

The 1975 Emergency: Personalizing and Patronizing Democratic Political Power



Ravi. C M

Assistant Professor,
Deptt.of English
University College of Arts,
Tumkur University,
Tumkur,Karnataka

Abstract

This paper tries to explore how the declaration of 1975 Emergency became the event that personalized and patronized the political power within the democratic framework. The 1975 Emergency has been very crucial in the political evolution of the world's largest democratic nation like India. It is tempting to view India's national political evolution that has been divided into three phases. The phase one unfolds how the new born national political consciousness became the unifying force not only to oust the British but also to help in the political formation of a nation called India. The second phase gives an account of the enormous efforts of the national political leaders to build India as the democratic nation by implementing the Western models of the constitutional and developmental practices in the post-independent India. The third phase begins with an enactment of the 1975 Emergency and the repression that followed. It gives an account of how the democratic socio-political practices were changed and the constitution was subverted to serve the personal interests of the rulers. Further, it shows how the Indian national politics continued to evolve with democratic and constitutional repression and subversion till date.

Keywords: Emergency, national politics, evolution, personalize and patronize, democracy, constitution, post-independence.

Introduction

The most controversial enactment of the post-independent Indian national politics was the imposition of the internal Emergency on 26th June 1975 which is considered to be the culmination of institutionalized authoritarianism in India. This historical political event did have the most considerable influence on the recent Indian politics. Thus, the proclamation of the Internal Emergency under the Article 356 of the Indian constitution has been always subject of critical inquiry. Though, much has been said and written exhaustively about it, the close reading and revisiting of this 'darkest period' would enable us to understand the present socio-political system of our nation. If an attempt is made to investigate the route cause for the prevailing socio-political problems like reckless political defection, breaking ideologies carelessly for the personal interests, practices of unethical deeds, nepotism, designing prejudiced agendas, strategies to defuse the socio-political dissents, the diplomatic use of bureaucrats to safeguard the personal interests of the rulers, the acts of judicial manipulations, subverting constitutional codes in the name of amendments, the art of centralizing the power in the decentralized system, the practices of illegal acts in the legal framework, the corruption, undemocratic election practices, repression of the socio-political opponents and their voices of oppositions, making others subservient to the person with authority and the practices of 'horse trading' in politics etc..., the answer would be the 1975 Operation Emergency. The careful observations of these problems would reveal the fact that whatever we witness in today's politics, has its point of reference to the 1975 'Operation Emergency' by Smt. Gandhi's government. It is in this context, the present paper views the Emergency, a constitutional provision used to personalize and patronize the political power in the democratic framework.

It was imposed to repress the political dissent against the central Congress government headed by Smt. Gandhi. The national act of repression to defuse the political dissent was done by keeping the fundamental rights of the constitution under suspension. Thus, the democratically ruled nation with the coalition of different classes under the socialist leadership has turned out to be highly centralized and autocratic political machine owing subservience to a single individual. The democratic system with the subversion of constitution through reckless amendments appeared to politically disintegrate under an autocratic rule.

Aim of the Study

The paper is basically aimed at looking at the Emergency which can be termed as Operation Emergency which, having had an absolute impact on the present day politics became the subject of critical analysis with which one can understand how the undemocratic practices are carried out in a democratic frame work to either personalize or patronize the political power.

The Citizens, Freedom and Democracy

Constitutional articles, statutory provisions, and judicial decisions do guarantee and ensure the citizens the freedom of expression and questioning in a liberal democracy. All these, however, itself can't guarantee and ensure a fearless action of the citizens in its working. Democratic system in comparison to any other political systems, as it is theoretically believed, provides more conducive legal and political conditions to the citizens in the exercise of its working freedom. As a result, the citizens enjoy and exercise their freedom within a given legal framework as long as that given legal framework works. But, if such given legal framework either fails or is made to fail by any democratically elected authority by taking advantage of the letters of the law then what could ensure and protect that freedom of the citizens in that democratic political system? A simple answer could be a sense of fearlessness among the people of the mass. However, fearlessness is not a medicinal product to be injected in veins of people. On the contrary, it is the product of one's courage, conviction and commitment to serve selflessly for the welfare of the society is considered to be the strength of democracy.

