

2023

UNION CABINET

Background Guide

INMUN





Letter From The Director

Dear Delegates,

It is a privilege to welcome you to the Union Cabinet. My name is Gautam Chari and I will serve as your Director for the Union Cabinet this year. I study in Grade 12 at Inventure Academy and have been MUNning since the 8th grade.

My most memorable experiences as a delegate come from participating in crisis committees, more specifically historical crises. My aim as your director is to ensure that delegates have the same experience as I did, engaging in debate, using directives to cause World Wars and most importantly, media scandals for political personages.

MUNs as a whole have been a catalyst in my growth, leading me to do research pertaining to past and current world affairs. It helps me keep an open mind and representing various perspectives is a skill that I am able to use in my daily life. Learning how to speak with purpose and confidence is another such skill, one that has to be honed through practice, which is provided by butting heads with my fellow delegates.

I'm a huge Chelsea fan and play quite a few sports myself, some being football, basketball and volleyball. I love reading manga and watching anime and make it a part of my everyday routine. I'm a big foodie and also like to cook, although I tend to bake more often. I would like to believe that I'm easy going in committee and like to allow people to have freedom with their crisis arcs. A good crisis arc goes a long way in catching your EB's attention and making the committee more interesting for everyone.

Operation Blue Star has various political and social ramifications. It was conducted during a tumultuous time in India's history and is debatably one of the most extreme decisions to ever come out of the PMO. There is a lot of scope for debate and a potential change in the course of events. I hope to see innovative directives that aim to further the story of the committee while working towards a persona's aims as well.

Any delegate with doubts or queries is welcome to contact me via mail:
gautam.chari@inventureacademy.com/uncab@inventureacademy.com The EB is always ready to help.



Introduction

One of the most turbulent eras in Indian history, 1984 was marked by social turmoil, economic distress, and political unrest. The government sought to address growing inflation, a budget deficit, and a balance of payment crisis while contending with internal and external turmoil. In June 1984, the Indian Army conducted a military action called Operation Blue Star, under the orders of the then-prime minister, Indira Gandhi. Sikh militant-led insurgency in Punjab was gaining strength leading to parallel movements throughout India. To “maintain national security” the Indian government hoped to quell the growth of these movements through the show of force, which became the cause for the birth of Operation Blue Star.

Its aim was to apprehend Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a Sikh Separatist leader associated with the Damdami Taksal. Bhindranwale was hiding out in the Golden Temple in Amritsar, upon being invited by another Sikh leader, Harchand Singh Longowal of the Shiromani Akali Dal. The Golden Temple, or the Harmandi Sahib, is the preeminent sacred site of the Sikhs. Many terrorists and civilians died during the Operation resulting in domestic and international criticism of the government's extreme actions. Public discontent, violent protests and riots were frequent during this period. This resulted in Indira Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards, which sparked additional anti-Sikh riots.

Operation Woodrose, another military operation, was also carried out. "Prevent the outbreak of broad public protest," was the stated goal of Operation Woodrose. In actuality, tens of thousands of Sikh men vanished, and protesters' civil liberties and habeas corpus were curtailed.

Both immediately and long term, Operation Blue Star had a significant impact on India's political landscape. Due to generational dislike of the Indian government, the Sikh separatist movement is still active today. More than 21,000 people have died as a result of violence between 1981 and 1995, whether it was committed in the name of independence or terrorism. Short-term consequences included Sikh officers in the Indian Army mutinying. These mutinies took place all throughout India, killing citizens, army officers, and resulting in the theft of military supplies. An attempt was made to kill Zail Singh, the president of India at the time. In large part as a result of directing Operation Blue Star, Indira Gandhi became the first Indian Prime Minister to be assassinated in 1984. India received criticism from other countries at the time for limiting its media and abusing the human rights of its inhabitants.



India in 1984

India's Economy in 1984

Succeeding the fiscal year 1979-1980, India was staring directly at a Balance of Payments (BoP) crisis, predominantly caused by the second oil shock of 1979 (also known as the 1979 oil crisis). Following the start of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, both Iraq and Iran's oil output was drastically reduced, which resulted in higher costs for consumers. Because of this severe crisis, India's imports nearly doubled in value between 1978–1979 and 1981–1982. India's exports suffered during the worldwide recession that lasted from 1980 to 1983. Also, during the 1980s, high inflation returned in 1979–80 (17.1%) and 1980–81 (18.2%) as a result of rising oil prices and subpar agricultural output. (*India Before 1991*)

The trade deficit during the first eight months of 1984–1985 was approximately Rs. 3017 crores, which is slightly lower than the deficit of Rs. 3080 crores for the same period the year before, with Rs.5897 crores being the entire budget deficit in the previous year (*India Budget. "Foreign Trade and Balance of Payments."*).

Overall, The combined budget deficit of the State and Central Governments, and Union Territories during 1985-86 amounted to Rs. 3,543 crores ("Fiscal Policy and Government Budget." Union Budget.)

To combat the pressing Balance of Payments and current account issues reforms—such as a decline in the share of canalised imports—were set in place largely during 1988. Despite these precautions however, the amount of external debt was growing towards the end of the 1980s. While increased borrowing fueled economic expansion, it was also progressively moving the already hassled nation closer to a crash. High current spending within the nation turned out to be unsustainable, similar to borrowing from abroad. This resulted in tremendously high budget deficits.

