

## **Movement Against the Congress Government and the Context of Emergency in Indian Politics**

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### **Abstract**

The most discussed chapter of Indira Gandhi's political career is the imposition of Internal Emergency on 25 June 1975 across India. Mrs. Gandhi established her authority over the whole of India by imposing the Emergency. The main aims of this study that to explore the real reasons why Indira Gandhi imposed emergency. Various political analysts and leaders of congress-opposition parties have blamed Gandhi's power politics as the for the imposition of Emergency. On the other hand, many have blamed the undemocratic nature of Indian politics at the time as the reason for Mrs. Gandhi's imposition of Emergency. In order to explore the real reasons for the imposition of emergency, it is particularly necessary to discuss the nature of the anti-central government in India in the 1970s. because the anti-Congress-government movement in various states, later changed to anti-Indira movement. And the Emergency was the ultimate result of the anti-Indira movement.

Keywords: Emergency, Congress Politics, Navnirman Movement, Total Revolution, Demand of Resignation.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Nothing was less inevitable in Indian politics than Indira Gandhi's rise to power. Indira Gandhi came to power because she appeared to have a set of paradoxical political qualifications, most significantly, of indistinctness and ambiguity (Kaviraj, 1986). In 1971, Indira Gandhi's Congress came to power with a huge majority in parliament with the slogan 'Garibi Hatao'. In the same year, Indira Gandhi's role in the emergence of independent Bangladesh that made her India's most popular leader (Dagmar, 2013). This had an inevitable impact on the state assembly elections in 1972. After the Congress-opposition parties were cornered in the 1971 Lok Sabha elections, in the 1972 state assembly elections, the electoral debacles of CPM, Jan Sangh, Congress (O), Socialist Party and other political parties made Indira Gandhi's political role overwhelming. Basically, there was no political leader in India at that time to

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challenge Indira Gandhi's political leadership. But when India's economic situation began to deteriorate from 1974, it had an inevitable impact on Indian politics. Since 1971, the economy of India started to decline. The main reasons for this are: (a) the crisis in Bangladesh and the resulting expenditure by the Indian government on relief materials for one crore refugees, (b) India's massive expenditure on preventing Pakistan's invasion and the cessation of US aid, (c) reduction in good grain production due to lack of rain in 1972-1973, (d) increasing the price of oil four times by OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), the world's oil supplier etc. The Government of India had no control over these events. As a result, the prices of goods increased up to 30 percent in 1973-74 (Dhar, 2000). Indira Gandhi's government was not responsible for any of the causes of this economic crisis. The Fifth Five Years Plan came into effect from 1 April 1974. The plan aimed to: (i) eradicate poverty, (ii) achieve the financial self-sufficiency, (iii) increase the GDP growth rate, (iv) expansion of labour resources, (v) development of primary education, drinking water supply and health services in villages and (vi) development of agriculture and large-scale industries. But the biggest obstacle in front of the implementation of this plan was the growing economic crisis of the country (Chatterjee, 2021). At this time, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and WB (World Bank) imposed various conditions on lending to India. Chief among these conditions was the relaxation of government controls on imports and exports. For this overall situation, Indira Gandhi's government to adopt several unpopular policies. Promulgated the Anti-Inflation Ordinance on 1 July 1974. It also suspended the wage hike of government employees and ordered that half of the increased dearness allowance be deposited with the government. Salary ceiling is also fixed in the private sector. Besides, workers earning more than 15000 per annum were ordered to compulsorily deposit 4 to 8 percent of their salary with the government (Dhar, 2000, a). the Reserve Bank of India also increases the interest rates on loans during this period.

