Jayaprakash Narayan's Thought and Its Contemporary Relevance for Combating Political Corruption

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Abstract:

This paper offers a critical analysis of Jayaprakash Narayan's (JP) anti-corruption philosophy and its contemporary relevance. Its central claim is that JP's call for "Total Revolution"—anchored in moral renewal, democratic participation, and institutional reform—constitutes a durable framework that remains effective today. First, the moral–spiritual foundation: JP treats politics as service, not power; he locates the roots of political corruption in the erosion of character, integrity, and civic responsibility. Second, public participation: he views peaceful, broad-based social movements and citizen awareness as essential pressure mechanisms for responsive governance, enabling transparency and accountability across electoral, party, and policy processes. Third, institutional reform: independent oversight bodies, an empowered ombudsman, penalty-backed enforcement, transparent political finance, and an impartial civil service are outlined as structural remedies. Historically situated interventions—Total Revolution, the Bihar Movement, and resistance to the Emergency—are read alongside present cases to show that despite technological advances, vested interests, weak enforcement, and the criminalization of politics continue to obstruct control of corruption. The paper concludes that JP's approach prioritizes the fusion of ethical leadership development, grassroots mobilization, and rule-bound institutional architecture; this combination provides a practical roadmap against contemporary challenges—illicit finance, policy capture, and regulatory rent-seeking—and travels well to democracies across the Hindi belt and the broader Global South.

Keywords: Jayaprakash Narayan; Total Revolution; political corruption; ethical leadership; mass movements; institutional reform; governance accountability.

Introduction

Jayaprakash Narayan belongs among prominent twentieth-century scholars known for political anti-corruption. He denounced corruption as a "common root cause of several maladies," setting the stage for this study's objective of rearticulating his complex and rich theoretical and experimental doctrine for combating political corruption. Narayan believes that certain philosophers and religious texts remain particularly relevant, grounded not only in their historical significance but also the ongoing complexity of the crises they address. He contends, "The problems that I decided to grapple with had not been solved." For him, political

corruption constitutes one of those unsolved problems, encompassing the misuse of public power and opportunity for personal gain. As a discipline, political science occupies a "singular position" with regard to anti-corruption: "politics can provide the framework for combating corruption, or it can open the door to it." Within this broad framework, Narayan examines both the characteristics of corruption and the potential role of Indian politics. These theoretical and experimental principles have profound contemporary relevance worldwide. Despite technological advances, governmental political corruption remains highly challenging to control. Narayan's ideas retain a distinctive and topical resonance based on their underlying principles, which deserve closer study.

Historical Context of Jayaprakash Narayan

Jayaprakash Narayan—fondly referred to as LP—was a philosopher and social reformer who advocated a democratic approach. He was also a Gandhian socialist, a brilliant thinker, a politician of great compassion and action, a pathfinder in contemporary social and political thought, a fighter for the independence of India, and moreover a nationalist and an idealist. Jayaprakash Narayan was born in a Bihari Kayastha family, hailing from Sitabdira village of Saran district, in Bihar. He played a deep and abiding role in Bihar's polity and prospered in the independent state.

Narayan's patriotism energized him to take an active part in the Quit India Movement. After three years of incarceration, he rose to shoulder the task of disciplining and uniting various Anticolonial forces through his party—Congress Socialist Party. Interestingly, the journey for independence from British rule did not end with the departure of the Colonial Government. Remaining true to himself, Narayan launched several movements to keep the rebellious spirit of the people alive. The nation was confronted by a very different set of problems, resulting not from foreign rule, but from the nature of the governing and the rulers themselves. Naturally, Jayaprakash Narayan raised his voice against these unstaunch rules and unjust governance.

Philosophical Underpinnings of Narayan's Thought

Jayaprakash Narayan advocated principled-based politics for good governance, arguing that the foundation for responsible government is moral and ethical values. The source of corruption lies in the gradual decline and erosion of individual moral and ethical values, which are crucial pillars of national life and character. The collective political conscience hinges on personal political conscience, making the moral and ethical fiber of an individual the starting point for building a corruption-free society. National reconstruction and a new political order can succeed only with a spiritual renaissance—a drive towards moral regeneration of individuals. Narayan viewed politics as a means to serve the masses rather than a tool to exercise power. The essence of politics lies in service, not in exercising power. Any attempt to pursue power for its own sake invites decay and corruption, eating away the soul of a nation. Politics for Narayan meant unselfish activity inclined towards the good of others. Selfless dedicated effort serving the people, though always difficult to find, provides the nation with its leaders.