Exports, Imports and Trade Deficit					
	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	(Rs. crores)
Exports	6418 (12.1)	6711 (4.6)	7806 (16.3)	8908 (14.1)	9866 (10.8)
Imports	9143 (34.2)	12549 (37.3)	13608 (8.4)	14356 (5.5)	15763 (9.8)
Trade Deficit	2725	5838	5802	5448	5897
As per cent of GDP	2.5	4.6	3.9	3.3	3.0

P—Provisional

NOTE : Figures in brackets are percentage variations over the previous year.

These circumstances caused a very significant public debt to be accumulated, with interest payments making up a sizable amount of government income. Additionally, they inexorably contributed to the current account deficits (CAD), which continued to grow until they reached 3.5 percent of GDP and 43.8 percent of exports in 1990–1991 and were inevitable. The June 1991 crisis was the result of these events. (*India Before 1991*)

Therefore, in India during the early 1980's there was a significant budget deficit and a large public debt accumulated, which largely influenced overall spending at the time which Operation Blue Star was held.



India in 1984

India's Social and Political Standpoint in 1984

Foreign Policy

In 1984, India's foreign policy was shaped by a combination of global and regional developments. India was also one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a group of countries that sought to remain neutral during the Cold War and not align with any major power bloc. The NAM provided a platform for India to assert its independent foreign policy and seek support from other developing countries. During 1984, India actively participated in NAM forums and sought solidarity from other NAM member states on various international issues.

India's relations with the United States, the Soviet Union, and other major powers played a significant role in shaping its international position. India continued to maintain its close relationship with the Soviet Union, which was a major ally and provided economic, military, and diplomatic support to India. The Indo-Soviet relationship was based on shared values of socialism, mutual respect, and cooperation in various fields. The Soviet Union provided significant military assistance to India, including the supply of weapons, technology, and training. The Soviet Union also supported India in international forums, including the United Nations, and stood by India during its conflicts with Pakistan.

India actively engaged with several countries within Africa (including Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and Egypt) at regional and multilateral forums, including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the United Nations (UN). India and African countries often shared common positions on global issues, including disarmament, South-South cooperation, and multilateralism. These shared interests helped in strengthening India's alliance with Africa during 1984. India sought to deepen economic cooperation with African countries during 1984. Efforts were made to enhance trade, investment, and economic partnerships. India provided technical and economic assistance to African countries in areas such as agriculture, health, education, and infrastructure development. Several bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) were signed to promote economic cooperation between India and Africa.

India maintained friendly relations with countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) during 1984. India sought to deepen its engagement with ASEAN countries through economic, cultural, and diplomatic channels. India participated in ASEAN-led forums, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, and sought to enhance trade, investment, and cultural exchanges with ASEAN nations. India also sought support from ASEAN countries on regional and global issues, including maritime security and regional integration.

Additionally, during the course of 1984, India attempted to maintain diplomatic relations with several middle eastern countries as well.

India and Iraq had friendly relations during 1984. Both countries engaged in economic cooperation, including trade, investment, and development assistance. However, it's important to note that the geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East, including the Iran-Iraq war, and Iraq's conflict with neighbouring countries, affected the overall regional situation and India's relations with Iraq. Despite the Iran-Iraq conflict, India and Iran have traditionally maintained friendly relations, and efforts were made to further strengthen bilateral ties during 1984. Economic cooperation, including trade, investment, and development projects, was a significant area of focus. India also sought to maintain its historical cultural ties with Iran, including exchanges in art, literature, and education.

Saudi Arabia was an important trading partner for India, and the two countries had signed agreements related to labour, trade, and investment. Saudi Arabia was also a significant source of remittances for Indian expatriates working in the country. Moreover, with the UAE also being an important trading partner for India, and both countries had signed agreements related to trade, investment, and labour. The UAE was also a significant destination for Indian expatriates, and both countries worked on issues related to the welfare and protection of Indian workers in the UAE.



India in 1984

India's relations with the United States were complex in 1984. Despite historical differences and periods of strained relations, India and the United States had made efforts to improve their ties. In 1984, India and the United States engaged in a dialogue on various issues, including trade, investment, and regional security. However, there were also areas of divergence, including differences over India's nuclear program and its relations with other countries in the region.

India's relations with other major powers, such as China and Japan, also played a role in shaping its international position in 1984. India's relations with China were marked by both cooperation and competition. While both countries sought to improve their bilateral ties and enhance economic cooperation, there were also differences over issues such as the border dispute and China's support to Pakistan. India's relations with Japan were characterised by economic engagement and development cooperation. Japan was one of India's major trading partners and provided significant aid and investment for India's economic development.

Regional Disputes in 1984

India's relationship with Pakistan in 1984 was marked by a complex interplay of historical disputes, security challenges, and attempts at engagement. The two neighbouring countries, born out of the partition of British India in 1947, had a tumultuous relationship characterised by conflicts, mistrust, and occasional attempts at reconciliation. In 1984, the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan were strained due to various factors, including the issue of Kashmir, cross-border terrorism, and political dynamics in both countries.