The above-mentioned steps taken by Indira Gandhi to overcome the country's financial crisis had an impact on the country's politics. opposition political parties criticized Indira Gandhi's government as anti-worker interests. Indira Gandhi's government was criticized as capitalist for accepting the terms and conditions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In this context, from 1974 to 25 June 1975, four movements against the Congress government took place. The first movement was the movement of railway employees. The second was the Navnirman movement in Gujarat. The third was the complete

revolutionary movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan and the fourth was the movement organized to demand the resignation of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister. Analyzing the nature of these four movements, it will be seen that none of these movements were democratic. The undemocratic nature of these movements gave to Indira Gandhi the opportunity to impose emergency. For the imposition of emergency, the opponents of Indira Gandhi blamed her power politics. Sometimes inciting Naxalite politics, sometimes resorting to caste and communal politics and sometimes moving in completely undemocratic ways to oust Indira Gandhi- these were the ways of the anti-Indira political parties. This undemocratic trend of anti-Indira politics that created the context for the imposition of Emergency (The Hindustan Times, 2021).

The objectives of this research are threefold. First, it aims to investigate the underlying reasons behind the declaration of emergency by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Second, it seeks to explore the political landscape of India during the emergency period. Third, the study intends to identify the causes that led opposition political parties to launch agitations against the ruling Congress party. In line with these objectives, the study addresses several key research questions: Why did Indira Gandhi impose the emergency? What was the condition of Indian politics during the emergency period? And why did the opposition parties resort to agitation against the Congress government? These questions guide the inquiry into one of the most controversial and politically significant periods in modern Indian history.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The research work is qualitative in nature based on the primary and secondary data. Books, theses, articles and papers are considered secondary data, while laws, acts, constitutional articles are considered primary data sources. Government websites of India and newspapers are considered primary data sources. After the collection data from various sources is interpreted and certain conclusions are drawn.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Movement of Railway Employees and Railway Strike**

The 1974 Indian railways general strike has entered the history and folklore of the Indian workers movement. Such a movement inevitably became not just an industrial dispute but a

major political issue as the government moved to meet the strike as a challenge to its authority (Sherlock, 1989).

In 1974, as the economic crisis deepened across India, the railway workers began agitation for an increase in wages. At that time, there were two main unions of railway employees in India. The Socialist party affiliated union was the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) and the Congress controlled union was the National Federation of India Railwaymen (NFIR). In 1973 George Fernandez became the President of AIRF. The Socialist party was the opposition party to the Congress. Fernandez took the leadership of the labour movement, bringing together the anti-Congress railway unions to form the National Co-ordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle (NCCRS).

Due to the economic crisis of the country, it was not possible for the government to fulfil the demands of the railway employees. Regardless of the country's financial crisis, railway employees started a rail strike across India on May 8, which led by George Fernandez. A rail strike is enough to paralyze the whole of India. Realizing this essence, the railway strike began. Fernandez's aim was to paralyze Indira Gandhi's government with a rail strike. He spoke about the strength of railway employees in his speech. Fernandez pointed out in his speech that if the railways stop, India's power generation, production of iron and steel industry and production of other industries will must be stop. Not only the railway employees but also workers in other sectors led by various trade unions went on strike. Its inevitable impact began to fall on the economy of India (Mathew, 2024). Skyrocketing prices of daily necessities on the one hand, rail strike across India on the other hand, upset Indira Gandhi's government. Those political parties that could not challenge Indira Gandhi's political authority in a democratic manner, they supported the railway strike. It is true that peaceful strike is the right of workers or common people. but striking without considering the economic situation of the country is indicative of narrow selfishness. At this time, the aim of the anti-Congress political parties was to disrupt the economy and administration of the country by supporting the strike (Nitya, 2018).

When the railway labour movement became violent, it became the prime duty of the government to suppress the movement at any cost. The central government decided to suppress this movement by enforcing the Defence of India Act of 1971. By implementing this law, the government declared strike illegal. Apart from this MISA applied strike were arrested by the government. The government arrested prominent railway leaders including George

Fernandez. Thousands of railway workers were sacked by the government and many employees were thrown out of the railway quarters by the government (Kapoor, 2015). Within twenty days, on May 28, Indira Gandhi's government forced the agitators to call off the rail strike with military and police forces. The railway movement gave Indira Gandhi the title of anti-labour interest (Mondal, 2021). Apart from this, the opposition parties of the Congress crossed the primary stage through the formed an anti-Indira coalition by supporting the railway workers movement. This movement helped the anti-Congress political parties forget their ideological differences and unite (The Hindu, 2024).