(a) Moral and Ethical Dimensions

Narayan's anti-corruption philosophy centred on moral, spiritual, and ethical principles. The absence of these values overridden all others, facilitating socio-political degeneration. Ethics forms the norm of behaviour that characterize a civilizational entity. The revival of ethical values therefore caters to the regeneration of civilisation in the face of moral decay. The problem that lurks in the existing political system is always the absence of internalization of these moral values. Corruption is ultimately rooted in the loss of orientation towards the truth and the subversion of individual conscience informed by it. Individual conscience can only act as an effective deterrent to corruption if it is enlightened and made operational by truth and by a moral code resting on it. Corruption signifies the death of ethical political

leadership underpinned by veracity, dedication, courage, and discipline. A perspective on corruption as a moral problem anticipates strengthening of the character and integrity of political leaders compromised by power, wealth, and affluence. Acts of corruption are seen as outcomes of their loss of a sense of civic responsibiliy and the failure to empathise with their fellow citizens.

(b) Political Ideologies

Jayaprakash Narayan's ideological framework combined nationalism with Gandhian socialism to uphold the values of Indian democracy. He rejected both totalitarian socialism and capitalism, addressing the failures and foibles of existing ideologies within the Indian milieu. Narayan aspired to change the social and economic foundations of society but maintained a sense of sympathy and respect for capitalism and communism. His mission was to define the role of ordinary citizens in a democratic government, prioritizing national service over individual interests.

Political Corruption: An Overview

Political corruption is a persistent challenge distorting trustworthy governance and undermining social and economic structures across nations. Definitions vary, but it is generally understood as the manipulation of power entrusted for a public purpose, by government officials, for personal, private gain rather than the common good. It manifests in myriad forms, ranging from bribery and extortion to misappropriation of public assets and fraudulent decision-making practices, permeating numerous political processes such as electoral systems, policy formulation, political-party financing, and legislature. Much scholarly effort has been devoted to identifying underlying causes and extensive consequences of political corruption in diverse global contexts. India, for instance, has suffered decades of protracted governance crises and lack of faith in democratic institutions. A series of abandoned reforms and little improvement in moral standards among politicians and in society has allowed multiple systemic and practical mechanisms to entrench corruption in political systems there. Such developments have historically provoked civic reactions embedded in diverse expressions of political, social, and economic thought. The philosophy and tactics of Jayaprakash Narayan offer a notable framework and practice for studying, interpreting, and confronting political corruption in general, as well as for investigating the Indian administrative morass.

(a) Definition and Types of Political Corruption

Political corruption refers to actions by government officials that deviate from the formal duties of their position for personal gain by abusing the powers of their office. Some typologies and theories suggest preventive measures for corruption, including democratic reforms, promoting the rule of law, and creating transparent and accountable governments. Reforming governments is considered vital in the fight against corruption. In many African states, the boundary between public and private spheres is blurred, and practices legally considered corrupt are perceived by perpetrators as legitimate. This embedded corruption is reinforced by networks of patronage and a moral economy that distributes state spoils. Defining political corruption is difficult because political systems vary across countries, and understanding of corruption depends on the specific political context. Despite these challenges, scholars have established common standards to conceptualize political corruption.

(b) Global Perspectives on Political Corruption

From a global vantage point, outright political corruption is hardly a new phenomenon, yet it has morphed into a more subtle variant today. Globally, the quest for power leads to political contests spurred by the pursuit of personal wealth and affluence. Ill-gotten wealth lures candidates, attracting even undesirable elements into politics. This trend results in the criminalisation of legislatures, with elected offices often seized as spoils of victory by political parties. Moreover, the prevalence of corrupt practices during elections tarnishes candidates' reputations even before they assume office. These globally corroborated observations remain

as urgent as ever.

Narayan's Critique of Political Corruption

In the initial decades of independent India, Jayaprakash Narayan identified a range of anti-national, anti-social, and anti-people activities that undermined political corruptions and the people's faith in them. His observations remain relevant today. In the early 1980s, Narayan witnessed corrupt officials who intoxicated themselves with power and money, frequently bribing law enforcement to avoid consequences. Such unpunished behaviour prevented justice for victims of civil and criminal offences. The profligate and impious misuse of public property—which should have been dedicated to national development and welfare—turned governmental rules and regulations into mere instruments of exploitation, oppression, and discrimination. Public welfare was sacrificed to the greed of a few who treated the national exchequer as their private property; they were too busy accumulating ill-gotten gains to promote the nation's development and welfare.