Personalizing and Patronizing Democratic Political Power

Indian society is a complex and variegated society whose inner dynamics are rarely understood by outsiders. Like China, India too has been virtually a universe unto itself, a microcosmic society which has its own deep-running currents and cross-currents was really shocked by the sudden declaration of the Internal Emergency. The dream with which republic India was built by the selfless sacrifices of great visionaries was shattered into pieces by the act of imposing the emergency. It was really a herculean task for the national political leaders of the freedom movement to join fragments together in the framework of Western models of democracy and constitution. Their enormous efforts to design these models to fit into the nation like India which is virtually a continental polity with its various regions, language groups, cultural units, minorities, etc..., were really laudable. The rule of democratically elected governments by upholding the national interests, political ethics and the constitutional values had been the hallmark of Indian politics. It was during the Nehruvian era the construction and the implementation of the democratic and constitutional rule was carried out seriously on the ideological grounds of socialism. Nehru, an ardent lover of socialism, hadn't left any stone unturned to keep the democratic and constitutional rule in force.

There were constructive efforts to strengthen the democratic system. But, during the Post-Nehruvian era the democratic rule was eclipsed by the dominant political rule. The dominant power that

emerged started to undermine democratic and national political values and endorsed personal political interests. Such an era of domination began with the emergence of Smt. Indira Gandhi who became the first matriarchal power to contest the hegemony of the so called patriarchal Indian polity.

The emergence of Mrs. Indira as a domineering political leader in the Indian national politics posed a great threat to the democratic and constitutional practices. The 1971 elections gave her the absolute mandate to form the government not only at the centre but also in most of the states in India. As the absolute power corrupts absolutely, she started to damage the ideal political and democratic practices and patterns of the Nehruvian era. Her shift from ideological politics to identity politics made her to be more obsessed with the power. Being consumed by this obsession, she planned to centralize the power. Hence, the very democratic idea of decentralization of power to keep the constitutional practices in force had been eclipsed. This marks the new political trend in India that allowed the politicians to use their political power to satisfy their personal agendas and vested interests. As a result, the socio-political and economic conditions of the nation started to decline in the mode that was similar to the poetic lines of W. B. Yeats, "Turning and turning in the widening gyre The falcon can't hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the center can't hold;" (Edited book, 2004; 24). The structure of Indian democracy was falling apart without the desired organizing principle. Hence, the nation suffered from socio-political discontent and unrest.

Mrs. Gandhi's beginning as the head of nation was tempestuous. It was characterized by continuous popular turmoil, mass economic discontent and political agitations provoked by many crises. This made her to script a new rule different from that of the traditional one to address the complex issues. Faced with mounting problems Mrs. Gandhi realized that a pragmatic response was needed, a will to act that was free of all political and democratic theories and paradigms. She started to develop the courage, determination and ruthlessness to handle the socio-political crises of the nation. She didn't seem to believe in democracy which in turn made it very vulnerable.

This marks the beginning of new political history of India which is completely different from that of Nehruvian era. She mastered the political skills to deal with the socio-political crises of the nation. She grew up as the leader who could influence and command others to obey her rule. She understood the significance of political power that boosted her confidence. This made her to have her own approach to deal with the national crises. Her nepotistic and prejudiced approaches gave shock to the most of the national political leaders including the stalwarts of her party who started to view her as the Anti-Nehruvian ideologist. But, she rejected it out rightly. It is interesting to know the way she defended herself. She said, "Do not tell me I don't know Nehru's ideology. We worked together. I was intimately connected with all his thinking. In any case I do not see myself in the role of an imitation of Nehru. If I think it is necessary to depart from his policies and principles in the interest of

the country, I shall not hesitate to do so" (Jayakar, 1995; 196).

Her acts of getting control over her party, making her followers to act according to her will and attaining control over state institutions such as armed forces, law enforcement agencies, judiciary institutions, financial institutions, executive bodies etc., indicate how she established hegemony over democratic system.

