

## The Crises of Democratic Order

### 1. Problems in India after the elections of 1971 - (1970s)

A) The Congress gave the slogan 'Garibi Hatao' in election of 1971 but the social and economic condition didn't improve much.

B) The Bangladesh crisis put a heavy strain on India's economy, this was followed by war b/w India & Pakistan.

(C) After the war US govt stopped all aid to India.

(D) Prices raised by 23% in 1973, a high level of inflation caused a lot of problem to the people.

(E) Industrial growth was low, unemployment was high

(F) Monsoon failed in 1972-73 due to this agricultural productivity declined.

\* In this environment of dissatisfaction the opposition parties were able to organise popular protests against the Congress. The Marxist-Leninist (Maoists) groups or Naxalites grew strong specially in West Bengal.

### 2. Movement in Gujarat: →

(i) In Jan, 1974 students in Gujarat an agitation against rising prices, and against corruption. This protest was joined by major opposition parties leading to the imposition of President's rule in Gujarat.

(ii) Moraji Desai, an important leader of Congress (O) demanded for fresh election.

(iii) In June 1975, Assembly election were held in Gujarat, Congress was defeated.

### 3. Movement in Bihar: →

(i) Students started protesting against rising prices in March 1974 in Bihar (Unemployment, Corruption)

(ii) Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) was invited to leave their movement.

(iii) He joined the movement on the conditions that it will remain non-violent and will not limit itself to Bihar only.

(iv) JP asked the Bihar govt to resign which it refused. There were strikes, bandhs <sup>(congress)</sup> etc.

(v) JP wanted to make it a nationwide movement. Along with this agitation, the employers of the Railways gave a call for nationwide strike.

(vi) JP led a huge rally to the parliament. He was supported by Non-congress parties like BTS, Congress (O), Bhartiya Lok Dal etc.

" Both the Congress and Bihar movements are seen as anti-congress and as an opposition to the leadership of Indira Gandhi.

### \* Railway Strike of 1974 :->

(i) The National Coordination Committee for Railway men's struggle led by 'George Fernandes' gave a call for nationwide strike by all employees of the Railways for pressing their demands related to bonus & Service Condition.

(ii) The govt didn't accept their demand which led to the Railways Strike in 1974.

(iii) The govt. declared it illegal, arrested many of the leaders.

(iv) After 20 days strike was called off without any settlement.

### \* The Naxalite Movement :->

(i) In 1967, a peasant uprising took place in Naxalbari police station of Darjeeling in West Bengal under the leadership of

local cadres of the Communist Party (Marxist)

- (ii) It spread to many states of India, it came to be known as the Naxalite movement.
- (iii) In 1969 they broke off from CPI (M) and formed a new party called (CPI-ML) (Marxist-Leninist) under the leadership of Charu Majumdar.

4. Methods & Aims: - (snatched land from rich landlords, give poor farmer)

- (i) They believed in democratic means & ways.
- (ii) They advocated the use of violent means to achieve their political goals. (believed in guerilla warfare)
- (iii) The West Bengal govt tried to suppress this movement strongly but it didn't end, and spread to other states.
- (iv) Around 75 districts in 9 states are affected by this naxalited violence specially in backward tribal areas.

Reasons for the growth of Naxalite Movement

- (A) forced labour
- (B) Exploitation by outsiders
- (C) Use of resource by outsiders
- (D) Exploitation by many leaders.

Steps taken by the govt: -

Stren steps taken to suppress this Naxalited violence, Many have been killed, which is criticized by (HRC)

\* Conflicts between Judiciary and Executive: ->

In 1973 in the Keshavananda Bharti case, a vacancy arose for the post of chief Justice of India. It had been a practice to appoint the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court the chief Justice. But the govt didn't follow this norm and appointed Anand Ray as

as the Chief Justice of India. The three senior judges, who were not considered, had given rulings against the govt. (41)

## \* Declaration of Emergency

(1) 12th June 1975 - Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha of Allahabad High Court passed a judgement declaring Indira Gandhi's election invalid, following a petition filed by Raj Narain, a 'Socialist' leader.

