**CONCLUSION**

Jayaprakash Narayan was born at a time when the Indian nation was passing through a turbulent phases. He saw the rise and fall of an empire. He witnessed how the nation rose up in an epic struggle against the mighty British Empire. He had observed how a noble leader, armed with the principles of truth and non-violence threatened the existence of the British Raj. His interest in political movements dawned at an early age as a college student when he responded to Mahatma Gandhi’s call for non-cooperation against the British Government. From that very tender age, till he sacrificed his personal interest in the larger interest of the nation, J.P. continued his struggle for freedom and equality. His aim was to bring far reaching socio-economic changes in the Indian society to remove poverty and exploitation.

He went to America for higher studies but he was not swayed by the consumerist culture of western society. Beneath the pomp and glitter of a capitalist society, he saw the spectre of unemployment and misery. His association with prominent Marxist leaders in America and his exposure to Marxist / Socialist literature convinced him that Marxist socialism alone could solve India’s problem of freedom and equality. For him freedom did not mean freedom from British rule; it also implied freedom from poverty and hunger and exploitation.

On his return from America, he joined the Indian National Congress and tried to influence the programmes and policies of the party. He wanted to combine the struggle for political
freedom and the struggle for social justice through his socialist ideas. He never hesitated to criticize Congress leaders for ignoring the need for economic change. Young J.P. emerged as a bitter critic of Gandhi. He rejected the Gandhian concept of trusteeship or Gandhi's idea of persuading the rich to change their attitudes. The root of inequality, J.P. believed, lay in the economic condition of society and steps should be taken to deal with it by abolishing private property and social ownership of means of production. As a young revolutionary committed to Marxism, J.P. believed that the national movement and struggle for freedom in India was not a struggle to oust the Britishers but to change the decadent socio-economic structure of the country.

One of his major contributions in the pre independence era was the formation of the Congress Socialist Party. He was bold enough to assert that it was a socialist wing within the Congress which could influence the congress party to modify its programmes and policies as per the socialist philosophy. He did not bow down to the criticisms of the senior leaders of the Congress. The policies and programmes of this party was instrumental in drawing the nation's attention to the importance of socialist policies.

On the stroke of midnight on 15th August, 1947, as India emerged out of the shadows of imperialism, J.P. realized that political freedom should be supported by the movement for economic freedom and equality. The future of the country depended on how it could deal with these two issues, yet certain developments in the socialist world, especially the fallout of
Stalinist policies in the Soviet Union, raised a few questions in his mind. In the Soviet Union, out of the dreams of a just society of free and equal men, emerged a leviathan state and new parties of inquisition. The endeavour for justice became a naked scramble for power. He was deeply disturbed by the contradiction between 'means and end' and 'freedom and development.'

At this point of time he realized that socialism must be linked to democracy and the movement for freedom and equality must go on through democratic institutions and practices. How far could one rely on the principles of Parliamentary democracy? He had little faith in the Parliamentary system where political parties used elections to divide and rule the common people. Moreover in modern Parliamentary democracies, the bureaucracy monopolized political power. The nexus between bureaucracy and political parties constituted a threat to freedom and equality. The bureaucracy also opposed any change that threatened their power and privileges.

He admitted that the loopholes in any democratic system can be plugged with the concept of decentralization. This emphasis on decentralization became more noticeable in the Sarvodaya phase of his life. He wanted to reconstruct the Indian polity on the basis of 'self sufficient and self governing' village communities. In the economic sphere, the agro-industrial communities will participate fully in the process of economic development. In a true community there is what he referred to as a 'communion', i.e. sharing, participation, fellowship, identity.
of interest, a feeling of unity in diversity and a sense of freedom within the framework of accepted social responsibilities. J.P. had great expectations from these communities. He portrayed them as the institutions that unified people while caste, community and religion continued to divide people. His concept of people’s socialism is based on the idea of decentralization at the political and at the economic level.

J.P. was deeply distressed at the prospect of bitter power struggle among political parties and the selfish attitude of many political leaders after India won her independence. He gave up party politics in search of a new definition of politics that eliminated the struggle for power. He withdrew from raj-niti (politics of party to secure power of the state) in favour of lok-niti (politics of the people). He was trying to develop a new concept of politics that would eliminate the concept of power struggle among the few, marginalising the vast majority of people. Lok-niti would encourage people to participate in the decision making process and would foster the spirit of cooperation among them.

Jayaprakash Narayan’s ideas moved closer to the Gandhian ideals during the Sarvodaya phase of his life. Once a bitter critic of Mahatma Gandhi, he realized that the Gandhian ideals of truth, non-violence and Sarvodaya could liberate man from the evils of materialism. Like Gandhi, he now advocated economic and political decentralization through Panchayati Raj institutions. Above all, he argued that the complete development of man needed moral development through education. The Sarvodaya view held man to be at the centre and
as an end in himself. Social and political organizations existed for the betterment of man. The aim of production in a Sarvodaya society will be consumption and not sale or profit. Equality and freedom will prevail not as a result of coercion but out of self restraint and moral sense of the people.

The underlying philosophy of Sarvodaya, for J.P., was all round development for all human beings. The society and the social relationship should be based on the principles of truth and non-violence as only these two principles bring all human being together and such a society will enjoy freedom and equality. In a Sarvodaya society there should be no distinction between physical and mental labour, only the dignity of labour should prevail. There should be complete decentralization of economic and political power.