The 1971 elections turned out to be the most significant in bringing back the popular legacy of the Congress rule. The stunning victory of the Congress (R) with 352 seats out of 518 was more spectacular than her father's previous elections. Cutting across regional, linguistic, caste and communal lines, the congress had once again assumed the predominant position it had in the Nehru era of Indian politics. The victorious and vanquished agreed that this victory was chiefly the tireless work of one person. It was really an overwhelming personal triumph for Smt. Indira Gandhi. The result of this election magnified her image larger than life. Her new born self-confidence made her to assert on a B B C program, "We are not dependent upon what other countries think or want us to do. We know what we want for ourselves and we are going to do it , whatever it costs . . . we welcome help from any country; but if it does not come, well, it is all right by us" (Quoted in ZareerMasani, 1977; 241). "Smt. Indira Gandhi, as the writer Khushwant Singh commented, "has successfully magnified her figure as the one and the only leader of national dimensions" (Quoted in Guha, 2007; 447). This had really unleashed her political power both at the national as well as at the international level. But, the intelligentsia was skeptical about her newly acquired power as khushwant Singh ominously commented that,

"However, if power is voluntarily surrendered by a predominant section of the people to one person and at the same time opposition is reduced to insignificance, the temptation to ride roughshod over legitimate criticism can become irresistible. The danger of Indira Gandhi being given unbridled power shall always be present" (Khushwant Singh, 14 March 1971).

It is very interesting to analyze Khushwant Singh's words with special reference to Smt. Gandhi who transformed herself completely with the absolute power. Her political strategies after this election seemed to be completely different from that of previous rule. It had been thought that she had prepared to write a new political history with an unbridled power hushing very effectively all legitimate criticism in a democratic way. She started master the art of exploiting the democracy and the constitution to enhance the absolute power of the state. Her success at the polls emboldened Smt. Gandhi to act decisively on many socio-political issues. She grew up as a strong political leader who is determined to solve any complex national problems without any compromise.

The glorious victory of the 1971 elections made Smt. Indira Gandhi as an Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient of the ruling Congress (R) party. Her party the Congress (R) now became known as Congress (I), for 'Indira'. It was during this time she settled the conflicts between East and West

Pakistan and supported the formation of Bangladesh. The victory over Pakistan unleashed a huge wave of devotional sentiments for Smt. Gandhi. She was referred as modern day *Durga* and an incarnation of *Shakti* or female energy. She was riding the crest of popularity after India's triumph in the war that was hailed as "India's first military victory in centuries" (Quoted in Guha, 2007; 416). It really enhanced her reputation among middle-class Indians as a tough and shrewd political leader. This great accomplishment of the Indian army turned out to be her major political capital that made her people say, 'Indira is India and India is Indira'. Her victory made her to say:

India is stronger today than it was twenty-five years ago. Our democracy has found roots, our thinking is clear, our goals are determined, our paths are planned to achieve the goals and our unity is more solid today than ever before. Nations marched ahead not by looking at others but with self-confidence, determination and unity (As reported in *The Hindu*, 16th August 1972).

The careful analysis of her speech reveals the fact it is as much a narrative of the nation as her own growth as the unquestionable leader of the country. It can also be read as her message to all her opponents, making them realize her growth as the superpower prime minister of the secular democratic nation. It seems that she spoke much about her changed political attitude that she later displayed during the Emergency period. As she found firm roots in national politics, she marched ahead not submitting herself to anybody. It is not the Indian democracy that found firm roots but she who found it, got the clear thinking, determined goals that she wanted to achieve and clear plans to lead an unquestioned leader in Indian politics. Her changed political perceptions taught her the art of centralizing the power that later made her behave as an autocrat.

