

Remembering Lokanayak Jaya Prakash Narayan



Smt. Chhabi Mohanty

Eminent freedom fighter, one of the spokesperson of socialist ideology, dynamic politician, the initiator of Total Revolution thought, the committed statesman for high idealism and social justice has influenced deeply the social fabric of India. His fight against injustice and exploitation has assigned a special place for him in the modern Indian history.

Some 80 (eight) kilometer from the historic Patna city, close to the banks of rivers Ganga and Ghagara, in the village Sitabadiara (now situated in Balia District of Uttar Pradesh) he was born on 11th October 1902 in an aristocratic family to father is Harsa Dayal and mother Phul Rani.

He was a student of Patna Collegiate School. After passing matriculation he studied in Suena College of Patna. He left his studies responding to the clarion call of non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi. Later on he passed I.Sc. examination from Bihar Vidyapitha. In 1920 he married Pravabati, the daughter of prominent lawyer Brajakishore, who was fighting for the interest of indigo farmers of Champaran.

In 1922 Jayaprakash went to America for prosecuting higher studies. He got higher education there from Chicago, Wisconsin, California and Ohio. He had well understood the dignity of labour and during his stay at America he earned some money by casually working in

fruit gardens and restaurants. During his stay in America he studied the essays of world famous philosopher Karl Marx and was influenced by Marxist thoughts.

He returned in 1929 from America and worked as a Lecturer in Sociology in Banaras Hindu University. During that time in the political arena the appearance of Mahatma Gandhi opened a new chapter in the freedom struggle of India. He gave up Lecturership and participated in the freedom struggle. The 'Purna Swarajya' proposal was passed and accepted in Lahore Session of Indian National Congress on 31st December 1929. In 1930 Salt Satyagraha was started, when most of the Indian leaders were arrested by British Government. During this period, Jayaprakash associated himself with secret organizations to keep intact the freedom struggle.

Jayaprakash had profound regards towards Gandhiji but in some spheres he had differences with Gandhiji. In 1931 when Gandhi-Irwin Accord was signed, Jayaprakash was not happy to postpone the non-cooperation movement by Gandhiji's decision. He was imprisoned several times during the freedom struggle in jails. Once, while going to Bombay from Madras he was arrested. While he was in Nasik Prison he came in contact with Achyut Pattabardhan and Minoo Masani. After release from the jail he and Acharya Narendra Dev

established All India Congress Socialist Party. Ideal and popular leaders like Ram Manohar Lohia, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya and Minoo Masani were his close associates.

Jayaprakash was an embodiment of indomitable courage and firm mind. He was arrested during the Second World War. First he was kept in Bombay Prison and later on transferred to Delhi and Hajaribag Prisons. Once he and his five associates absconded from the jail by scaling and the jail boundary by jumping from it. British Government announced awards to capture him. Jayaprakash was arrested from Nepal and again escaped from jail. Later on he was arrested from Delhi.

In the post-Indian election politics, Jayaprakash's Socialist Party could not achieve spectacular success. Jayaprakash was enquiring what could have been the alternative means of violence for the establishment of socialist ideology in India. He had actively participated in Sarvodaya movement pronounced by Vinoba Bhave and was endeavouring most for the financial development of innumerable landless people through Bhoodan movement.

One of the aims of Jayaprakash was to bring transformation in lives of hardcore criminals, who had deviated from the path of non-violence. He had realized to bring back those people to the national mainstream. Due to his sincere efforts the Decoits of Chambal Valley surrendered and hardcore decoit Sardar Madho Singh repented for his misdeeds. This affair is rare in modern world.

Jayaprakash had profound faith in self independence and democratic values. In 1975 the internal emergency situation shocked his mind. There were student movements in Gujarat and Bihar. During this period Jayaprakash gave the clarion call for 'Total Revolution' and was arrested

and fell ill. He was then admitted to Jaslok Hospital at Bombay.

In 1977, General Election to Lok Sabha was declared. Jayaprakash gave the call to all opposition parties to be united and to contest from one platform against Congress Party. Due to his sincere efforts all political parties combined and formed Janata Party. Due to his blessings this party achieved majority in 1977 General Election and came to power.

For the propagation of Socialist ideology and Bhoodan movement, Jayaprakash visited Orissa so many times. In 1939 he visited Orissa to preside over Provincial Youth Conference. In 1975 he visited Jharasuguda, Sambalpur, Angul, Dhenkanal, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar and addressed massive gatherings. Personalities like eminent leaders Gopabandhu Choudhury, Rama Devi, Manmohan Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy, Harekrushna Mahatab, Biju Patnaik and Rabi Ray were close associates of Jayaprakash.

Lok Nayak Jayaprakash breathed his last on 8th October 1979. The end came quietly and peacefully in the early hours of the morning at his modest home Kadamkuari, owned by the Mahila Charakha Samiti, which his wife Prabhabati helped to organize.

A fearless and indiscriminate society was the dream of Jayaprakash. Jayaprakash will be remembered for his Socialist idealism and fight to establish a society free from corruption.

Shrimati Chhabi Mohanty resides at the residence of late advocate N.C. Mohanty at Anandpur Town P.O.-Anandpur Dist. Keonjhar, Orissa.