(2) The opposition parties led by JP pressed for Indira Gandhi's resignation, organise a huge demonstration on 25th June 1975.

(3) He asked the army, police & govt employees not to obey ~~the~~ <sup>illegal</sup> immoral orders. So everyone seemed to be turned against the Congress, more than ever before.

(4) The govt in response declared emergency on 25th June, 1975, declared that there was a threat of internal disturbances and invoked article 352.

"Emergency a condition in which normal democratic politics can't function and special powers are granted to the govt."

### Action taken during emergency: →

(i) On the night of 25th June 1975 the PM recommended and imposition of emergency to the President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.

(ii) After midnight electricity to all the major news paper offices were disconnected.

(iii) Early morning, a large no. of opposition party leader and workers were arrested.

### Consequences: →

- (i) Strikes were banned
- (ii) Opposition leaders were put in Jail.
- (iii) Govt. Suspended the freedom of Press.
- (iv) Press ~~Censorship~~ Censorship imposed.
- (v) Govt. banned some organisations like RSS, Jamaat-e-Islami.
- (vi) Various Fundamental Rights of Citizens were suspended.
- (vii) Excessive use of Preventive Detention was done.
- (viii) In April 1976, the Supreme Court overruled the High Courts and accepted Government's plea which showed that even Supreme Court didn't protect the rights of the citizens.
- (ix) Many Newspapers like the 'Indian Express' and the statesmen protested against censorship. Many journalists were arrested.
- (x) Some eminent writers returned their awards to protest against the suspension of democracy.
- (xi) 42nd amendment was passed during this time and many changes were made in the Constitution.

### CONTROVERSIES REGARDING EMERGENCY: →

- (i) Emergency one of the most controversial episodes in Indian Politics.
- (ii) In May 1977, the Janata Party govt appointed a commission of inquiry headed by Justice J.C. Shah to inquire the malpractices done by the govt. during emergency.
- (iii) Indira Gandhi was told to appear before 'Shah Commission' but she refused to answer any questions.
- (iv) She wrote in a letter to Shah Commission that some forces were trying to remove her from power through extra-Constitutional means.

- (43)
- (V) CPI supported Congress during emergency but later regretted that it was an error to have supported the Emergency.
  - (VI) It was seen that the movement led by JP was non-violent & in a democratic country, people have the right to protest against the government. There was no need to suspend democratic functioning and install emergency.  
- The threat was not to the unity and integrity of the country but to the ruling party and to the PM itself.

The critics say that Indira Gandhi misused a constitutional provision meant for saving the country to save her personal power.

### During Emergency :->

- (1) Govt introduced a 20 points programme which included land reform, land redistribution, review of agricultural wages, worker's participation in management, eradication of bonded labour etc.
- (2) Urban middle class was happy, that agitations will end and discipline will be enforced.
- (3) Poor people hoped for the effective welfare programmes.

### Criticism :->

- (1) Most of these promises were not fulfilled.
- (2) Shah Commission report said that nearly 1 lakh people were arrested under preventive detention law.
- (3) In all, 676 opposition leaders were arrested.
- (4) Sanjay Gandhi's role in demolition (displacement of people living in Delhi's poorer localities) and forced sterilisation in Delhi (for controlling over population) became very controversial.

## Lesson learnt after Emergency :-

The emergency brought out both the weaknesses and the strengths of India's democracy.

- (i) Most important lesson that it is most difficult too.
- (ii) It brought out the uncertainty of the provisions of the Constitution regarding emergency.
- (iii) A major amendment has been done after this, that internal emergency can only be declared in case of 'armed rebellion' and it is necessary that the advice to the President to proclaim emergency must be given in written by the Council of Ministers.
- (iv) It was seen that the institutions like Police and administration were turned into political instruments of the ruling party.

