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The Mistakes by Indira Gandhi During her Political Period

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ABSTRACT: Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi India's 3rd and only lady Prime minister in history. She had many marvelous achievements on her name which will never be forgotten in the history, like India's first nuclear test and also for some work, never done by any leader in the world like in December 1971 changing the world map with India's decisive victory over Pakistan in the liberation war, that led to the formation of independent Bangladesh. But there are some marvelous blunders also done by the same Indira Gandhi. Here are mentioned 3 mistakes done by her which can also not be easily forgotten by the nation and on which the question should be raised.

KEYWORDS: Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, world, achievements, nation

I. INTRODUCTION

The first mistake – In 1971 she had the great opportunity to resolve the Kashmir problem once for all, not only the Kashmir problem but also the terrorism issue. Pakistan would have not become a terrorist state creating problems for India.



In 1971 India had 93000 POW (Prisoners of war) which Indira Gandhi gave them for free along with the land captured by the Indian force. She could have put many sanctions on Pakistan like limiting the number of Army personnel in the area, taking back POK never interfering in Kashmir valley and many more just like the USA did to Germany after the first world war in 1918 in the treaty of Versailles. Beside this the Balochistani should not be oppressed by the Pakistani army. these are the same troops which were held POW in Bangladesh and after 1972 deployed in the Balochistan. This raises some serious questions on her geopolitics knowledge and strategies.



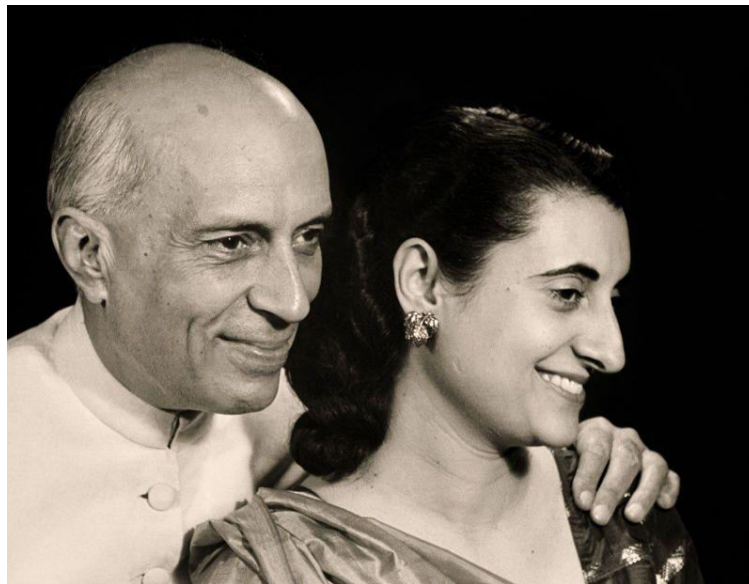
Second mistake – Emergency – in 1975 she tried to control the judiciary system just because in an election petition filed by her opponent, Raj Narain in 1971 (who later defeated her in 1977 parliamentary election from Raebareli), alleged several major as well as minor instances of using government resources for campaigning. On 12 June 1975, the Allahabad High Court declared Indira Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha in 1971 void on grounds of electoral malpractice. Many historians believe this being the one of the main reasons behind the emergency declared by her on 25 June 1975. During Emergency Police were granted powers to impose curfews and indefinitely detain citizens. All publications were subjected to substantial censorship by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. This shows her hunger for power that she didn't want to lose the PM chair and power at any costs.

Third mistake – the rise of Bhindranwale – in late 1970 Indira Gandhi supported the Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in a bid to split the Sikh votes and weaken the Akali dal its chief rival in Punjab. Bhindranwale was originally not very influential, but the activities of Congress elevated him to the status of a major leader by the early 1980s. Bhindranwale was responsible for the launching the Sikh militancy during the 1980s. Since the early 1980s, Bhindranwale was supported by Pakistan's ISI on his radical separatist stand, plans and operations and this rise of Bhindranwale which was ended up with operation blue star and which also became the reason of the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

Had Indira Gandhi not made these 3 mistakes, the nation would have remembered her as a different leader. But now whenever someone says her iron lady, such questions start bogging into the minds of countrymen.

II. DISCUSSION

Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi ,(19 November 1917 – 31 October 1984) was an Indian politician and a central figure of the Indian National Congress. She was elected as 3rd prime minister of India in 1966 and was also the first and, to date, only female prime minister of India. Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the 1st prime minister of India. She served as prime minister from January 1966 to March 1977 and again from January 1980 until her assassination in October 1984, making her the second longest-serving Indian prime minister after her father. During Nehru's premiership from 1947 to 1964, Gandhi was considered a key assistant and accompanied him on his numerous foreign trips. She was elected president of the Indian National Congress in 1959.