The issue of claim over the Jammu-Kashmir territory remained a central point of contention between India and Pakistan in 1984. Both countries claimed sovereignty over the region of Jammu and Kashmir, which had been a disputed territory since their independence. In 1984, the situation in Kashmir was tense, with sporadic incidents of violence and clashes between security forces and militants. India accused Pakistan of supporting and sponsoring cross-border terrorism in Kashmir, while Pakistan maintained that it was extending support to the separatist movement in the region. The issue of Kashmir was a major source of strain in bilateral relations, leading to a lack of trust and cooperation between the two countries.

In addition to the Kashmir issue, India and Pakistan also faced security challenges along their borders in 1984. Cross-border infiltration and attacks by militants were a constant source of concern for India. India accused Pakistan of harbouring and supporting militant groups that were involved in terrorist activities in India. The infiltration of armed militants from Pakistan into Indian territory, especially in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, had led to loss of lives and heightened tensions between the two countries. India's concerns about cross-border terrorism and its impact on its internal security further complicated its relations with Pakistan in 1984.

More specifically, there was a tussle over the Siachen Glacier, located in the eastern Karakoram range of the Himalayas, the dispute over which traces its roots back to the partition of British India in 1947, which resulted in the creation of India and Pakistan as separate countries.

When Jammu and Kashmir became a contested territory, with both India and Pakistan claiming sovereignty over it the Siachen Glacier, which was uninhabited and inaccessible due to its extreme altitude and harsh climate, was not demarcated in the ceasefire line agreed upon by India and Pakistan in 1949, known as the Line of Control (LoC).



India in 1984

On April 13th 1984, Indian troops were able to successfully gain control of the Siachen glacier region, however, according to a former senior Indian army officer and Siachen veteran, "It's been a shocking waste of men and money".

Despite these challenges between the neighbouring countries, there were also attempts at engagement between India and Pakistan in 1984. Both countries participated in the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit held in Nepal in November 1984, where they had an opportunity to interact and discuss regional issues. There were also diplomatic efforts to address bilateral issues through dialogues and negotiations, although progress was slow and limited. The two countries engaged in talks on various platforms, including the UN, to discuss their differences and find ways to improve their relations.

However, the attempts at engagement were often overshadowed by the continued conflicts and mistrust between India and Pakistan in 1984. The sporadic incidents of violence, cross-border attacks, and allegations of terrorism created a volatile environment, hindering the progress of bilateral relations. The lack of trust and confidence-building measures between the two countries further complicated their relations and made it challenging to achieve meaningful progress in resolving their disputes.

It is established that Sikh separatist groups, both militant and peaceful, had ties with the Government of Pakistan. Pakistan's involvement with Bhindranwale in the days leading up to Operation Blue Star was a widely discussed topic, with several testimonies of involved individuals being used as proof. This claim was never confirmed with decisive evidence.



*Image displaying the geographical location of Kashmir, Himachal pradesh and India's neighbouring nations



The Indira Gandhi Government

Indira Gandhi's Background

Indira Gandhi was born on November 19, 1917, in Allahabad, British India into a political family, her father, Jawahar Lal Nehru, being the first Prime Minister of India and her grandfather being the President of the Indian National Congress before Indian independence. Her mother, Kamala Nehru, was also active in the freedom struggle. Indira Gandhi grew up in an environment that nurtured her interest in politics and public service.

Indira Gandhi's political career started when she served as her father's personal assistant during his tenure as Prime Minister. She later became a member of the Indian National Congress (INC) and held various positions within the party. In 1959, she was appointed as the President of the Indian National Congress, becoming the first woman to hold that position.

Gandhi's political career faced significant challenges and controversies. In 1966, after the sudden death of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, she was appointed as the Prime Minister of India, despite being relatively inexperienced in governance. She won with a convincing 186 votes over her opponent Morarji Desai.



*Image from The Hindustan Times, published on January 20th 1966

Indira Gandhi is the only woman to have become the Prime Minister of India and her tenure was strife with controversy and criticism, more often than not, from within the country. She faced several challenges during her tenure, including economic issues, regional tensions, and social unrest.

However, she was known for her strong leadership style and implemented various policies to promote economic growth, social justice, and national security, making multiple assertive actions in a decisive manner. While a majority of these actions ended in failure, her charisma and drive was what won the hearts of the Indian populace.



The Indira Gandhi Government

Indira Gandhi in office: Prior to Operation Blue Star

Indira Gandhi served as the country's leader for a total of four terms - from 1966 to 1977, and then again from 1980 until her assassination in 1984.

During her time in office, one of the key areas of reform undertaken by Indira Gandhi was in the realm of agriculture. In 1966, she launched the Green Revolution, a program aimed at modernising India's agriculture and increasing food production. This initiative involved the adoption of high-yielding varieties of seeds, along with the use of fertilisers, pesticides, and irrigation to enhance crop yields. The Green Revolution helped to transform India from a food-deficient nation to a food-surplus country, making it self-sufficient in food production and improving the livelihoods of millions of farmers.

Indira Gandhi also focused on social welfare and poverty alleviation programs. In 1971, she introduced the 'Garibi Hatao' (Eradicate Poverty) program, which aimed to address poverty and inequality through measures such as land reforms, employment generation, and access to basic services like education and healthcare. While the success of this program remains a topic of debate, it reflected Indira Gandhi's commitment to social welfare and poverty alleviation as key policy priorities.