### **Navnirman Movement in Gujarat**

After the railway workers agitation, the politics of Gujarat became turbulent. Due to the lack of rain in 1972, the production of foodgrains across India was much lower than before. The prices of rice, wheat, sorghum and millet increased many times compared to earlier. In Gujarat, the Hostel authorities of L.D. Engineering College enhanced the mill charge of the students due to the fire-price of foodgrains. In protest of this, the students of that college started the first protest. The agitation organized against the increase in hostel mill charge, it soon turned into an agitation against the increase in the prices of daily necessities. This student movement against increase the price of daily necessities spread across Gujarat (The Times of India, 18 Feb. 2017). As the movement heated up, the Jana Sangh and Morarji Desai's Congress (O) started supporting the movement directly. In short time, the student movement under the auspices of Jana Sangh, Congress (O), and C.P.M. became an anti-Congress-government movement in Gujarat.

The student movement in Gujarat was organized through the Construction Youth Association. At this time, there were allegations of corruption against the cabinet of Gujarat Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel. Gujarat's student society and various political parties demanded the government's resignation. The Congress(O) took the final opportunity of this movement in Desai's home state of Gujarat. Losing the contest with Indira Gandhi in electoral politics, the opposition parties of the Congress used the student movement as a ladder to occupy the power. The whole of Gujarat was abuzz with anti-Congress agitation. At that time, the Congress had 140 MLAs out of 168 total seats of Gujarat assembly (Mondal, 2021, a). The agitators started besieging the houses of the MLAs and harassing them in various ways. Many Congress MLAs were forced to resign under the threat. The Gujarat government also enlisted

the help of the police and military. In this context, President V.V. Giri advised Indira Gandhi to impose President rule. But Mrs. Gandhi did not agree at first. But as law and order continued to deteriorate, she was eventually forced to impose the President rule. On her orders, Chimanbhai Patel resigned from the post of Chief Minister (Bhagat-Ganguly, 2014). But even with the resignation of the Chief Minister, the opposition did not calm down. Morarji Desai started a hunger strike for demanding the dissolved the Gujarat assembly and re-election. Jayaprakash Narayan supported this movement in Gujarat. Later, he led the movement against the Congress government.

Initially, the movement in Gujarat was a completely non-political student movement. But this movement gained political character with the help of anti-Congress political parties. The movement was completely chaotic in nature. The anti-corruption activists against the Gujarat government chose direct struggle instead of going to court as a way of protest. By ousting an elected government with majority support through strikes and sieges, the then anti-Congress leaders created the ultimate example of undemocratic behaviour. The wave of Gujarat movement spread to other states of India. Jayaprakash Narayan left his long political asceticism and entered direct into the politics. the success of the Gujarat student movement influenced him to lead the anti-Congress movement (Kureshi, 2025).

### **Jayaprakash Narayan and Total Revolution**

After the student movement in Gujarat in 1974, a similar movement started in Bihar. The student society in Bihar was greatly influenced by the success of the movement in Gujarat. During this time, the students of Bihar also started a movement against the increase in the prices of daily necessities. In Bihar, Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Samajwadi Yuva Jansabha and Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti started the student movement. Later, the three organizations jointly formed the Bihar Rajya Sangharsh Samiti and they started the movement against the Congress-ruled state government. Like Gujarat, the politics in Bihar also became turbulent due to anti-Congress political parties. On the request of Bihar student society, Jaiprakash Narayan came forward to lead the student movement. The Bihar movement under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan did not aim at bringing about a few changes. It aimed at a total revolution in the country (Shah, 1977). Bihar is the birthplace of Jaiprakash Narayan, so his popularity among the students of Bihar was unquestionable. Jaiprakash started a direct anti-Congress movement in Bihar. It was in the wake of the Bihar movement that Jaiprakash