Twenty-first-century India offers no better epilogue. From the priestly Cambridge-educated 2G minister who 'sold' the public spectrum to the bureaucratic 'saint' who caused postal-rate madders to collapse, India continues its well-travelled path to ignominy. The irregularities of controversial land acquisitions (often including former ministers' relatives) and the sudden swindling of banks and minorities represent further evidence of a diseased polity whose early post-independence leaders foresaw neither the extent nor the intensity of the rot.

Within the Indian judiciary, barring a handful of honourable exceptions, countries with sub continental legacies await the complete triumph of blood ties over impartiality; the National Human Rights Commission's virtual incarceration of writing instruments within its case backlog offers experience testimony to the injury inflicted upon 'An Institution of Betrayal'. Within India, Chinese officials accused of having accepted bribes from local business interests face uncertain repercussions. Narcotics and smuggled wedding invitations lie behind at least one public industrialist's removal, and yet India's multitude of signatories to the international KEIV treaty find themselves unable to claim even the small refund they were promised. Jayaprakash Narayan's brand of Gandhian socialism—and its capacity for political revival through grassroots movements—remains all that offers respite from further decline.

(a) Case Studies from Narayan's Era

Jayaprakash Narayan's critique of corruption relates to socio-political developments potentially responsible for contemporary cases. During Narayan's era, personal and family ties influenced administrative decisions, while politicians and businessmen sought individual prestige and prosperity. Events such as the 1954 Telangana uprisings, the 1955 Food Movement, the 1974 Bihar Movement, and the Emergency intensified Narayan's concerns. He emphasized that bilateral trade often served the interests of dominant countries, fostering economic dependence and strengthening colonial structures. Narayan also argued that development strategies imposed by Western powers ignored India's unique environment, population pressures, and cultural traditions.

(b) Comparative Analysis with Modern Instances

The Vijji scandal continues to draw large crowds, led by the Service Teachers Union. The witnesses who have spoken to the Commission have spoken openly and fearlessly; others who claim that they have been silenced, and advised by people in high places not to speak, have passed on, with full names, details of facts, and counter-affidavits, to the Commission. The position appears to be eminently reasonable. After carefully patching his tattered reputations and setting the record straight, Mr. Bodh Raj is believed to have fled to the Malaysia-Singapore area. The Commission has directed the Special Branch of the Police to trace him.

Whether the Commission should go further and try to indict suspect, such as the Deputy Internal Security Minister, may be a matter for the Commission, but, while the Republic can afford to wait, the people of Sabah cannot. The Malaysians have waged a fierce campaign

against the separatist elements that pervade Sabah administration — the only time Malaysia has openly declared that it is conducting a campaign against communists.

Narayan's focus on understanding the range of political corruption types and engaging grassroots democratic movements aligns with broader anti-corruption scholarship. The failure to enact independent investigations and electoral reforms in India underscores the ongoing relevance of Narayan's advocacy for widespread reforms. Meanwhile, a decade-long moratorium on political education, accompanied by increased economic opportunities, illustrates how governments in Southern Asia have removed sources of internal chaos and instability.

Strategies Proposed by Narayan

Jayaprakash Narayan (PN while Narayan is also accepted) viewed the campaign against corruption as a moral crusade requiring individual sacrifice. The battle to uphold righteousness, or dharma, superseded mere political expediency and remained relevant across contexts. The sustained eradication of corruption hinged on establishing and upholding mechanisms of good governance. When traditional links in the chain of accountability malfunction, alternative connections had to be devised. From a Gandhian perspective, cultivating earnest sincere public servants committed to combatting corruption, reinforced by still-unrealized ethical ideals, might induce a prevailing social culture of honesty. Narayan omitted a systematic anti-corruption template and criticised preconceived frameworks that only deepened complexity and diverted focus; instead, he advocated a critical journey probing corruption's essence and underlying causes.

The fundamental principles for addressing corruption included active participation by ordinary citizens in reform processes, not solely reliant on political leaders; integrity and determination among reformers to avoid moral collapse; and the construction of a vibrant participatory democracy. Societal checks on rulers were imperative. While political parties often hindered measure implementation, solutions did not rest with multi-party electoral competition, which had itself degenerated. Thus, the remedy demanded a pyramidal arrangement starting from the grassroots and extending upward. Correspondingly, Narayan spearheaded a political movement at the community level challenging deeply entrenched political corruption persisting into subsequent decades.