Therefore, instead of much expected phase of all round national development she felt that she must acquire the levers of power in the states, which were, after all, the agencies for implementations of much of the needed reform and developmental programs and policies. Consequently, elections were held in March 1972 for the legislative assemblies except Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Orissa. As expected, the Congress won a massive victory and secured majority of seats everywhere. This made Indira Gandhi to unify her command at both the Centre and the States with a virtual control over the party, cabinet and the chief-ministers. While commenting on her dominance Bipan Chandra says, "the dominance she enjoyed across the political system suppressed even that of Nehru in his time" (Bipan Chandra, 2003; 13). The convention was that the chief-ministers used to be selected by the local legislatures wherever the Congress came into power. But, Smt. Gandhi broke this convention by appointing her own candidates for the respective positions of the assemblies after 1972 spectacular victories. Her nepotistic and autocratic attitude endorsed her act of centralizing the political power. This made her to be very confident to sack any of her opponents within or outside her party. This made her to personalize and

patronize democratic political power given by the citizens.

Establishing Personal Hegemony over Democratic and Constitutional Practices.

The Union Government led by Smt. Gandhi seemed to last its national interest. The major national developmental programs such as eradication of poverty, socio-economic inequalities, check on the ever increasing inflation and corruption and many such matters of paramount importance were completely ignored. As Bipan Chandra opines, "By 1972 the Congress was subject to a creeping nepotism, and, to galloping corruption as well" (Bipan, 2007; 470). Smt. Gandhi seemed to be interested in the politically motivated activities rather than her commitments to her responsibilities. In March 1973 she appointed a new chief justice of the Supreme Court A. N. Ray who was elevated while three colleagues were ahead of him. Her unconstitutional decision made everyone to look at her suspiciously. It was justified by saying that the State intervention is must in the government's commitment to restructure the entire socio, economic and political fabric of the nation. She wanted even the Supreme Court to remain quite whenever she thinks to disturb the basic structure of the Indian Constitution. She wanted even to curb the judiciary freedom. But, her act of chaining the Judiciary to function at her command was strongly condemned. Justice K. S. Hegde, in a public lecture in Bombay had sadly expressed his concern that,

"The political exigencies and self-interest of individual leaders [had] perverted the working of the administrative machinery. He thought that 'the centre has encroached on the powers reserved to the states, by recourse to extra constitutional works'. And he commented on the growing corruption, of 'too much hankering after pelf and patronage' (Quoted in Guha, 2007; 474).

Mrs. Gandhi's acts of establishing her hegemonic rule would have continued if the year 1973 had not witnessed the socio-political unrest due to bad governance and natural calamities. The government failed to resolve this social unrest decisively. The rising discontent and the political unrest made the economy and the polity go downhill in 1973. The people became skeptical about the credibility of Indira Gandhi's leadership and the Congress governments at the centre and the states. As the result the congress had experienced the great failures in several by-elections across the country. The despair and frustration with the existing situation spread like the wild fire.

As misfortunes rarely come single, most parts of the country suffered a terrible drought, which persisted in some areas up to 1975. Consequently, there was a sharp decline in agricultural production, water reservoirs dried up, heavy power cuts due to lack of power generation and no demand for the manufactured goods in the rural areas due to fall in agricultural production. The massive increase in the price of petroleum and its products came as a last nail in coffin, creating a large gap between imports and exports and drained India's foreign exchange reserves and further increased the budgetary deficit and deepened the economic recession. The galloping inflation was worst since independence which became

the cause for the sharp rise in the price of rice, wheat, pulses and other articles of daily consumption. The union government didn't act briskly to check these unhealthy developments. Thus, drought and shortages of food grains gave an opportunity to unscrupulous traders and manufacturers to indulge in speculation, hoarding and black marketing. The people started to accuse the ruling party for colluding with hoarders and black marketer. The ruling party had witnessed the erosion of support in urban and rural areas. The intelligentsia thought that the ruling party was not intended to remove *Garibi* (poverty) but the *Gribs* (poor).