presented his theory of Total Revolution. He started opposing the entire Congress party, because of the corruption and lack of ideology among a section a section of Congress leaders. JP's (Jaiprakash) aim was to oust the Congress by creating an anti-Congress mentality throughout India. For that, instead of quelling students protests and discontent, JP tried to strengthen them. Initially, Jaiprakash Narayan's aim was to radically change the entire country through a complete revolution. Some of basic principles of JP's Total Revolution are- (i) reducing economic inequality, (ii) work provision for all, (iii) decentralized planning, (iv) balancing the prices of agricultural and manufactured goods, (v) development of agro-based industries, (vi) production of consumer goods through small village industries, (vii) modernization of agriculture, (viii) transfer the ownership of agricultural land to villages, (ix) not to destroy the democratic rights of the people with the help of police and military forces, (x) eliminating violence, etc (Verma, 2008).

The means that Jaiprakash advocated for realizing these goals were largely anti-democratic. For example, civil disobedience, non-cooperation and strikes etc. All the political parties that participated in the JP's movement, whose political parties were not committed to the goal of the complete revolution. Their only aim was to oust the Congress. Indira Gandhi's alternative leadership was needed to oust the Congress. But at that time, there was no leader among the opposition parties to challenge Indira Gandhi's political popularity. When Jaiprakash Narayan expressed his desire to lead the anti-Congress movement, he was welcomed by the leaders of almost all political parties in India except the Left parties. There is no doubt that JP gave a great opportunity to the leaders of the opposition parties to oust the Congress (Roy, 2019).

Jaiprakash Narayan took the leadership of the student movement in Bihar and organized a movement against the Congress led government in Bihar. His aim was to oust the Congress government and establish a government of the people in Bihar. Like Gujarat, Bihar was also heated by the politics of bandhs, strikes, sieges etc. He called for the formation of a parallel Congress government in Bihar. The Bihar government tried to suppress this movement of Jaiprakash through force. It was the experience of Gujarat that forced the Congress government to take strict action against the agitators. JP promoted his total revolution as a manifestation of Vinoba Bhava's Sarvodaya Movement. But in reality, there was a lot of difference between the Sarvodaya movement and the total revolution of JP. The capturing of

state power and party politics had no place in Mahatma Gandhi's Sarvodaya thought. Gandhiji's Sarvodaya's goal was to establish a stateless and party less village swaraj. But JP's entire revolution was full of party politics. However, the several political parties were involved in JP's total revolution to oust the Congress government (Selbourne, 1986). On March 1975, JP along with his supporters marched in parliament with a Charter of People's Demands, which had nothing to do with his self-invented theory of total revolution. Jayaprakash Narayan compared his campaign to Gandhiji's Dandi Campaign. But Gandhi did the Dandi campaign for Salt Satyagraha. He did not try to raid the centre of power of the British government (Selbourne, 1986, a). Apart from that, the National Co-ordination Committee was formed in November 1974, with the representatives of four opposition parties on the initiative of JP.

Under the leadership of Jaiprakash Narayan, the movement against the Congress government in Bihar gradually turned from full revolution to opposition party politics. JP started a 'non-violent direct movement' to oust the Congress government in Bihar instead of taking the democratic route. During this period law and order situation deteriorated in entire Bihar due to bandh and hartal. The anti-Congress political parties took the path of anti-parliamentary politics at this time. Leaders who believed in democracy like Atal Bihari Vajpayee also talked about the need for movement beyond parliamentary politics. at the Calicut Conference in December 1974, the Socialist Party also emphasized the anti-constitutional path and the need for a mass movement for the movement against the Congress government. In this context, CPI(M) leader E.M.S. Nambudripad also opined that India's problems could not be solved through parliamentary process (Dhar, 2000, b). The situation in Bihar became fiery due to such thinking of political leaders.