In the field of foreign policy, Indira Gandhi pursued a strategy of non-alignment, seeking to maintain India's independence and neutrality in the midst of Cold War tensions. She also played a prominent role in regional and global affairs, advocating for issues such as disarmament, global peace, and South-South cooperation. During her tenure, India built closer ties with countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, which helped to expand its influence and presence in the international arena.

Indira Gandhi also made significant efforts to empower women and promote gender equality. In 1975, she introduced the Women's Reservation Bill, which aimed to reserve a certain percentage of seats in local and national elections for women. Although the bill was not passed during her time in office, it laid the foundation for subsequent efforts to promote women's political participation in India. She also established the Ministry of Women and Child Development to focus on policy initiatives related to gender issues, child welfare, and family planning.

Another notable reform undertaken by Indira Gandhi was the nationalisation of banks. In 1969, she nationalised 14 major banks in India, transferring ownership from private hands to the government. This move aimed to increase the reach of banking services to rural areas, promote financial inclusion, and channel credit to priority sectors such as agriculture, small-scale industries, and housing. The nationalisation of banks was a significant step towards creating a more equitable and inclusive financial system in India.

It is also important to note that under Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister, India's first successful nuclear bomb test took place on May 18, 1974, and was given the code name Operation Smiling Buddha or Operation Happy Krishna. The Indian Army exploded the bomb on the military installation Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan.



The Indira Gandhi Government

The Emergency

In particular, Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister during the darkest time in India's history, the Emergency from 1975 till 1977. While the document for The Emergency was signed by the President, the primary force behind passing the Bill was Indira Gandhi.

The Emergency period was marked by the suspension of civil liberties, the curtailment of press freedom, and the concentration of power in the hands of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Emergency was declared on June 25, 1975, and lasted for 21 months until its eventual lifting on March 21, 1977. The Emergency was a highly controversial period that had a significant impact on Indian society and politics.

The Emergency was declared by Indira Gandhi, citing "internal disturbance" as the reason. The political atmosphere in India was highly charged at the time, with widespread protests and demonstrations against her government. Indira Gandhi's government was facing allegations of corruption and maladministration, and the opposition parties were demanding her resignation. In response, she invoked Article 352 of the Indian Constitution, which allowed for the imposition of Emergency in case of "grave emergency" threatening the security of the country.

During the Emergency period, civil liberties were suspended, and fundamental rights were curtailed. The government arrested thousands of opposition leaders, activists, and dissenters without trial. Freedom of the press was severely restricted, and censorship was imposed on media outlets. The government also had sweeping powers to detain individuals without trial and curtail their basic rights. This led to widespread fear and intimidation, with a climate of fear prevailing throughout the country.

The Emergency period also witnessed the concentration of power in the hands of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the central government. The state governments were dismissed, and the President of India (President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed), who was a figurehead at the time, was used to rubber-stamp the decisions of the PMO. The judiciary was also curtailed, with the government having the power to transfer judges and control their appointments. The government used these powers to suppress dissent and maintain its authority.

The Emergency had a profound impact on Indian society and politics. Many individuals and families suffered due to the arbitrary arrests, detentions, and abuses of power by the government. Political opposition was effectively silenced, and dissent was suppressed. The media, which played a crucial role in holding the government accountable, was muzzled. The Emergency led to a loss of faith in democratic institutions and principles, and it left a deep scar on the Indian political landscape.

The Emergency also witnessed the forced sterilisation campaign, where the government implemented aggressive measures to control population growth, including coerced sterilisations and forced vasectomies, which led to widespread human rights abuses and violations of bodily autonomy.

However, the Emergency period also witnessed widespread protests and resistance against the government's authoritarian actions. Several opposition leaders and activists, including Jayaprakash Narayan and Morarji Desai, emerged as prominent voices of dissent. They called for the restoration of democracy and civil liberties, and their voices resonated with a wide cross-section of Indian society. Many individuals and organisations, including the media, continued to resist the government's actions and speak out against the violations of civil liberties.

The Emergency eventually came to an end on March 21, 1977, when Indira Gandhi called for elections and lifted the Emergency. The elections that followed were a watershed moment in Indian history, as the opposition parties, which had come together under the banner of the Janata Party, won a decisive victory. Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister, and Indira Gandhi and her party were voted out of power—signalling the end of the Emergency era.



Punjab in 1984

The Khalistan Movement

In 1984, multiple Sikh groups, and the Sikh community were pushing for the formation of an independent sovereign state, namely Khalistan. This movement (named The Khalistan Movement) was started by Jagjit Singh Chohan, who founded the political party Khalsa Raj Party.

The British colonial tactics of the late 1800s and early 1900s, which tried to split Sikhs and Hindus, are the origins of Khalistan. To use against Hindu tyrants who rebelled against the British Raj, a considerable number of Sikhs were enlisted into the British army. Following Indian independence in 1947, tensions between the state of Punjab and the national government emerged, giving rise to complaints from a large number of Sikhs against the government.