"Economic recession, unemployment and price rise, which eroded workers' real income, led to large-scale industrial unrest and a wave of strikes and sit-ins in different parts of the country during 1972-1974" (Bipan, 2003; 18). The opposition parties started to play a dominant role in supporting these strikes against the ruling party. But the government, instead of resolving the problems democratically, began to treat them as illegal. The Prime Minister Smt. Gandhi broke the railway strike in May 1974 calling it as illegal under the Defense of Indian Rules and she dealt with striking employees severely. She made it clear that it was no longer possible for the government to meet popular agitations by catering to or appeasing all the disgruntled social groups as it had done earlier. By this time, she must have forgotten the fact that she was the head of the nation not ruled by her but by the democratic constitution. Hence, she started to perceive 'fair as foul and foul as fair'. She felt that time was out of joint and wanted to join it with her despotism. Her obsession with power blinded her democratic perceptions.

By 1974 the socio-political unrest caused by the complete failure of the ruling party to deal with the serious crises found its expression, as Bipan Chandra says:

"Through strikes, student protests, demonstrations, anti-government rallies, *gheraos* and *bandhs*, which often turned violent. Many colleges and universities—and at one time most of them—were closed for prolonged periods, often proceeded by *gheraos* of university and college administrators, bus burning, stone throwing and other form of violence" (Bipan, 2003; 19).

The acts of dissents are quite natural in a democratic and constitutional system whenever the citizens find their ruling power fail to cater to the nagging socio-political crises. It was during this time the people found the congress government unfit to be in power. Therefore they decided to oust the dominant and the most corrupt congress rule by the national movement supported by the people from all walks of life. This popular movement began in Gujarat and later in Bihar headed by Jayaprakash Narayan. But, the central and the state governments ruled by the congress party decided to douse the spirit of these movements by martial powers. . It seemed that Mrs. Gandhi might have modeled her moves at this juncture on West-Pakistan's Yahya Khan who dealt with protesters in an undemocratic way in his country. Of course, one leader learning from another leader is a precedent in the international politics. She appeared to be an omnipotent despot who decided to stamp out

any single rebellion either against her or her governments. She became an unyielding political figure.

The socio-political images of the nation had broken into pieces. The shadow of anarchy that enveloped all around was beyond any one's comprehension. It has been confirmed as BipanChandra says, "the Congress party had been declining as an organization and proved incapable of dealing with the political crises of 1974-75 at the state and grassroots level" (Chandra, 2003; 22). It was because, as Inder Malhotra, an acute observer of Indian politics, notes, "most of the congress leaders had no interest in changing their mental outlook, working methods, lifestyle, factional functioning and addiction to self-advancement by hook or crook" (Inder Malhotra, 1989; 147). Mr. Gandhi too was not exempted from this. Instead of improving the poor socio-economic conditions of the middle class, the poor, the landless, the Harijans, and the tribal, she engaged in centralizing the political power in her hands. As the result, as BipanChandra says, "She virtually destroyed the federal structure of the part, developed during the freedom struggle and carefully nurtured after 1947 by Jawaharlal Nehru" (Chandra, 2003; 22). Her political domination made her a monarch. The rapid growth of unchecked corruption in large areas of public life became intolerable. The government acts of not punishing the corrupt politicians and bureaucrats had led to the public anger and cynicism. The mass questioned the Mrs. Gandhi's credibility and moral authority. The public thought that they were on the road to their demise. The desperation of the people from all walks of life contributed to the popular political turmoil that brought an end to Indira Gandhi's hegemony.

Hegemony versus Democracy and JP Movement

The students' movement that started in Gujarat turned out to be the most significant national movement in the political history of Independent India when the Bihar ChhatraSangharshSamiti asked JayaprakashNaryan, a great moral authority of Bihar and a hero of the freedom struggle, to lead their movement, to which he agreed on two conditions. The *first* being, he wanted it to be scrupulously non-violent and the *second*, he wanted it not to be restricted to Bihar. He joined the movement on 19th March 1974 saying that he could no longer "remain a silent spectator to misgovernment, corruption and the rest, whether in Patna, Delhi or elsewhere. He had now decided to fight for a real people's democracy" (Guha, 2007; 479). His entry gave the struggle a great boost, and also changed its name; what was till then the 'Bihar movement' now became the 'JP movement'. His attempt to set up 'Citizens for Democracy' for protesting citizens' rights and democratic institutions was really laudable. The people's disillusionment with Mrs. Gandhi and her governments had given him another opportunity to fight for 'Democracy'. He wanted to bring an end to the government that adopted personality-based politics rather than politics based on consensus. He wanted to rebuild the democratic structure which was replaced by the autocracy. He said, "The struggle in Bihar is not just a flash in the pan of history but a continuing process of revolutionary struggle. That is why I have called it a

struggle for total revolution" (Quoted in Chandra, 2003; 43).