Unable to force the resignation of the Congress government in Bihar, JP tried to raise the anti-Congress movement to an all-India level. The opposition parties in various states did not miss this opportunity. In Odisha, the leaders of Sarvodaya movement joined the student movement. Apart from student movement in Odisha, Bharatiya Lok Dal, Socialist Party, S.U.C.I. (the Socialist Unity Centre of India) and Congress (O) jointly started the movement. In Madhya Pradesh too, Jana Sangh, Socialist Party and Bharatiya Lok Dal joined the anti-Congress movement. In Karnataka, the Jana Sangh, the Socialist party and Congress (O) formed the Karnataka Navnirman Samiti to organize the anti-Congress movement. JP himself led the student movement in Uttar Pradesh. Apart from these states, the anti-Congress movement



became strong in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi. In everywhere, the aim of the movement was to oust the elected Congress government. This movement of Jaiprakash Narayan evoked a great response among the common people of the country. But the main reason for this is not his ideology or the ideology of the Congress's opposition parties. The main reason for this was the abnormal increase in the prices of daily necessities and uneven development. It was the economic plight of the common people that strengthened the anti-Congress movement.

During the anti-Congress Movement, Jaiprakash Narayan made several statements which were anti-democratic. During the agitation in Bihar in 1975, Jaiprakash said that revolution is never possible through electoral or parliamentary way. But whether the revolution is peaceful or bloody, it must be a revolution of the people and by the people (Dhar, 2000, c). In a speech to the students of Utkal University in Odisha on March 1975, Jaiprakash said that he would not hesitate to call upon the military and police forces to revolt against the government, if necessary (Chatterjee, 1986). At a youth conference in Allahabad in June 1974, JP said, "Thought he himself would not take part in any armed rebellion, he would not restrain revolutionaries from taking to guns" (Dhar, 2000, d). At this time, an important news was circulated in the media where it was said "He had never taken up arms against the government, nor did he want violence, but if the people wanted it from him, he would do that at an appropriate time" (Dhar, 2000, e). Jaiprakash Narayan's such statements made Indira Gandhi's government concerned about his intentions. Apart from the Jan Sangh, various organizations including Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Anandmargi, Naxals joined the anti-Congress movement led by JP. CPI (M) did not join the movement directly, but party had moral support for the JP's movement. As a result, the whole of India was engulfed in bandhs, strikes and political violence. At this stage, the movement of JP was a movement against the Congress government. JP felt that Congress-ruled state legislature had lost popular support. So, they should resign, so that the people can elect their representatives anew. But the main target of JP's criticism was Indira Gandhi. Jaiprakash Narayan considered Indira Gandhi to be an anti-democratic and authoritarian. On the other hand, Indira Gandhi also considered JP to be an anti-democratic and anarchist. Due to these conflicting mindsets, it was not possible to reach any solution between the two. India became agitated again, centred on the judgement of the

Allahabad high Court on the election of Indira Gandhi. In this context, leaving aside the theory of total revolution, JP started a movement demanding the resignation of Indira Gandhi.

### **Agitation for the Demanding of Indira Gandhi's Resignation and Impose the Emergency**

Jaiprakash Narayan called Indira Gandhi's government a "One women government". JP felt that Indira Gandhi condoned the corruption. He informed Indira Gandhi about the huge expenditure on elections. In particular, JP drew Indira Gandhi's attention to Congress candidate Nandini Shatapathi's spending of huge sums of money in Odisha by-election. But Indira Gandhi told him that she (Mrs. Gandhi) had no idea on this matter that from where Mrs. Shatapathi collected the money (Nayak, 1975). Apart from this, JP was unhappy on Indira due to Sanjay Gandhi's allegations regarding the Maruti car manufacturing plant. Jaiprakash Narayan directly criticized Indira Gandhi's government as corrupt, authoritarian and opposed to civil rights of citizens. JP wrote about Indira Gandhi in his prison diary, "I had always believed that Mrs. Gandhi had no faith in democracy, that she was by inclination and conviction a dictator" (Narayan, 1977). This mutual animosity between Jaiprakash Narayan and Indira Gandhi further complicated the problem.