Following linguistic divisions (Punjab is a Punjabi-speaking state, while Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are Hindi-speaking states), Punjab was divided into the three states of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh in 1966. This caused resentment among many Sikhs because it further divided the historical boundaries of Punjab, which had already been divided between India and Pakistan in 1947. Given the predominantly Hindu populations in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, it is important to note that it was the subsequent separation of Punjab that allowed Sikhs to embrace a religious majority in the state.

Many Sikhs in Punjab also objected to Haryana and Punjab's joint ownership of Chandigarh, and they saw water-sharing agreements as unjust and favouring Haryana's farmers at the expense of Punjab's.

These issues were perceived by many Sikhs as religiously motivated policies of discrimination and exploitation against them, who majorly believed that the Sikh community would only be safe in an independent Sikh country.

The Khalistan movement is regarded as having started in April 1978. And in 1980, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (a leading figure of The Khalistan Movement) and his allies began murdering Hindus, including Lala Jagat Narain, the editor of the dialect weekly Punjab Kesri and a strident opponent of Bhindranwale. Large-scale violence against people spread throughout the state soon after this.

The violent campaign of the Khalistan movement, which reached its height in the 1980s and 1990s, included numerous instances of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, and massacres of people. Nearly 22,000 people, both Sikhs and Hindus, including about 12,000 civilians, died as a result of the movement. When Canadian-based Khalistani separatists detonated a bomb on an Air India flight travelling from Toronto to New Delhi in 1985, all 329 passengers on board—including 82 children under the age of 13—were killed. That incident remains the deadliest terrorist attack in Canadian history.

Akali Dal

The Akali Dal, also known as the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), founded in 1920, is a prominent Sikh political party in India that has been associated with the Khalistan movement.

The party has played a significant role in the promotion and protection of Sikh identity, language, culture, and religion. It has been at the forefront of various agitations and movements, demanding autonomy and recognition of Sikh rights. However, the involvement of the Akali Dal in the Khalistan movement is complex and nuanced.



Punjab in 1984

In the early years of the Khalistan movement, particularly in the 1980s, some leaders and factions of the Akali Dal were seen as sympathisers or supporters of the demand for an independent Sikh state. The Akali Dal leaders, including Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (a prominent Sikh leader, and former Chief Minister of Punjab) were seen as advocating for Khalistan and promoting Sikh nationalism. Bhindranwale, in particular, emerged as a prominent figure within the Akali Dal who espoused the idea of Khalistan and led the demand for Sikh sovereignty.

The Akali Dal's involvement in the Khalistan movement was marked by a complex interplay of various factors, including historical grievances, political aspirations, and religious identity. The party's leaders and factions felt that the Sikh community's rights and interests were not adequately protected by the Indian government, and they demanded greater autonomy and recognition of Sikh sovereignty. One such grievance is the disregard of Sikhism as a religion of its own. At that point in time, the Indian government considered Sikhism as a philosophy within Hinduism. However, it is important to note that not all members of the Akali Dal supported the demand for Khalistan.

The Akali Dal's participation in the Dharam Yudh Morcha, a mass protest movement in the 1980s that sought to assert Sikh rights and autonomy, was marked by widespread violence and militancy.

Dharam Yudh Morcha

The Dharam Yudh Morcha (also known as the Punjabi Suba Morcha) was a mass protest movement that took place in the state of Punjab, India, from 4th August 1982 up till 10th June 1984. The term "Dharam Yudh Morcha" translates to "religious struggle movement" and it was primarily led by the Akali Dal, a prominent Sikh political party, with the support of various Sikh organisations and individuals. The Dharam Yudh Morcha was a significant event in the history of Punjab, and the main demand of the Dharam Yudh Morcha was to assert the rights and autonomy of the Sikh community in Punjab, particularly in matters related to language, culture, religion, and political representation. The Akali Dal and other Sikh organisations felt that the rights and interests of Sikhs were not adequately protected by the Indian government, and they demanded greater recognition and autonomy for the Sikh-majority state of Punjab.

The Dharam Yudh Morcha led to conferences amongst the various parties in Punjab, eventually leading to the Anandpur Sahib resolution. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution contained policies that aimed to protect the rights of the Sikh people and include regions of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh that had a majority Punjabi speaking population to be added to Punjab. This resolution would then evolve into the Ludhiana Resolution. The Ludhiana Resolution centred around socio-economic policies, most importantly the distribution of river water.

The Akali Dal called for a series of agitations, including strikes, rallies, and sit-ins, to put pressure on the Indian government to meet their demands. The protests were often led by Akali Dal leaders, including Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who emerged as a prominent figure during the Dharam Yudh Morcha.

The Dharam Yudh Morcha was not without controversy and violence. The protests were met with a heavy-handed response from the Indian government, which deployed security forces to quell the agitation. The clashes between the protesters and the police resulted in injuries, deaths, and damage to property.

The situation escalated further when Bhindranwale and his armed supporters sought refuge in the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar, which is considered the holiest site in Sikhism. The government launched Operation Blue Star in June 1984, a military operation which aimed to evacuate Bhindranwale and his supporters from the Golden Temple complex. The operation resulted in heavy casualties, including the death of Bhindranwale and significant damage to the Golden Temple complex.



