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Jayprakash Narayan: A study in his idea of Sarvodaya Society

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Abstract

An attempt has been made to explore the ideas of Sarvodaya in view of Jay Prakash Narayan. The term Sarvodaya denotes as well fare for all and development for all consonance with truth, non-violence and justice. Sarvodaya is a social ideology which was used in several religious books such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagabhat Gita, Quran and Bible and thinkers both western and India such as Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, John Stuart Mill, Bentham, John Ruskin, B.R Ambedkar, M'K. Gandhi, Binobha Bhave, Jayprakash Narayan. The present study is related to historical, analytical and descriptive methods. The data and information are collected from primary and secondary sources. His idea of party less democracy is a political thought which may appreciate in the present political scenario of India. The large numbers of people are politically apathy.

Keywords: Sarvodaya, Land, Dan, Wealth, Property, Village, Society, Justice, Human, Government.

Introduction: Sarvodaya is a social restructuring movement through which Jay Prakash Narayan has tried to establish a social justice providing good life and welfare of all. This society wants to reconstruct the present society, property, wealth and land for the welfare of the mob. In this society all human beings without on the basis of caste, creed, religion, gender, race and sex will get equal opportunity. No party power politics is in Sarvodaya society. Loknity will take the place of politics in this society where all people will take participate in the decision making process. Love, compassion and sympathy are the element of Sarvodaya society. This society believes in liberty, equality and fraternity with abolishing the corruption, unemployment, nepotism and malpractice. In this regards he has proposed some constitutional amendments. Political life of JP developed through the way of Marxian socialism. In view of JP "the remedy is to create and develops forms of socialist living through the endeavoured of the people rather seek to establish socialism by the use of power of the state..... the remedy is to peoples socialism rather than state socialism. Sarvodaya is a people's socialism."(Prasad, p.161) Jayaprakash Narayan argued, "It is the initiation of a new humanity and a new civilization". It is collective welfare programme. The Sarvodaya society will free from centralised authority with autonomous village. Local self government, self management, mutual cooperation, sharing, freedom, equality and brotherhood will practice in the Sarvodaya society. He wanted create an administration based on 'Lok Niti' instead of 'Rajniti'. He was always disfavour to use the muscle power in politics. To him, "I should also add the though all my energies would be bent towards developing lokniti..." (Prasad, p.171.)



The theme of the Sarvodaya society is that the good of the individual is contained in the good of all; that a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work; That a life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life is worth living. (Gandhi p.259) In view of Mk. Gandhi, 'Enjoy the wealth by renouncing it.' 'Excel in your work, produce wealth, and take the minimum which you need, leave the rest to the welfare of the community.' (Vettickal, p.98) JP analysed Sarvodaya as, "The Sarvodaya Plan will find that it contains eighty percent of the immediate programme of the socialist party, besides sharing the common ideals of classless and casteless society." (Prasad(ed). p.91)

Sarvodaya Society of Jayprakash Narayan

There are some mechanisms of Sarvodaya society as prescribed by JP. The land is the gift of earth for human race which was used by the propertied persons where there was no law, rules and regulations. In the primitive society there were no land reforms policies. The feudal king used the land for their own interest. Kautilya's Arthashastra for the first time mentioned about the land reform policies. In the medieval period the Muslim rulers took the land reform policies for the till workers. In the British period Sir Thomas Munro formulated the "Rayotwari Vandovast". Land revenue system and rent system was also initiated which was collected from rayots'. In 1793, 'permanent settlement' was introduced for farmers. Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shashtri raised slogan the "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan". The abolition of 'Zamindars' system is started. It was the credit of Jayprakash Narayan and Vinoba Bhave for introducing the "Bhoodan movement".

Way to establish the Sarvodaya Society: Under mentioned mechanisms for Sarvodaya society are propagated by Jayprakash Narayan.

I. Bhoodan Jajna: It is a movement which postulates the security of land to those who have no land. The gift of land is a social reform movement that denotes that the excess land will distribute to the landless people for the betterment of themselves. It was Bhave who started land-gift movement on 18th April, 1954 at Pochampalli village in Telengana district. JP and Vinoba have introduced Bhoodan Yajna. Telengana was facing a civil war in which the communists took over lands on the barrels of gun. A communal conflict between Hindu and Muslim landlords took one million of land. Bhave's Bhoodan movement was a method of modernization and a change of mentality of individual. On 4th August 1953 he announced the three stages of Bhoodan movement. i. The movement should have acquire its target of five crore acres of land. ii. State legislative should take some resolution on the distribution of land. iii. If the movement got failed, the government should adopt non-violent, non-cooperation movement.