Although Jaiprakash Narayan was able to unite the opposition parties to the Congress, the common people did not spontaneously join the movement. On the other hand, the government is able to bring inflation under some control, the general people discouraged about the JP movement. When the JP's agitation was fading, the Allahabad High Court judgment on Indira Gandhi's election gave a new weapon to the agitators. As a result, a movement started for demanding the resignation of Indira Gandhi.

12 June 1975 was the most critical day of Indira Gandhi's political life. On that day, the results of the Gujarat Assembly elections were announced. In this election, Congress (O) (led by Morarji Desai), Jan Sangh, B.L.D., and Socialist party are formed Janata Morcha (Coalition). The Janata Morcha won a landslide victory in this election. Indira Gandhi herself campaigned for the Gujarat assembly elections many times. This defeat of Congress tarnished Indira Gandhi's image. On the same day, justice Jagmohan Singh of the Allahabad High Court declared that Indira Gandhi's election of 1971 from Rae Bareilly was invalid, because she did not properly obey the rules and regulations of election. As soon as this verdict was announced, the opposition camp led by JP took to the streets demanding the resignation of Indira Gandhi.

Justice Jagmohan Singh became a hero to the Congress opposition. The total revolution of Jaiprakash Narayan, which Pranab Mukherjee refers to as “total revocation movement” in his book. It was revived by this judgment of the Allahabad High Court (Mukherjee, 2014).

This judgment of the Allahabad High Court helped the Congress opposition parties to directly promote Indira Gandhi as anti-democratic. This judgment of the High Court became a major issue in anti-Indira politics (Bar & Bench, 2021). The day after the verdict, Jaiprakash Narayan demanded the resignation of Indira Gandhi. He opined that if Indira Gandhi do not resign after this verdict, it would be anti-democratic. On June 13, opposition leaders staged a sit in front of the Rashtrapati Bhavan for demanding the resignation of Indira Gandhi. The opposition parties of the Congress decided to observe “Resignation Demand Week” to demand Indira Gandhi’s resignation (Mukherjee, 2014, a).

Most of the Congress MPs were with Indira Gandhi at this moment of political crisis. They remained unwavering in their respect for Mrs. Gandhi and faith in her leadership. Congress workers loyal to Indira Gandhi prepared to respond to the opposition movement politically. A historic rally was called at Delhi’s Boat Club on June 20 to show loyalty and unwavering support to Mrs. Gandhi. Lakhs of Congress workers and supporters from all over India attended that rally. Indira Gandhi said in emotional terms that the opposition wants to destroy the country’s democracy. She alleged that the opposition was plotting to oust her in the name of ‘rule of law’. Addressing the Congress workers, Mrs. Gandhi said in an emotional voice, “The question is not whether I live or die, but one of national interest” (Mukherjee, 2014, b). Before this rally, on June 18, Indira Gandhi said in the Congress parliamentary party meeting, “My continuance does not depend on what the opposition demands but on what my own party and people want” (Mukherjee, 2014, c). In that same meeting, a resolution was passed referring to Indira Gandhi as “indispensable to the nation” (Mondal, 2021, b). In this context, Congress president Dev Kant Barua said to Indira Gandhi that “India is Indira, Indira is India” (Mukherjee, 2014, d). The confidence of Congress leaders on Mrs. Gandhi in her during this political crisis, it proves that she was the pillar of the Congress. Indira Gandhi decided not to resign from the post of Prime Minister after seeing the enthusiasm of the Congress workers inside and outside the party organization. Another reason for not yielding to opposition pressure was the Supreme Court’s stay order on the Allahabad High Court judgment. The Congress appealed to the Supreme Court against the judgment of the Allahabad High Court on June 23. Supreme

Court's justice Krishna Iyer stayed the judgment of the Allahabad High Court. This moratorium allowed Mrs. Indira Gandhi to assume her duties as Prime Minister. But it is said that while Mrs. Gandhi can participate in parliamentary debates, but cannot participate voting. The verdict, while not entirely in Indira Gandhi's favour, preserved her post as Prime Minister. But the opposition parties of the Congress ignored the verdict and started protests all over India for demanding the resignation of Indira Gandhi. The political suppression always creates violation and that brakes peace in South Asia where India is not an exceptional (Nandy, 2022).