Punjab in 1984

Damdamī Takṣālā

The Damdamī Takṣālā, also known as Damdama Sahib, is a prominent Sikh religious institution that was established in the 18th century by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Guru of Sikhism. It is located in the town of Talwandi Sabo in the Bathinda district of Punjab, India. The Damdamī Takṣālā is known for its role in spreading Sikh education and spirituality, and it has played a significant role in Sikh history and the Sikh community's religious and social life.

The term "Takṣālā" refers to a traditional Sikh school where students are taught the Sikh scriptures, history, philosophy, and spirituality. The Damdamī Takṣālā is considered one of the oldest and most prestigious Takṣāls in Sikhism, and it has played a crucial role in preserving and promoting Sikh teachings and traditions. The institution is known for its emphasis on the proper pronunciation and understanding of the Sikh scriptures, particularly the Guru Granth Sahib, the central religious scripture of Sikhism.

The Damdamī Takṣālā has been associated with several prominent Sikh scholars, theologians, and leaders over the years. One of the most well-known figures associated with the Damdamī Takṣālā was Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who served as the Jathedar (head) of the Damdamī Takṣālā during the 1970s and early 1980s.

The Damdamī Takṣālā was known to have a strong influence over Bhindranwale, who was also known as "Sant Ji" among his followers. The institution provided religious and ideological guidance to Bhindranwale and his supporters, and it is believed that the Takṣālā's teachings and support played a crucial role in shaping Bhindranwale's views and actions during the events of 1984. As Bhindranwale was also a leader, he had an influence on Sikh youth. He persuaded many people to follow Sikh rules and tenets.

The Damdamī Takṣālā played a significant role in the events that unfolded during the infamous Operation Blue Star in June 1984, during which time Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was the Jathedar (head) of the Damdamī Takṣālā. Bhindranwale, along with his armed members of the Takṣālā, had taken refuge inside the Golden Temple complex, and the Indian government's decision to use force to remove him and his associates led to a violent and tragic confrontation.

During Operation Blue Star, the Golden Temple complex was heavily fortified by Bhindranwale's armed supporters, who were determined to defend the holy shrine against the government forces. The Damdamī Takṣālā and its followers were actively involved in the resistance, with many of Bhindranwale's armed supporters coming from the Takṣālā's ranks.

The aftermath of Operation Blue Star also had repercussions for the Damdamī Takṣālā. The institution faced criticism and scrutiny from various quarters, with some accusing it of promoting militant activities and separatist ideologies.



*Image of the Damdamī Takṣālā: a Sikh seminary or school—founded by the tenth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Jee.



Timeline

1978:

Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale gained a following in Sikh circles. His policies are centred around getting the Anandpur Resolution passed.

1981:

KGB-run Operation Kontakt successfully caused alarms in India that the Pakistani ISI was supplying arms to Sikh separatist movements.

July 1982:

Bhindranwale takes up residence in The Golden Temple along with 200 armed followers, upon the invitation of Harchand Singh Longowal.

April 23, 1983:

Deputy Inspector General of Punjab Police A.S. Atwal is murdered outside the Harmandir Sahib, allegedly by Bhindranwale's supporters. This is the instance that led to the Punjab Government acknowledging the existence of armed extremists within the Golden Temple.

October 1983:

President's rule is imposed in Punjab following violent protests, demonstrations and the murder of 6 civilians.

Bhindranwale claims residence in the Akal Takht, an act never performed, either by leaders or the esteemed Gurus.

December 1983:

Several Sikh leaders called for the removal of Bhindranwale from the Akal Takht. 4 of these leaders were then killed, presumably by Bhindranwale's supporters.

January 1983:

Negotiations with Bhindranwale failed due to his stubbornness with his claims. Indira Gandhi's negotiations with Akali Dal to have Bhindranwale peacefully arrested also failed. Operation Sundown was proposed by RAW and subsequently rejected by Indira Gandhi.

May 26 1983:

Multiple attempts at negotiation were made, all unsuccessful. Bhindranwale was considered independent, under the influence of no specific group.

Indira Gandhi gave permission for Operation Blue Star to be initiated by Chief of Army Staff General Vaidya.