Upon her father's death in 1964, she was appointed as a member of the Rajya Sabha (upper house) and became a member of Lal Bahadur Shastri's cabinet as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. In the Congress Party's parliamentary leadership election held in early 1966 (upon the death of Shastri), she defeated her rival Morarji Desai to become leader, and thus succeeded Shastri, after his death, as Prime Minister of India. As prime minister, Gandhi was known for her political intransigency and unprecedented centralisation of power. She went to war with Pakistan in support of the independence movement and war of independence in East Pakistan, which resulted in an Indian victory and the creation of Bangladesh, as well as increasing India's influence to the point where it became the sole regional power of South Asia. Citing separatist tendencies, and in response to a call for revolution, Gandhi instituted a state of emergency from 1975 to 1977 where basic civil liberties were suspended and the press was censored. Widespread atrocities were carried out during the emergency. In 1980, she returned to power after free and fair elections. After Gandhi ordered military action in the Golden Temple in Operation Blue Star, her own bodyguards and Sikh nationalists assassinated her on 31 October 1984.

After her father's death in 1964 she was appointed a member of the Rajya Sabha (upper house) and served in Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's cabinet as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. In January 1966, after Shastri's death, the Congress legislative party elected her over Morarji Desai as their leader. Congress party veteran K. Kamaraj was instrumental in Gandhi achieving victory. Because she was a woman, other political leaders in India saw Gandhi as weak and hoped to use her as a puppet once elected: Congress President Kamaraj orchestrated Mrs. Gandhi's selection as prime minister because he perceived her to be weak enough that he and the other regional party bosses could control her, and yet strong enough to beat Desai [her political opponent] in a party election because of the high regard for her father ... a woman would be an ideal tool for the Syndicate

Gandhi's first eleven years serving as prime minister saw her evolve from the perception of Congress party leaders as their puppet, to a strong leader with the iron resolve to split the party over her policy positions, or to go to war with Pakistan to assist Bangladesh in the 1971 liberation war. At the end of 1977, she was such a dominating figure in Indian politics that Congress party president D. K. Barooah had coined the phrase "India is Indira and Indira is India. The first electoral test for Gandhi was the 1967 general elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The Congress Party won a reduced majority in the Lok Sabha after these elections owing to widespread disenchantment over the rising prices of commodities, unemployment, economic stagnation and a food crisis. Gandhi was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Raebareli constituency. She had a rocky start after agreeing to devalue the rupee which created hardship for Indian businesses and consumers. The importation of wheat from the United States fell through due to political disputes.

The Garibi Hatao slogan and the proposed anti-poverty programs that came with it were designed to give Gandhi independent national support, based on the rural and urban poor. This would allow her to bypass the dominant rural

castes both in and of state and local governments as well as the urban commercial class. For their part, the previously voiceless poor would at last gain both political worth and political weight. The programs created through Garibi Hatao, though carried out locally, were funded and developed by the Central Government in New Delhi. The program was supervised and staffed by the Indian National Congress party. "These programs also provided the central political leadership with new and vast patronage resources to be disbursed ... throughout the country.

III. RESULTS

In 1977, after extending the state of emergency twice, Gandhi called elections to give the electorate a chance to vindicate her rule. She may have grossly misjudged her popularity by reading what the heavily censored press wrote about her. She was opposed by the Janata alliance of Opposition parties. The alliance was made up of Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Congress (O), The Socialist parties, and Charan Singh's Bharatiya Kranti Dal representing northern peasants and farmers. The Janata alliance, with Jai Prakash Narayan as its spiritual guide, claimed the elections were the last chance for India to choose between "democracy and dictatorship". The Congress Party split during the election campaign of 1977: veteran Gandhi supporters like Jagjivan Ram, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna and Nandini Satpathy were compelled to part ways and form a new political entity, the CFD (Congress for Democracy), due primarily to intra-party politicking and the circumstances created by Sanjay Gandhi. The prevailing rumour was that he intended to dislodge Gandhi, and the trio stood to prevent that. Gandhi's Congress party was soundly crushed in the elections. The Janata Party's democracy or dictatorship claim seemed to resonate with the public. Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi lost their seats, and Congress was reduced to 153 seats (compared with 350 in the previous Lok Sabha), 92 of which were in the South. The Janata alliance, under the leadership of Morarji Desai, came to power after the State of Emergency was lifted. The alliance parties later merged to form the Janata Party under the guidance of Gandhian leader, Jayaprakash Narayan. The other leaders of the Janata Party were Charan Singh, Raj Narain, George Fernandes and Atal Bihari Vajpayee

In 1980, as a tribute to her son's dream of launching an indigenously manufactured car, Gandhi nationalized Sanjay's debt ridden company, Maruti Udyog, for Rs. 43,000,000 (4.34 crore) and invited joint venture bids from automobile companies around the world. Suzuki of Japan was selected as the partner.