According to JP that Sarvodaya is a creation of new society which created its structure on non-violence and non-exploitation. To him, if there was an (Telengana district) attempt to establish by violence social and economic justice that attempt would be met by the superior violence of the state (Prasad (ed.), vol-six, p.367) He argued that if violent revolution succeeded it would be those who come forward to secure the 'effective means of coercion'. He asserted on his Bhoodan dynamics that a good and fair society established on the goodness of man and love. Exploitation never achieves a just society. JP addressed that Bhoodan is a psychological



revolution among men-to-men for social change. According to JP a landowner should have a land for domestic and economic purpose. The landless never have a land for gift. They suffered from social injustice which is now should eradicate. In future this non-violent method also used in industries and commerce. If land problem could be solved, India would solve other problems relating in the social and economic sector.

II. **Gramdan:** A particular area and a number of villages should be gifted for the welfare of the people. JP called it as '*gramikaran*'. He argued in his letter entitled "Intervention in the Debate on General Secretary's Report, Betul, on 16th June 1953" to me village ownership of land is the final stage of the economic evolution of rural society (Prasad (ed.), vol-six, p.354). Kantowsky asserted that "In such a village the landless labourer ceased to be a recipient of acts of charity and was elevated to the status of an equal among all the other members of the community. If that scheme had succeeded on a grand scale, then India would have made a great stride towards the Gandhian goal of village autonomy and village government. Such were the hope of mid-fifties"(Kantowsky,p.19) Gramdan system is stressed on the socio-economic development of the village people. The unused and excess of the land owners should be gifted to those who have no land to ensure welfare for all. To establish Swaraj or autonomous village is the objective of the Gramdan. To provide the basic amenities like food, shelter and clothes of the village people and the development of local areas are the objectives of the Sarvodaya society. (Jayaprakash , no.4) , In his 13th points programme Jayprakash Narayan wanted to establish a non-exploitative, equilibrium village society and make welfare society. i. Enrolment of congress members. Attempts should be made to enrol every villager. Meeting of the enrolment members should be flag salutation; ii. A cultural centre should be open where newspaper should be read and the other activities conducted as adult literacy, dramatics and folk songs; iii. Seva Dal and Akhand work; iv. Problems of sanitation, roads and bunds, etc. Tackled in particular way; v. Untouchability work; vi. Communal harmony work, vii. Prohibition; viii. Surveys of condition, ix. Redress of grievances; x. Foundation of grain banks; xi. Propagation in neighbour village; xii. Co-operative marketing; xiii. Women and children work.

III. **Sampattidan:** Jay Prakash Narayan and Vinoba Bhave introduced the Sampattidan or gift of property or wealth for the welfare of the people. JP toured all over country to collect the property or wealth to gift to those people who were very poor. He also collected the property from the industrialists for the welfare of the people. The social and economic organizations both foreign and nation have donated property for the well being of the people. He and his followers have visited and collected the cow, bullocks, seeds, ploughs, pumps etc.(Sodhganga, no.292)

IV. **Jeevandan:** Jeevandan means 'gift of life'. A Sarvodaya Samaj Sammelan was held in the Bodh Gaya on 19th April 1954 organized by Binoba Bhave, Dada Dharmadhikari, M.P. Desai, and Acharya Kripalini. Smt. Asha Devi was the president of the sammelan. From this sammelan JP argued in favour of Jeevandan and stated that "History will not allow much time to non-violent revolution to succeed. If Vinoba's movement does not produce quick result, forces of violent revolution sweep over the land. I announced here today that I would dedicate the rest of my life to the cause of the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movement. I also call upon others to come forward and give their lifetime for the success of the non-violent, social revolution. (Prasad, (ed.) vol-six, p.407) Kantowsky said that "Jeevandan (life-gift) giving one's whole life and the energy to the cause of the movement (Ostergaurd, p.16). He was disagreed to change the society with the



help of legislature because it tries to bypass the law. The Jeevandan is a movement on account of Sarvodaya by the jeevandanis will dedicate or sacrifice their whole life for the welfare or progress of all persons. The Sarva Seva Sangha stressed that the all jeevandanis should give some of his earning for welfare of all.

V.Sadhandan: The sadhandan means gift of equipments and materials such as bullock cart, bullock, axe, fertilisers and seeds while cultivating the land. JP and his followers appealed to the industrialists, landlords, citizens and governmental authorities to dedicate some gift of equipments which were necessary for removing the unnecessary trees and jungles from the land.