From 1969 onwards, J.P.'s ideas gradually shifted from Sarvodaya to Total Revolution on which he pinned his faith till his death in 1979. At the beginning of the Sarvodaya phase of his life, J.P. had given up an active political life. He withdrew from party politics and became a 'jeevandani' in order to serve the society. He changed his decision when he perceived widespread corruption and anti-democratic tendencies in the Indian society and polity. J.P. soon became the architect of a major mass movement in Independent India. Both Sarvodaya and Total Revolution had same objectives: social change through people's non violent participation. The strategy of Total Revolution was different. It advocated change through opposition and constructive work involving all the sections of society.
His call for total revolution was aimed at removing the traces of corruption and anti democratic tendencies in the Indian Polity. J.P.'s concept of Total Revolution was also guided by his intention to preserve freedom and equality and to promote change in Indian society. He was disappointed with the lopsided development of the Indian society where the wealthy had cornered all the benefits of development. He realized that gentle persuasion through appeals to the conscience of the rich was not enough. This was the main flaw of the bhoodan movement. The rich and the poor were all products of faulty policies of socio-economic development- the poor were at the receiving end, left to fend for themselves, even the institutions of parliamentary Democracy could not empower them.

J.P.'s leadership during the phase of Total Revolution offered an alternative to the traditional party based politics to politics based on moral values. J.P. rose above his personal tragedy (his wife Prabhavati passed away in April, 1973) and ignored his failing health and lent his support to the agitation of the students and the opposition parties. He united the opposition parties under one banner to uphold the cause of freedom, equality and change; all these to be achieved by means that could be justified by moral values. He offered a new definition of politics as an activity that involved people and was dedicated to the welfare of one and all. He emerged as the chief architect of a major non Congress alliance at the national level. He was able to draw the attention of the country to the need to remove corruption at all levels of the Indian society.
Jayapraksh Narayan has been often criticized for abandoning Socialism for Sarvodaya. It should be mentioned that J.P. was not interested in any ideological debate; his plea was that one should come out of ideological jargon and concentrate on reality. Since his goals were fixed, he could come out and experiment with different ideologies at ease without succumbing to any orthodox interpretation of any concept. His concept of socialism is a unique example. Young Jayapraksh considered socialism to be the science of society and a scientific method to bring change through revolution; but he was quick to ascertain the loopholes in socialist theory and practice and did not hesitate to combine it with Gandhian philosophy and practice. He considered it worth while to blend the two because the two ideologies strive for same kinds of values such as social and economic equality and freedom from exploitation. He himself admitted that he had often shifted his commitment to particular ideas or ideology but this was done only to secure freedom, equality and social change.

One can point out the areas where J.P.'s synthesising efforts extended which are as under:

1) He added the goal of moral development of man to the socialist aim of material development of man. By linking material development to the need of moral development, he upheld the view that people's socialism could bring the all-round change in society.

2) He sought to add the Gandhian idea that the means chosen for development must have certain moral
standards. Ends cannot justify the use of any means and if such ideas are pursued there will be no limit to which our society will sink.

3) J.P. thought it necessary to utilize the Gandhian concept of decentralization to counter the over centralizing tendencies of the socialist state. Participation of the people was necessary to reduce the absolute authority of the state.

4) He realized that non violence was the best means to achieve one's objectives. Violence would breed violence and if one pursued the aggressive policy of an 'eye for an eye' the entire world would become blind!

Jayaprakash Narayan did not abandon Socialism as many of his critics had pointed out. He only tried to offer a new definition of socialism by borrowing liberally from Gandhian theory and practice. His concept of 'Peoples Socialism' promoted the aims of socialism (equality, freedom and social justice) through decentralization, both political and economic, popular participation, non violence and moral education.

The moral overtone in J.P.'s political thought and his emphasis on non violence make him a true heir to Indian cultural tradition and ethos handed down from the time of Buddha to the present time. Apart from Gandhi, M.N. Roy was another modern Indian thinker who had profoundly influenced J.P. Both M.N. Roy and J.P. were ardent Marxists in their youth.
and believed that Scientific Socialism could put an end to India's poverty. Socialism, for both of them, meant common ownership of the means of production, distribution and equal opportunities to all. They felt that Socialism could be brought by the policies of the State. These policies would be socio-economic in nature including the policy of nationalization. Both Roy and J.P. however criticized the policies of the Soviet State. They advocated decentralization as the means of solving the problem of freedom and equality because the process of decentralization would ensure participation of the people even at the grassroots level.

In their later phases of life, both J.P. and M.N. Roy renounced Marxism. While J.P. joined the Sarvodaya movement, Roy developed the philosophy of Radical Humanism. Roy believed that a cultural/philosophical revolution or renaissance must precede any socio-political revolution to prepare the people for social change. J.P. spoke about a moral and educational revolution as a component of Total Revolution. This was their ardent attempt to save human beings from atomisation and alienation. Future research should attempt a thorough comparison between the ideas of J.P. and M.N. Roy both during their socialist and post socialist phases of their life.

For the future generations, Jayaprakash Narayan left a clear message: inequality and violence are the two major problems of the Indian society today. Extreme inequality may force people to choose the path of violence. Hence any process of removing inequality must be peaceful and also should be justified by moral values.
Jayaprakash Narayan's political ideas—his emphasis on the need of moral development, non-violence and his definition of politics as the expression of popular participation are the most suitable means of solving the problems that continue to rattle the Indian society today.

At a time when India is facing the problem of inequality and violence, at a time when the country is fighting lethal enemies within and outside its boundaries, when sectarian, religious and regional divides seem as intractable as ever, Jayaprakash Narayan's political ideas would be the bridge that would unite us and guide us to a better society.