Mrs. Gandhi had been taken by surprise by this sudden development in Gujarat. She realized that her surrender in Bihar was likely to set off a chain reaction in other states and in the end, threaten her position through a domino effect. Visualization of her own catastrophe made her to have a firm refusal to give a way to the JP movement and concede to the demand for the dismissal of the state government and the dissolution of the assembly in Bihar as she had done in case of Gujarat. She came to believe that the real and ultimate target of the Bihar agitation was her government at the Centre. In an interview to Blitz in December 1974 she said: "From the very beginning we have known that this movement was aimed at the Central Government and at me" (Reproduced in R. K. Karanjia, 1975; 43). She prepared to confront this undemocratic demand as she had secured the political power through democratic and constitutional means. There was no doubt that she had every right to continue in power. She treated JP's movement as a political threat and decided not to compromise with it but to confront it authoritatively.

Indira Gandhi having decided to take on JP movement as a challenge that she had to meet politically, she started to denounce the JP movement as unconstitutional. She also called it an illegitimate way to destabilize her government. Her constant criticism of JP movement strengthened JP's will to fight against the political evils. Moreover, her criticism helped to change the character of JP movement that determined to dislodge Congress and Indira Gandhi from power.

The decision of Allahabad High Court: A Prelude to the Emergency

She found herself in the whirlpool of problems when she had to face a challenge offered in the language of law. Immediately after Indira's election victory in 1971, her defeated opponent, a socialist, Raj Naryan had submitted an appeal in Allahabad High Court against the election result claiming that wide spread corruption practices were responsible for Indira's victory and that the election should be set aside. As Guha says, "the petition alleged that the prime minister had won through corrupt practices, in particular by spending more money than was allowed, and by using, in her campaign, the official machinery and officials in government service" (Guha, 2008; 488). According to the rule of law, the judge said, her election to Parliament was rendered null and void. It was a defining movement for Indian democracy and the rule of law that made even the most domineering prime minister to experience the worst setback of her political life. Thus, the 12th June 1975 turned out to be the most unfortunate day for Mrs. Gandhi. As the news spread, the distraught cabinet ministers of Mrs. Gandhi and many others poured in to meet the prime minister. Everybody knew that she had no choice other than to resign. The nation would not have witnessed the kind of political turmoil caused by the imposition of the Emergency if the judgment had asked Mrs. Gandhi to resign and quit her position there and then only. But, her anxiety about the way the Supreme Court might deal with the appeal she would

file, kept her tentative. The question that bothered everyone was, what should she do if the Court debarred her from seeking election for six years? Nobody had any answer to the question. As a result her instinctive response to 'resign immediately' disappeared. She and her close advisers came to the conclusion that she should not resign. Her decision was influenced by several national, political and personal factors.

What made her to believe that there would be political and economic chaos if she resigns? How could she think in a democratic system there would be nobody to fill vacuum except her? Why did she think that she was an indispensable national leader? Where did she get the strength to disobey the democratic and constitutional values? An inquire of this kind would allow us to reflect on her 'self' that changed drastically over a period of time. It reflects on her changed self from a democrat to an autocrat, who held herself above the rule of law. She must have thought that she was a political asset but not the liability for the country. , she appeared to be an aspiring dictator to be dislodged. JP had sharpened his attack and had begun calling the central government as KuldipNayar says, "a non-woman government, reduced to dictatorship under the façade of democracy"(Nayar, Emergency Retold, 2015; 32). Later the Supreme Court was to hear Mrs. Gandhi's appeal on and deliver its decision. "The court ordered that till the final disposal of her appeal by the full bench, her electoral disqualification 'stands eclipsed' and she could continue as prime minister and participate in Parliament's proceedings but she could not vote or draw salary as an MP" (Bipan Chandra, 2003; 69). As it gave a thunderous shock to Mrs. Gandhi and her 'yes-men', it made opposition to feel victorious. It also made the opposition to argue that "the conditional stay was a snub to Mrs. Gandhi, that the stigma of corruption continues, and her credibility stands destroyed, and that she could no longer function as a prime minister" (Chandra, 2003; 69). It was undoubtedly a golden opportunity for all her opposition to throw all their forces into the battle. Their demand to oust immoral and corrupt prime minister was renewed even more vociferously. JP denounced Mrs. Gandhi's continuation in office as illegal and unconstitutional. He appealed to the military, police and government servants not take orders from 'a disqualified head of a discredited government'. He also dared the government to try him for committing treason for making the appeal.