Grassroots mobilisation was the sole pathway for overthrowing corrupt practices, with the Jan Lokpal at the centre. Its eventual establishment, chaired by the former Chief Justice of India, signalled the possibility of meaningful reform. Bureaucratic inertia posed the principal obstacle, requiring resolution through intensified public representation allied with devoted, heroic administrators.

(a) Grassroots Movements

Jayaprakash Narayan stressed large-scale grassroots movements and political awareness as critical means for revitalizing democratic institutions and combating political corruption. Broad social mobilizations remain pivotal for ensuring responsive governance in much of India today. Since the eighteenth century, the bedrock of Indian democracy has been immense popular participation on a massive scale. Narayan recognized that government will not change corrupt practices until sustained public pressure enforces political accountability and fosters political awareness throughout society. He insisted that the future of the democratic process depends upon large-scale grassroots movements. The agenda of such movements combats political corruption through peaceful, constructive campaigning, consumer activism, and by seeking adequate implementation of laws addressing corruption. Once citizens become more politically aware and assertive regarding their rights, elected leaders who place the welfare of the people above personal and factional interests will succeed and survive, while corrupt leaders will be rejected and voted out of office.

(b) Institutional Reforms

Jayaprakash Narayan viewed corruption as a barrier to socio-economic development that deceives people through the promise of prosperity and at the same time threatens individual freedom. To address this degradation, political and institutional reforms are necessary. Political stabilization is the prerequisite for social and economic progress. The adoption of a system based on single-member constituencies helps to curb the abuse of power. At the same time, an Assembly free from corruption confirms the people's faith in democracy. It is difficult to establish true democracy until the civil services are free of corruption. The staffs have acquired an extraordinary amount of power, which no government seems capable of controlling. The government should instead appoint a supervisory authority independent from the political branch to monitor the performance of civil servants. The institution of a harmonious and disciplined political organization is also desirable.

Contemporary Relevance of Narayan's Thought

Narayan asserted that the gravity of the problem of political corruption was an appalling reality of modern political life, even in a newly independent polity. His response was epitomized in his rallying call for a 'Total Revolution' through a political–cultural movement 'from below' to restore a regime of clean governance. His conceptual framework concurrently accords with political and ethical reflections on the use of power within a political–institutional context, while revivifying one of the principal political values that contemporary political theory has neglected: the need to restrict the arbitrary and self-interested exercise of political power. Contemporary political science explores new interdisciplinary and empirical strategies to deepen the understanding of political corruption and to propose effective anti-corruption tools. Within this setting, Jayaprakash Narayan's thought offers a significant source of insight and policy planning, for it not only provides an in-depth and penetrating analysis of the phenomenon of political corruption but also encourages a mode of governance utterly hostile to such irregular political conduct.

(a) Application in Current Political Climate

The increasing involvement of Indian citizens in demanding increased transparency and accountability for public officials indicates the contemporary relevance of the approach advocated by Narayan. His emphasis on composed resistance and national reconstruction, channeled through professions and service, fosters a strong commitment to the public interest and sustainable institutional reform. The urgent need to involve the youth in state affairs to re-establish democratic norms and effectively confront corruption is especially clear. The mobilisation of youth in projects involving voluntary self-employment, cooperatives, and vigorous intellectual discourse reduces the danger of violence in popular protest.

The recent rejection of Lokpal legislation, due to fears that the institution could become the instrument of yet another despot, demonstrates the difficulties of combating political corruption. Although the bill precipitated a general willingness to believe in the possibility of some measure of national reconstruction, there seems to be considerable doubt about the means. If Narayan's thought can play a role in contesting the widespread suspicion that reform is not possible—given the apparent impossibility of justifying the appropriation of power prevented from manifesting in a thoroughly anti-democratic façade—then it will be because it provides the necessary means rather than merely expressing the desired end.