## POLITICS AFTER EMERGENCY

The election of 1977 were turned into a referendum on the experience of the Emergency. "Specially" in North India where the impact of the emergency was felt most strongly.

The opposition fought these elections on the slogan "Save Democracy".

It was very much clear and visible that the governments which violated the democratic norms were punished by the voters. In the end we can say that the experience of ~~the~~ the 18 months of emergency 1975-1977 ended up strengthening

The foundation of democracy in India.

## LOK SABHA ELECTION - 1977

1) The major opposition parties came together and formed 'Janta Party' under the leadership of J P Narain, who became a popular symbol of restoration of democracy.

### Results of 1977 elections:

- (1) For the first time since independence, the Congress Party was defeated in the Lok Sabha elections.
- (2) Congress could win only 154 seats in the Lok Sabha.
- (3) Janta Party and its allies won 330 out of 542 seats.
- (4) There was a strong reaction against Congress in North India where it lost in every constituency like Bihar, UP, Delhi etc.
- (5) Congress got a good no. of votes in the South and in certain many seats in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha due to the fact that impact of emergency was not felt equally in all the states.
- (6) A major change was seen as the middle class from North India started moving away from Congress and moved towards Janta Party.

JANTA GOVERNMENT OF 1977 :- There were three candidates

for the post of new PM that were

- (i) Morarji Desai - rival to Indira Gandhi
- (ii) Charan Singh - leader of Bharatiya Lok Dal
- (iii) Jaggivan Ram - a senior minister in Congress Govt.

## Reasons for the failure of Janta Govt: →

- (1) It lacked direction
- (2) It lacked leadership
- (3) It lacked a common programme.
- (4) Could not bring a fundamental change in previous policies, couldn't offer anything new.

### Result: →

- (1) Janta Party split and Morarji Desai lost majority in less than 18 months.
- (2) Charan Singh from govt with the support of Congress and when Congress withdraws its support the govt. collapsed within 4 months only.
- (3) In Jan 1980, fresh election were held Janta Party was defeated badly.
- (4) Congress won 353 seats in Lok Sabha and came to power again.

→ It was seen that the voters in democracy are the real power & they do not show their faith in an unstable and quarrelsome govt.

→ A change in party system was seen - Since 1969 the Congress shed its image of an umbrella party with accommodational difference ideology. Now it focused on a particular ideology i.e. only socialist & pro-poor party.

→ Now the importance of OBC was seen in election.

→ The period of emergency is also called as the period of Constitutional crisis & political crisis.

Important Questions

1. Mention any two reasons due to which Janata Party won the elections of 1977.
2. "Governments that are perceived to be anti-democratic are severely punished by the voters". Explain the statement with reference to the emergency period of 1975-77.
3. The emergency declared on <sup>June</sup> 25, 1975 is seen as a blip on Indian democracy? Assess its impact on the party system in India.
4. What is 'Naxalite Movement'? Evaluate its role in Indian politics.
5. Examine the legacy of the Emergency of 1975.
6. How did the Emergency of 1975 benefit the Indian democratic set-up?
7. Explain any two consequences of the 'Declaration of Emergency' provided in the Constitution of India.
8. Evaluate the role played by Jayaprakash Narayan during 1975-77.
9. What is the restoration of the Congress after the general elections of 1977? How did it differ from the earlier Congress system from 1950 to 1960?
10. Analyse any three reasons for imposing emergency on 25th June 1975. Did the government misuse its emergency powers? Give any three arguments in support of your answer.
11. "Government that are perceived to be anti-democratic are severely punished by the voters." Explain the statement with reference to the emergency period of 1975-1977.
12. What is meant by Emergency? Was the Emergency declared on 25th June 1975 on the request of the PM, Indira Gandhi, necessary? Support your answer with any four arguments.
13. Why was the national emergency declared in India on June 25, 1975? Analyse any two consequences of this emergency.

Chapter 5