In Indian governance system, an emergency is declared by the President during the specific crisis. Articles 352 to 360 of the Indian Constitution provide detailed descriptions of emergencies. Although the nature of the Indian governance system is federal, during an emergency it becomes a unitary system (Jain, 2024). The Indian Constitution specifies in Article 352 what constitutes a National Emergency (Sanghadia, 2017). It is referred to as a "democratic emergency". The inclusion of the phase 'armed rebellion' in the Indian constitution debates to the 44<sup>th</sup> amendment (Mathue, 2023). Furthermore, the 38<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act of 1975 provides an exception for the proclamation of a National Emergency from undergoing judicial review (Epari, 2022). In normal times it is free to work as a federal system, but in times of emergency it is designed to make it work as through it was a unitary system (Constituent Assembly Debate, 2023).

A state of emergency is declared in the country due to internal disturbances or due to an attack by a foreign state (Goel, 2021). The President declares a state of emergency in the country on the instructions of the Prime Minister. However, it has to be approved by the parliament. During a state of emergency, the central government can also curtail the fundamental rights of the citizens, according to Article 358 and 359 of the Indian Constitution (Shadija, 2021).

In the context of the judgment of the Allahabad High Court and the protests by anti-Congress political parties, the options before Indira Gandhi were- (1) to resign as Prime Minister, (2) to dissolve the Lok Sabha and proceed to elections, (3) installing an important leader of the party as Prime Minister, and (4) usurping all administrative powers by invoking Article 352. In this context, if Indira resigned, that's mean it would have been an acceptance of the opposition's accusations against her. On the other hand, if any other Congress leader is installed as the Prime Minister, she may not have control over the party in the future. And if the

Lok Sabha was dissolved, the winning chances of Congress were less. Because Indira Gandhi realized from her experience in Gujarat that if the opposition parties form an anti-Congress alliance, so electoral defeat of Congress is inevitable. Considering all these aspects, Indira Gandhi thought of issuing emergency (The wire, 2021). Because if the state of emergency is imposed, she can suppress the opposition movement on the one hand. On the other hand, would be end to the politics of bandhs, strikes and sieges and also improve economic conditions of the country. However, the politics of suppression and politics of populism are two types political expression. In India's political culture populism also plays significant role (Nandy and Akon, 2023). Many researchers have said due to such actions of Indira Gandhi, whose emergency is it- India's or Indira's (Jones, 1975)? So, Indira Gandhi thought it best to declare an internal emergency (Bose & Jalal, 2024). Despite having criticism, in comparison with Pakistan, Indian democracy is qualitatively better. In Pakistan democracy is entirely disrupted (Nandy, 2015). Even in two other South Asian states, such as Nepal and Bhutan democracy either disrupted or per-mature stage (Nandy, 2018).

## **CONCLUSION**

It is true that Indira Gandhi did not act unconstitutionally by declaring emergency. And it was the politics of bandhs, hartals and sieges by the opposition parties since 1974 that allowed Mrs. Gandhi to impose emergency. The big mistake of the Congress opposition parties was to try to remove the elected government through the movement. Although it was possible to dissolution of the Gujarat assembly through movement, it was a wrong policy to force Indira Gandhi to resign through the agitation. Indira Gandhi did not think of imposing an internal emergency when the whole of India was in turmoil due to the railway workers movement, the Gujarat movement and the Bihar movement. But when her position as Prime Minister was in danger, she thought of declaring emergency. In this case, it will not be irrelevant to say that in any democracy in the world an elected government cannot be removed without elections.

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