(b) Lessons for Modern Governance

Jayaprakash Narayan offered valuable lessons for addressing political corruption in the contemporary world. Grassroots movements to promote ethical leadership emerged as necessary prerequisites for democratization and development, capable of restoring the connection between elected officials and the electorate. The evolution of the particle archive also provides practical support for implementing these strategies. Today Indian public officials encounter limited anti-corruption mechanisms. Narayan's prescriptions for political reforms remain relevant. Such recommendations await diligent adoption by political and governmental

leadership upon the superannuation of the current regime. Adjacent democratic countries including Pakistan and Bangladesh stand to benefit from the encouragement of grassroots movements that organically generate influential leadership from below. While economics, 'one of Narayan's deep concerns, frequently receives immediate attention, forthcoming research should also emphasize historical, intellectual, political, and philosophical analyses to fully comprehend his contributions and enduring relevance.

Challenges in Combating Political Corruption

Jayaprakash Narayan's critique of political corruption became a source of inspiration for grassroots movements that demanded fundamental changes in the country's administrative system. Strategies proposed by Narayan, such as advocating for grassroots movements and recommending institutional reforms, continue to find resonance even in contemporary settings. However, efforts to combine ongoing democratic reforms with this agenda have encountered formidable obstacles.

Colonel Viplav Tripathi's systematic examination of these challenges highlights a range of institutional barriers and public engagement difficulties. Institutional barriers include resistance from entrenched bureaucratic systems, lack of political will, and vested interests that benefit from opaque governance structures. Public engagement challenges encompass widespread apathy, limited awareness of anti-corruption measures, and difficulties in mobilizing collective action against corrupt practices. Despite these obstacles, civil society has persisted in advancing the fight against political corruption, partially mitigating the inertia surrounding information campaigns and reform initiatives.

(a) Institutional Barriers

In the Indian context, political leaders control vital services and also influence their distribution. Corrupt politicians rely on unscrupulous civil servants with authority to extract resources on their behalf, rewarding them with lucrative postings. Ministers also encourage and protect corrupt officials within their ministries because they generate personal wealth and provide financial support for electoral expenses. The fate of whistle-blowers often depends on whether they use appointed channels or go outside the system; those who follow official procedures usually face intimidation and reprisals. Criminalization of politics is a critical issue impeding the fight against corruption; roughly 30% of members of parliament have serious criminal charges that relate to corruption. Public distrust of UPA-II was due to high-profile corruption scandals, and the government's violent response to the 2011 anti-corruption movement further harmed its reputation. The passage and effectiveness of the Lokpal bill remain uncertain because of concerns about potential corruption within the institution, the dilution of proposals in the original bill, and the scrutiny of the ombudsman's composition. Major reforms are needed to address legislative weaknesses that grant immunity to public officials, create a more transparent business environment, and strengthen and depoliticize law enforcement agencies. Limiting the use of violence by political authorities to an accountable judiciary and ensuring the equitable distribution of power and prosperity are essential to tackling institutional corruption. Anna Hazare emphasizes that a strong regulatory framework, transparency, accountability, reduced bureaucracy, and advanced technology are necessary to fight corruption. Effective laws like the Right to Information Act and Lokpal are critical, and leaders must demonstrate sacrifice and righteousness, rising above selfishness and greed. These values, deeply rooted in Indian culture and employed by historic figures such as Buddha, Ashoka, Vivekananda, and Gandhi, remain vital for mobilising society against corruption.

(b) Public Perception and Engagement

The extent of political corruption directly correlates with public apathy, which hinders legal and civil society actions; the perceived futility of protests against such corruption allows it to thrive unchallenged. Another obstacle is the lack of accountability, transparency, and

follow-up in corruption investigations conducted by mandated agencies. Establishing independent, transparent, fair, and reliable enforcement institutions can help restore public faith in the system and encourage cooperation in anticorruption efforts. Additionally, many corruption issues stem from bureaucrats who exploit government power for personal gain; educating these officials in values and ethics can alter their attitudes and reduce such misconduct.

Future Directions for Research

Academic interest in political corruption is growing rapidly in modern political science, especially during periods of political crisis. Economists, criminologists, psychologists, sociologists, and many other researchers are also addressing this interdisciplinary topic. A lot of effort is going into the revitalisation of research on corruption, and much remains to be done. The insights of Jayaprakash Narayan might therefore prove useful for the proper direction of future research initiatives on political corruption.