The company launched its first Indian manufactured car in 1984. Following the 1977 elections, a coalition led by the Sikh-majority Akali Dal came to power in the northern Indian state of Punjab. In an effort to split the Akali Dal and gain popular support among the Sikhs, Gandhi's Congress Party helped to bring the orthodox religious leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to prominence in Punjab politics. Later, Bhindranwale's organisation, Damdami Taksal, became embroiled in violence with another religious sect called the Sant Nirankari Mission, and he was accused of instigating the murder of Jagat Narain, the owner of the Punjab Kesari newspaper. After being arrested over this matter, Bhindranwale disassociated himself from the Congress Party and joined Akali Dal. In July 1982, he led the campaign

for the implementation of the Anandpur Resolution, which demanded greater autonomy for the Sikh-majority state. Meanwhile, a small group of Sikhs, including some of Bhindranwale's followers, turned to militancy after being targeted by government officials and police for supporting the Anandpur Resolution. In 1982, Bhindranwale and approximately 200 armed followers moved into a guest house called the Guru Nanak Niwas near the Golden Temple. By 1983, the Temple complex had become a fort for many militants. The Statesman later reported that light machine guns and semi-automatic rifles were known to have been brought into the compound. On 23 April 1983, the Punjab Police Deputy Inspector General A. S. Atwal was shot dead as he left the Temple compound. The following day, Harchand Singh Longowal (then president of Shiromani Akali Dal) confirmed the involvement of Bhindranwale in the murder. After several futile negotiations, in June 1984, Gandhi ordered the Indian army to enter the Golden Temple to remove Bhindranwale and his supporters from the complex. The army used heavy artillery, including tanks, in the action code-named Operation Blue Star. The operation badly damaged or destroyed parts of the Temple complex, including the Akal Takht shrine and the Sikh library. It also led to the deaths of many Sikh fighters and innocent pilgrims. The number of casualties remains disputed with estimates ranging from many hundreds to many thousands.

Gandhi was accused of using the attack for political ends. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer stated that she attacked the temple complex to present herself as a great hero in order to win the general elections planned towards the end of 1984. There was fierce criticism of the action by Sikhs in India and overseas. There were also incidents of mutiny by Sikh soldiers in the aftermath of the attack.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

On 31 October 1984, two of Gandhi's Sikh bodyguards, Satwant Singh and Beant Singh, shot her with their service weapons in the garden of the prime minister's residence at 1 Safdarjung Road, New Delhi, allegedly in revenge for Operation Blue Star. The shooting occurred as she was walking past a wicket gate guarded by the two men. She was to be interviewed by the British filmmaker Peter Ustinov, who was filming a documentary for Irish television. Beant shot her three times using his side-arm; Satwant fired 30 rounds. The men dropped their weapons and surrendered. Afterwards, they were taken away by other guards into a closed room where Beant was shot dead. Kehar Singh was later arrested for conspiracy in the attack. Both Satwant and Kehar were sentenced to death and hanged in Delhi's Tihar Jail.

इंदिरा के हत्यारों की कहानी, जिनके लिए पहली बार ब्लैक वॉरंट रद्द हुआ



Gandhi was taken to the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences at 9:30 AM where doctors operated on her. She was declared dead at 2:20 PM. The post-mortem examination was conducted by a team of doctors headed by Tirath Das Dogra. Dogra stated that Gandhi had sustained as many as 30 bullet wounds, from two sources: a Sten submachine gun and a .38 Special revolver. The assailants had fired 31 bullets at her, of which 30 hit her; 23 had passed through her

body while seven remained inside her. Dogra extracted bullets to establish the make of the weapons used and to match each weapon with the bullets recovered by ballistic examination. The bullets were matched with their respective weapons at the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) Delhi. Subsequently, Dogra appeared in Shri Mahesh Chandra's court as an expert witness (PW-5); his testimony took several sessions. The cross examination was conducted by Shri Pran Nath Lekhi, the defence counsel. Salma Sultan provided the first news of her assassination on Doordarshan's evening news on 31 October 1984, more than 10 hours after she was shot.

Gandhi was cremated in accordance with Hindu tradition on 3 November near Raj Ghat. The site where she was cremated is known today as Shakti Sthal. In order to pay homage, Gandhi's body lay in state at Teen Murti House. Thousands of followers strained for a glimpse of the cremation. Her funeral was televised live on domestic and international stations, including the BBC. After her death, the Parade Ground was converted to the Indira Gandhi Park which was inaugurated by her son, Rajiv Gandhi.

Gandhi's assassination dramatically changed the political landscape. Rajiv succeeded his mother as Prime Minister within hours of her murder and anti-Sikh riots erupted, lasting for several days and killing more than 3,000 Sikhs in New Delhi and an estimated 8,000 across India. Many Congress leaders were believed to be behind the anti-Sikh massacre

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