VI. Shramdan: Shramda means gift of human labour freely for the well being for all people. Shramdan or the dignity of labour plays the crucial part for the Sarvodaya movement. It has mentioned in the several epics and manuscripts such as Upanishada, Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Bhagvat Gita we observed many instances of Shramdan. Bhave, argued, "We want only body labour. The sacred product of the labourer of those who earn their bread with the sweat of their brows- will be alone be accepted to God as offerings" (Sodhganga. Desai, vol-XIX). In Shokhodeora village the Shramdanie constructed earthen dams to trap water to use for irrigation....." During Shramdaan Yajna JP and other Shramdanie built some houses in villages for the newcomer families. At Kapasia and Borambagh villages Shramdanie constructed new houses, schools, veterinary hospital. In this process Jayaprakash Narayan along with other members of Shramdan movement involve in development scheme for the upliftment of all human race in India. (Sodhganga)

VII. Gyandaan/Buddhidaan: Bhave and JP have launched this movement as the noble dan for enlighten of the society. Buddhidaan means gift of knowledge or merits and intelligence both for men and women to the promotion of the common good or welfare of the people for sacred cause. JP welcome to the intelligence people to provides their Buddhi or Gyan for the upliftment of society. To JP, "What Bhoodan says about land it, according to Gandhiji, true of all possessions, including even knowledge and skill" (Sodhganga, vol-XIX, no.16, and p.7)

VIII. Sarvasvadan: This technique of Sarvodaya stands for that all land belongs to God. Like other natural resources the land is the natural sources. Nobody has created the land; it is the credit of the God. The land should be donated to those persons who have no land for equal share for everybody.

IX. Samaydan: It means the dedication of samay or time for the welfare of the society. He appealed to the youths, doctors, politicians, engineer, landlords, industrialists and all noble people to dedicate their few time for establishing the welfare society. in 1954, from the state of Puna, Maharashtra under the auspicious of Rashtriya Sevak Dal joined in Samaydaan with social renowned socialists leaders like Shri Patwardhan and shri S.M. Joshi were present there. JP then appealed to the youth groups in Muzaffarpur to join in Samaydaan and advised them to fight for the social exploitation against the depressed class which helped to establish social equality.

X. Party less Democracy: In view of Jay Prakash the people of India are not aware about the parliamentary form of government where the majority winner political party form the



government and other party forms the opposition party. Beside, the coalition politics is another trend of parliamentary form of government. That type of government is power oriented, not people oriented. The communalism, dalit politics, regional politics, gender inequality and poverty are the determinants of power politics. In 1959, JP quoted, "Man is a social animal and is endowed with a social nature. Further, the relation of the individual to society is not like that of the grain of sand to the sand dune.....Man always lives in organic relationship with other men.....It is the totality of these living relationships that constitutes society. Society is not a mere sum of individuals." On the other hand, "Modern western democracy is based on a negation of the social nature of man and the true nature of human society as an inorganic mass of separate grains of the individuals; the conception is that of an atomize society....."(Narayan, p.19) In this context, JP argued that the concept of parliamentary democracy are unsound in nature. Election he called "sham democracy". He wrote; "...Everyone has one vote, one vote to everyone. What is the sense of it, will you please, tell me? ...The most eminent philosopher has one vote and the fool in the village also has one vote...".(Narayan p.90). Parliamentary democracy cannot form the ideal society. According to JP "If we would see our dream of Sarvodaya, i.e., true democracy realized we would regard the humblest and lowest Indian as being equally the ruler of India with the tallest in the land. And purity must go hand-in hand with wisdom. No one would then harbour any distinction between community and community, caste and outcastes. Everybody would regard all as equal with oneself hold them together in the silken net of love. No one would regard another as untouchable. We would hold as equal the toiling labourers and the rich Capitalistknow how to earn an honest living by the sweat of one's brow and make no distinction between intellectual and physical labour." (Kumarappa, p.19)

X. Non-Violence Revolution: Non-violence is a social and ethical ideal which renounce from violence. It means that a person will abstain from the violence and will follow love, sympathy and compassion. The concept of non-violence we found from the Hinduism, Buddhism and Jain philosophy. JP was in favour of ethical supremacy and welfare for all. All people of India without on the basis of caste, creed, religion and others will participate in the welfare programme of the society. His Sarvodaya movement will change the present society with the help of Bhoodan, Gramdan and Jeevandan.

Conclusion: The techniques and mechanisms of sarvodaya as prescribed by JP is as egalitarian society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He has tried to establish a society where all should be treated as equal irrespective of caste, creed, and religion and sexes and others. His Sarvodaya movement followed the truth and non-violence which teaches universal love and progress for all. In view of JP the self-government, equality, fraternity is necessary for the balanced growth of the society. His concept of party less democracy is concern with welfare society. It is technique of social reconstruction which will eradicate the social inequality from the society. Sarvodaya is a spiritual and humanitarian noble work for an ideal society. To make India this idea will help to nation-building. The concept of dan or gift is an exclusively a learning issue of an ideal society. JP was favoured of decentralised village autonomous institution where economy should be self-sufficient and independent through autonomous administrative order, cottage industries and self-help groups. The conception of Sarvodaya is a socio-economic and political thought where inequality, ugliness of power politics will disappear and will establish a Lokniti in place of politics



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