In all the contemporary discussion, the Scarfe–Chakraborty–Hazare model immediately springs to mind. Their proposals are extremely congruent with the ideas of Jayaprakash Narayan in several respects. It might prove profitable, therefore, to interpret the ideas of these three authors on the basis of the insights of JP. It is hoped that as a result the relevance and importance of political philosophy can be established even more clearly. In addition, they lay the foundation for a research programme directed towards the formulation of an integrated model for the analysis and amelioration of corruption. JP's ideas, which constitute broad perspectives, will be supplemented on the basis of the critical inspections of the three authors. It is essential to try to use interdisciplinary methods to create a strong theoretical framework along these lines.

(a) Emerging Trends in Political Science

A number of emerging trends in political science offer new perspectives to consider in the study of political corruption and efforts to combat it. The analysis of these trends provides direction for future research and points to potential interdisciplinary collaborations to develop a comprehensive understanding of corruption and anti-corruption reforms. One emerging trend involves the recognition that political corruption arises not simply as a function of individuals' personal ethical lapses, but rather within the context of the broader political structures within which they operate. Individuals' choices to engage in corrupt behaviour are substantially influenced by the institutional and systemic dynamics of their political environment. In this respect, corruption can be understood as a systemic problem that is shaped by structural factors beyond the control of individual political actors. The implication of this insight is that efforts to address political corruption must adopt a wider, systemic perspective. Combating corruption effectively requires attention to institutional design and governance arrangements, rather than focusing solely on the moral character of officeholders.

Another emerging political-science perspective focuses on the role of civil society in combating political corruption. An important function of a vibrant civil society is its capacity to exercise effective scrutiny of the government and to hold governing political actors accountable. Correspondingly, the health of civic institutions and the level of public engagement in collective action to oppose corruption are key determinants of the success of anti-corruption efforts. Considerations of the role of civil society stimulate further questions concerning the conditions that foster social mobilisation to oppose corruption. Moreover, given the central importance of civil- society efforts in anti-corruption initiatives, understanding the challenges to their effectiveness emerges as a highly salient issue.

(b) Interdisciplinary Approaches

Promising new directions in corruption research are emerging from ongoing trends in political science and the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches. Although the interdisciplinary imperative has become a ubiquitous and largely unquestioned ideal within

the contemporary academic environment, the process of developing institutional support for such work remains uneven. At the same time, interdisciplinary approaches that explicitly address the role of corruption as a major development challenge are only just beginning to emerge. This even as scholars continue to acknowledge the importance of using rich, multidisciplinary understandings to develop effective solutions to corruption. The overall message is clear: a more comprehensive understanding of the political economy and institutional aspects of corruption requires the integration of disciplinary boundaries theoretically and methodologically.

Even though research on corruption continues to stie sustained eort and progress in generating theory and on providing comprehensive empirical coverage, there is still considerable excitement about understanding incorporated in new trends and frameworks for research—a excitement stimulated, in part, by eorts that advocate "a wider range of theories and methods, and that are inherently interdisciplinary". Building on some of these recent developments, a stronger focus on the mechanisms that allocate power is proposed. The principal objective behind facilitating the emergence of political science trends in corrupt related research and the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches, therefore, relates to the possibility of deepening and extending understanding within this area of research and hence enabling more rigorous examination of the many unresolved issues and questions in political corruption, Developing a conceptually more comprehensive approach also opens up possibilities for establishing delimiters and tighter boundaries for narrowing coverage. The process can thus facilitate a much-needed re-framing of what constitutes political corruption and severely curtail its spectrum in terms of phenomena, phenomena types, explanations, and correlations, which will in turn strengthen the potential for more robust and inductive analysis of this still challenging topic.

Conclusion

Jayaprakash Narayan's writings are a powerful indictment of the systemic corruption plaguing Indian politics. His arguments are rooted in a pragmatic optimism that stresses the need to cleanse the public life of corruption. He was acutely aware of the Islamofascist elements of this corruption—public officials using their vast influence and power to enrich themselves, their friends and families, eroding society and its institutions. His emphasis on collective effort and youth mobilisation, with subsistence responsibilities borne by the elders, remains an important call to action. Narayan's approach complemented the subsequent 1974 fight against corruption led by the Lok Sangharsh Samiti, United Trade Union Congress (UTUC), All India Students Federation (AISF) and All India Youth Federation (AIYF), which was remarkably successful in purging corruption from the area. If combined with new anti-corruption technologies, and a recommendation system based on social networking and the "viral principle" of grassroots mobilisation, Narayan's notion of socio-political cleansing may yet be realised. Such an event would mark an extraordinary breakthrough for India, and endorse Narayan's political and social vision as both practicable and deeply relevant.

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