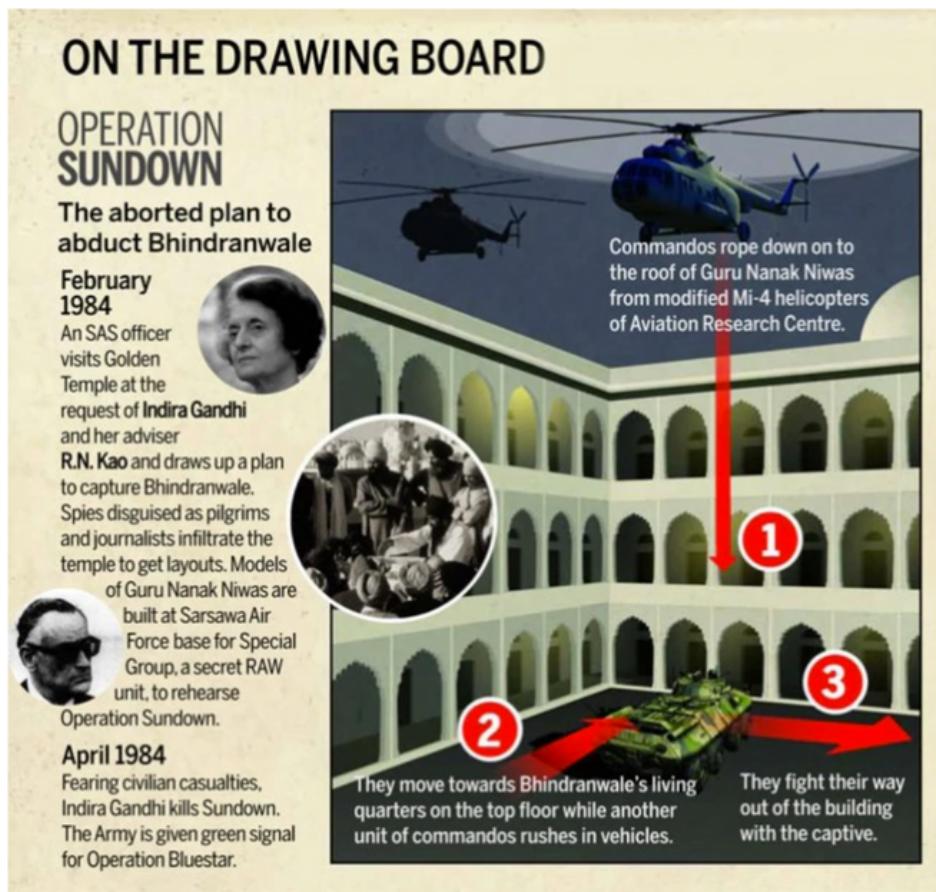


Operation Blue Star

Bhindranwale and supporters of Khalistan seized control of the Akal Takht complex in Amritsar's Golden Temple during Operation Blue Star.

As Bhindranwale was regarded as being in favour of the establishment of Khalistan, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale's removal from the Golden Temple complex and the regaining of control over Harmandir Sahib (The Golden Temple located in Amritsar) was the main aim of Operation Blue Star.

Prior to the execution of Operation Blue Star, Operation Sundown was the planned, yet aborted, mission drawn up by RAW agency to abduct Bhindranwale.



*Image explaining Operation Sundown and its timeline

However, after factoring in the enormous amount of innocent civilian casualties that were bound to arise, Indira Gandhi rejected the operation, and Operation Sundown was abolished before the first helicopter could take off.

However, as the condition of Punjab continued to substantially deteriorate, Indira Gandhi gave the Army the order to remove militants from the temple just two months later, birthing the single most bloodiest confrontation in independent India's history of civil strife: Operation Blue Star

Operation Metal, which was restricted to the Harmandir Sahib complex, and Operation Shop, which conducted raids on the countryside to capture suspects, made up the two prominent parts of Operation Blue Star. After that, Operation Woodrose was started in the countryside, where Sikhs who were demonstrating and carrying a kirpan (a religious blade required to be carried by Khalsa Sikhs) were targeted.



Operation Blue Star

Operation Metal

The infiltration of The Golden Temple by the Indian Army and officials occurred from June 1st 1984 to June 8th 1984, and the operation was commanded by Lieutenant General Kuldip Singh Brar.

June 1st 1984:

Thousands of devotees began to assemble at the Golden Temple complex to commemorate the anniversary of Guru Arjan's martyrdom.

Police snipers fired on Sant Jarnail Singh Bindranwale as he was seated on the Langer hall's roof. Sikh militants retaliated after they missed. 11 people were killed and 25 injured during a seven-hour fight that took place during the night and lasted until daylight. The Langer building (the 'Guru Ram Das Langar' building), the marble pavement that surrounds the Golden Temple, and the Golden Temple itself all had bullet holes.

This simultaneously served as an effort to evaluate the terrorists' training. According to eyewitness accounts from visitors inside the temple complex, security personnel fired their first shots at the Harmandir Sahib on June 1 rather than June 5, as the army had claimed.

June 2nd 1984:

The Indian army stationed seven divisions in Punjab. There was a total blackout of the media, and travel in the area was severely affected. The international border between Kashmir and Ganga Nagar, as well as Rajasthan, was sealed off completely.

June 3rd 1984:

There was a strict curfew throughout Punjab. The complex's entrances and exits were all sealed. All telephone lines to and from Punjab had been shut off. Punjab was closed off by roadblocks, and all journalists were banished from the province. Up to 10,000 pilgrims were confined inside the temple complex due to a strict curfew.

For breaking the curfew rules, milk merchants from the villages who provide milk to Amritsar were shot and killed.

June 4th 1984:

The Ramgarhia Bunga, a water tank, and other strongholds were all bombarded by the troops. There was a gun battle lasting 5 hours. The army shot upon dissident positions atop the two 18th-century towers (known as Ramgarhia Bunga's) using machine guns and mortars.

There were hundreds of thousands of Sikh deaths (At least 100 were killed on both sides). An attempt to negotiate with Bindrawale was made by ex-SGPC head Gurcharan Singh Tohra, but it failed.