JP's Civil Disobedience Movement and Declaration of the Emergency

As the JP movement was determined not to let India to be Indira Gandhi's India, its followers decided to surround her house to prevent her going out or receiving visitors. They also planned to squat on railway tracks and see that the trains won't move. They also planned not to let the courts and government offices to function. They wanted to bring everything to a standstill until she resigns. Mrs. Gandhi too was preparing for the encounter authoritatively. When she addressed a public meeting she said that she won't be quiet and tolerate the forces which had been working not only to oust her from office but to liquidate her physically; to achieve

their designs, they had spread a wide net. She allowed her son Sanjay and his team to operate the mechanics of their pre-plan. It was Sidharth Shankar Roy, chief minister of West Bengal, who spelt out the course of action to stop the opposition attack. He told to Mrs. Gandhi that the only way to go about doing something was to declare internal emergency under the article 352 of the constitution that empowers the president to proclaim an emergency in case there was internal disturbance. He assured that this would give the government blanket power. He explained that the imposition of internal emergency would enable Mrs. Gandhi not only to silence all her opponents but also she could give any direction to any state, suspend Article 19 of the constitution or suspend the whole range of fundamental rights. Courts could be ordered not to entertain any suit seeking to enforce these rights and so on.

Mrs. Gandhi, at last, was greatly relieved to find herself acting under the constitution to execute a sudden attack on the opposition in an unexpected way. Now she became an 'Empowered Empress' who took a serious note of the agitation and civil-disobedience plan of the Opposition and the plan to *gherao* her house as well of the call to the armed forces, the police and government servants to disobey Mrs. Indira's government orders. She decided to press the panic button by letting her contingency plan for the declaration of emergency to come into operation. The time set for the action was midnight, 25 June 1975. Sanjay Gandhi and his men were getting ready for the kill. As the midnight approached, there was feverish activity in the prime minister's house. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was directly under the control of Ms. Gandhi had built up dossiers on government opponents, on critics, businessmen, bureaucrats and journalists. This helped so much to target her opponents to be arrested and punished. Mrs. Gandhi and her 'yes-men' set the ground ready for the battle with all precaution before they proceeded to RashtrapatiBhavan. She went to meet the president with Siddhartha Shankar Ray, nearly four hours before the dead line, who explained what the internal emergency would entail. It took 45 minutes for them to brief about the necessity to impose internal emergency to bring the country back to sanity. As the president was indebted to Smt. Gandhi for elevating him to the highest position in the country, he had not dared to question her, whether she opted for the emergency to save herself from loss of power or to give a shock treatment to erase her opponents. Thus, the proclamation of a state of emergency was signed by the president Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed on 25 June at 11.45 p. m.,. The proclamation of the emergency was brief and read as follows: "In exercise of the powers conferred by clause 1 of Article 352 of the Constitution, I Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, by this Proclamation declare that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened by internal disturbances" (Kapoor, 2015; 23).

Conclusion

It authorized the Mrs. Gandhi's regime the supreme power to impose press censorship, to suspend court proceedings regarding the enforcement

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of civil rights and to do all that which was necessary to restore the socio-political sanctity. By empowering Mrs. Indira's government to destroy the threats to national stability, security, integrity and unity, it allowed her to personalize and patronized the democratic political power.

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