

Jayaprakash Narayan's

Concept of Total Revolution

Jayaprakash Narayan's Concept of Total Revolution!

- Jaya Prakash once stated that Total Revolution is a combination of seven revolutions, viz., political, social, economic, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual;
- and the main motive being to bring in a change in the existing society that is in tune with the ideals of the Sarvodaya.
- By the early 1970s, JP completely withdrew from party and power politics, and concentrated more on social regeneration through peaceful means.
- This did not mean that JP kept quiet while there was social and political degeneration taking root in political freedom.
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- In order to better the situation, despite his old age, he embarked on the task of working towards bringing in a complete change in the political and economic life of India
- Initially, he tried to organize people and make them conscious or aware of the situations and then appealed to the leaders.
- But with no response, he began to organize youth to save the democracy from degeneration and called this revolution as Total Revolution.
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- The momentum to the movement came when there were agitations in Gujarat and followed in Bihar as well.
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- In 1974, the Bihar agitations spiralled into massive protests by the people to bring about a change in the political, social and educational system.
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- At this juncture, JP announced a fourfold plan of action that aimed to paralyze the administration, introduction of Gram Swarajya and establishing people's government.
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- Explaining the term 'peoples government', JP stated that it would be a small unit of democracy at the village, panchayat, or the block level, at all the three levels, if possible.
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- These units were regarded as the sources of the power of the people in times of peace, as well as in times of injustice or tyranny, and mainly for the reconstruction of the society on the basis of equality and the elimination of poverty, oppression and exploitation.
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- JP further called upon the people of Bihar as well as the entire India to unite by cutting across their individual and party interests.
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- His motive behind charging up the Bihar students was to bring about a complete change in the entire governmental structure and the system of Indian polity.
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- It is for this reason he called it a Total Revolution. JP presented the concept of total revolution in a very comprehensive manner. His commitment to socialist and humanistic ideas was very evident in the idea of total revolution
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- He was aiming at uprooting of corruption from political and social life in India. Besides this, JP wanted to create conditions wherein the people living below the poverty line could get the minimum necessities of life.
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- Thus, total revolution was a device for bringing about a Gandhian humanist version of an ideal society.
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- In his prison diary, JP once stated that Total Revolution is a combination of seven revolutions, viz., political, social, economic, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual;
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- Like Gandhi, he also experimented with his own beliefs, tested his notions and modified his ideas.
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- The inherent contradictions within the Parliamentary democracy made JP lose any faith he had in it.
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- He opined that democracy gives no assurance for a better life to the people in the future when they are socially and economically neglected. He opined that only a peaceful revolution could bring about some change in the society.
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- One of the main reasons for lack of development in India, according to JP, was the widespread corruption in all walks of life.
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- He believed that the multiparty system and general elections every five years had reared corruption.
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- Further, the failure of economic planning and public investments is also due to this corruption.

- Through this revolution, JP aimed at changing the society and also the individuals' outlook towards the society.
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- He also asked the workers in Bihar to prepare for the long struggle for achieving the objectives of total revolution.
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- He laid out a plan for the movement; on how the revolution should move on the propaganda for public education, and constructive programmes consisting of creating consciousness about various social evils such as dowry system, caste conflicts, communalism and untouchability.
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- Thus, JP had a very clear perspective of the social ideals and objectives when he took upon the task of guiding the Indian masses for a concrete action.
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- JP strongly believed that for democracy to be a lively and effective instrument there is an urgent need for a strong opposition, powerful public opinion, free and fear-less press, ideological and moral pressure from the academicians, and trade unions.
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- He, in fact, advised the people to revise their thinking and attitude towards democratic functioning in India.
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- When Janata Party came to power, JP was hopeful that there would be a change in socio-political and economic situation in India.
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- But unfortunately, the party leaders pursued their political ambitions and were attracted towards the corrupting influence of power, despite their pledge that they would aim at bringing about a just society.
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- Naturally, the country slipped into old order of political rivalry and infighting.
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- Towards the end of his life, JP revealed his thoughts about India and the ideals for which he struggled all these years.
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- He explained saying, India of my dreams is a community in which every individual, every resource is dedicated to the service of the weak community, dedicated to 'Antyodaya' to the well-being of the poorest and the weakest.

India of my dreams is a community in which every citizen participates in the affairs of the community. It is a community in which the weak are organized and awakened to implement reforms and to keep an eye on the rulers ... it is a community in which the people have a right to and opportunity to bring them to book if they go astray in which office is not looked upon as a

privilege, but as a trust given by the people ... in short, my vision is of a free progressive and Gandhian India. However, his dream remained unfulfilled despite his long struggle throughout his life.