view that the universities should become pure centres of teaching, training and research and act as motivational centre for promoting mental growth and development. Education should aim at humanization of science and promoting non-violence. Education must create awareness among the submerged and weaker sections of the society.

Spiritual or Moral Revolution : Jaya Prakash was of the view that primordial, conceptual, existential and valuational truth was to be encouraged in place of antinomian dialectics, wrangling and semantic victories. Emphasis should be given to promote moral values like love, affection, respect, good will, magnanimity etc. Co-operation was to be encouraged. Jaya Prakash stated that some prescriptive moral ideals and standards may be deemed to be almost absolute and universally applicable to promote good life throughout the world. Moral values and faith in our own culture must be restored in the society and people must be made both scientific and spiritual. He emphasised on moral and ethical values of both end and means. He believed that unless the moral and spiritual qualities of the people are appropriately developed, democracy cannot function in the right direction.

Ideological or Intellectual Revolution : Jaya Prakash asserted that a strong opposition, powerful public opinion, free and bold press, intellectual and moral pressure from academics and trade unions were all important to make Indian democracy a vibrant and successful one. He also recommended people to rethink their views and attitudes toward India's democratic functioning.

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Stop to Consider

Techniques of Total Revolution

Jaya Prakash Narayan clearly mentioned that the method to achieve the goals of total revolution would be non-violence. He wanted the youths and other protestors to proceed with courage and discipline. He asked them not to resort to violence at any stage, so that the government could not find out any legitimate excuse for violently curbing their efforts. The Satyagraha techniques that Jaya Prakash and other revolutionaries used to achieve the goals of total revolution were: persuasion, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, strikes etc. They also used the method of direct takeover and running of enterprises. Jaya Prakash laid emphasis on mobilisation of student and youth power as the authentic revolutionary force and regarded it as the basis of total revolution. He said that total revolution has to be peacefully brought about without impairing the democratic structure of society and affecting the democratic way of life of the people. To quote Jaya Prakash, “There must also be people's direct action. This action would almost certainly comprise, among other forms, civil disobedience, peaceful resistance, non-cooperation - in short, satyagraha in its widest sense. One of the unstated implications of such a satyagraha would be self-change: that is to say, those wanting to change must also change themselves before launching any kind of action.”

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SAQ

What is Seven Fold Revolutions? (80 words)

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5.5.2 Total Revolution – An Assessment

The total revolution phase of Jaya Prakash’s life had clearly revealed his charismatic personality and re-established him as a great leader. The revolution created turmoil in Indian politics and challenges for the ruling Congress party to continue their regime. But in its operationalisation, it was observed that the practitioners were not so much clear about the idea of total revolution as advocated by Jaya Prakash. It cannot be denied that under the leadership of Jaya Prakash large student’s movements occurred in different parts of the country. But the public perceived that the only objective of total revolution was to subdue all state power at the hands of the people.

Likewise, few people tried to take alternative method of some sort of violent activities; but Jaya Prakash was determined in his idea that total revolution could be brought only with peaceful and non-violent techniques on the part of the people.

Jaya Prakash was successful in uniting all the opposition parties having different ideologies to defeat Congress. He had such a hypnotic effect on the political scene that under his guidance and leadership Congress (O), Jana Sangh, Swatantra Party and other socialists merged to form Janata Party and defeated Congress in the next general election in 1977. When Janata Party formed the government, Jaya Prakash was hopeful that the new government would bring change in socio-economic and political structure of India. But he got frustrated to see that the party leaders started to pursue their political ambitions and were attracted towards the corrupting influence of power. So, critics regard Jaya Prakash as dreamer and idealist whose conceptual interventions in the context of total revolution are more theoretical than practical.

In the context of Bihar movement, Ghanshyam Shah mentioned that the groups, classes or interests which dominated the Congress programmes once were the same that supported the movement. So, how can then one expect the movement to bring 'total revolution'? Moreover, question also arises about the inefficiency of the Sarvodaya ideology that guided the total revolution of Jaya Prakash Narayan. Because people have experienced that the working of the Sarvodaya movement of the last twenty five years had not produced any revolutionary changes in society.

Critics are of the view that the revolution hardly had any programme with concrete objectives. Most of the programmes were mobilising programmes to create a tempo for the movement. Therefore, the revolutionaries did not get involved with other programmes. Students were the vanguard of this revolution. As the students were not earning by themselves during that period, so it is obvious that they did not have any hostility against class system. The student leaders who basically came from upper and middle classes were more concerned for jobs, better prospects in life. Therefore, they joined colleges inspite of Jaya Prakash's plea to boycott examinations and educational institutions. They hardly felt that the socio-economic and political systems were unjust. Moreover, the leaders from opposition parties were more concerned about their own interest rather than the objectives of total revolution. They wanted more benefits by bringing about changes in the system. To them, 'Total Revolution' was another slogan like 'Garibee Hatao'

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to campaign against Congress Party and Indira Gandhi and thus to win in the next election. The Sarvodaya workers who were truly worried about the reconstruction of Indian structure were not interested in election as well as in political power. On the other hand, the political parties who would form government in future were not interested in the broad objectives of total revolution.

Check Your Progress

1. When was the Janata Party formed?
2. When was the national emergency declared by Indira Gandhi?
3. Write “True” or “False”
 - a) Total Revolution was the combination of seven revolutions proposed by Jaya Prakash Narayan.
 - b) The opposition parties used the term “Total Revolution” as their anti-Congress slogan.
 - c) The Congress Party won the general election in 1977 and formed the government.
4. Mention two techniques of Total Revolution.
5. What were the main components of Total Revolution? Discuss.
6. What were the drawbacks of total revolution led by Jaya Prakash Narayan? Discuss in brief.

5.6 Summing Up

After reading this unit, now you have come to know about the heroic role played by Jaya Prakash Narayan during 1970s. His whole life was a message of struggle for independence and justice. He witnessed that people are still deprived from their dues and from freedom to take part in decision making even after we got independence. He was not satisfied with the socio-economic, education, moral and political illness existing in Indian society. Therefore, Jaya Prakash felt the necessity to call the people of the country for a peaceful protest to bring reform in Indian democratic system and in the society. He launched the idea of “Total Revolution” or “Sampoorna Kranti” against corruption, manipulation, exploitation, social discrimination, unemployment and rise of authoritarianism in Indian democracy.

After going through this unit, you are now able to understand how and why Jaya Prakash launched total revolution throughout the country. He used different techniques of satyagraha and asked other revolutionaries not to

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use any violent means at any cost. Though he was not totally succeed to bring transformation to Indian polity and society, but he was successful to intimidate the ruling party and the government. It was only because of his guidance and leadership almost all opposition parties merged to form one party despite having different ideologies. No doubt, Jaya Prakash Narayan was a selfless and dedicated revolutionary activist and a true humanitarian democrat. During the Janata regime after emergency period, he could have easily secured a top position. Despite public demand for his leadership, he made it clear that power was not his goal. After his death Vinoba Bhave said, “Jaya Prakash considered himself only a Lok-sevak or servant of the people”.

5.7 References & Suggested Readings

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