June 5th 1984:

Tanks from the 16th Cavalry Regiment of the Indian Army moved to enclose the Golden Temple complex around 7:00 p.m. as Operation Blue Star, the invasion of The Golden Temple, began. Soldiers were instructed not to fire their weapons at the Akal Takht or the Golden Temple itself. The water tank and the Ramgarhia Bungas' tops were destroyed with artillery. In and around the temple complex, dozens of buildings were on fire. One artillery shell had hit the densely populated city more than 5 km away.

Paramilitary commandos attempted to enter the temple through the little passageway in the Akal Takht's back area. Some reached the roof, but were forced to return because of the intense gunfire. During this time, tanks moved into the area in front of the Golden Temple's clock tower entryway, which was located at its northern entrance.



Operation Blue Star

At 10:30 p.m., commandos from the 1st Battalion of the Parachute Regiment attempted to run onto the marble pavement surrounding the holy pool from the steps under the clock tower. They were subjected to a barrage of gunfire, suffered casualties, and were forced to flee. After taking down the machine gun positions on either side of the stairs, a second wave of commandos descended to the marble pavement.

Sandbags and brick gun emplacements in its windows and arches were used to fortify the Akal Takht. Any commandos who approached the Gurdwara from here or the nearby buildings could be fired upon by the dissidents.

After engaging in a gunfight, two companies of the 7th Garhwal Rifles were able to take up position on the roof of the Temple library after they entered the temple complex from the other side of the southern gate entrance. Two companies of the 15th Kumaons were added to their reinforcements. There were numerous unsuccessful efforts to take over the Akal Takht.

June 6th 1984:

After midnight, tanks were employed to destroy the stairs leading from the hostel side to the parkarma, and an 8-wheeled armoured personnel carrier made in Poland moved in the direction of the Akal Takht. A Chinese-made rocket-propelled grenade launcher destroyed it.

The beautiful marble inlays of the marble pavement were crushed when six or more Vijayanta tanks entered the temple complex and advanced on the Akal Takht. After receiving orders, the tanks began attacking the Akal Takht with their powerful 105mm cannons and high explosive squash-head shells. These shells were made for fortifications and armour, which are hard targets. Their heads spread out or crunch on the hard surface when the shells hit a target. Their fuses were set up to allow for a brief lag time between contact and the shells igniting, causing a shock wave to pass through the target and a hefty slab of armour or masonry to be pushed outside the fortification or armour.

The Akal Takht, the most revered of the five Takhts, was severely impacted. The revered Gurdwara was filled with more than 80 shells. The Takht's entire façade was damaged, and fires started in numerous chambers, blackening the marble walls and destroying the beautiful embellishments. Destroyed items included marble inlays, plaster and mirror work, filigree dividers, and rare ancient wall paintings.

Artillery bombardment had also seriously damaged the Akal Takht's gilded dome. A 3.7 inch Howitzer gun was at one point put on the roof of a structure behind the shrine and repeatedly fired at the dome.

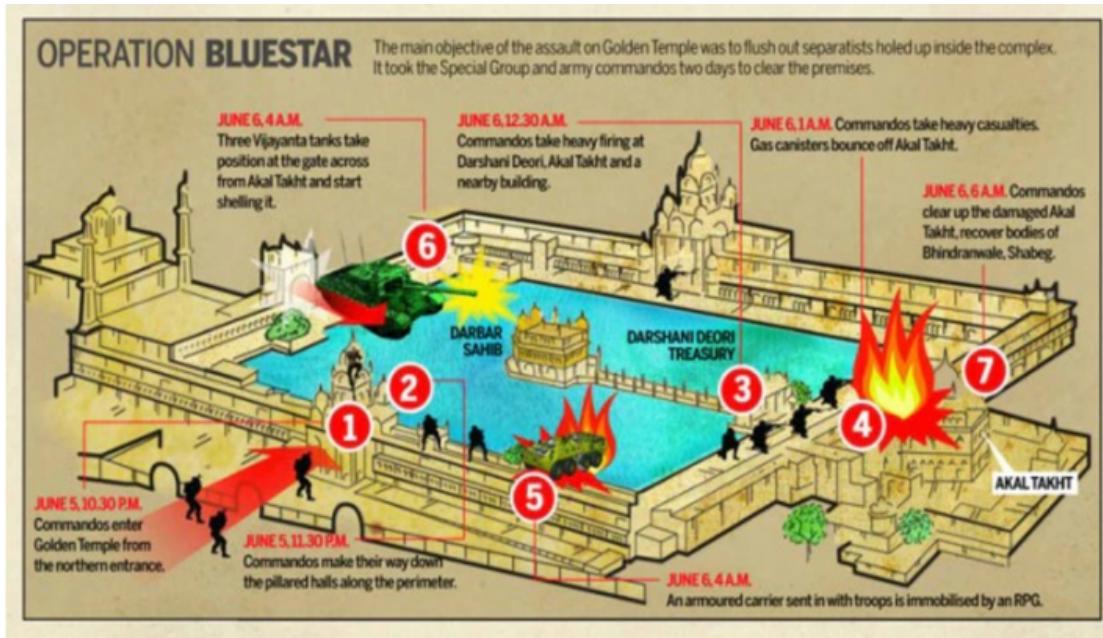
A unit of the Kumaon Regiment was attacking the hostel complex at the opposite end of the temple complex on the easternmost side, where many innocent pilgrims and temple staff members were sheltering. Since the water tower was demolished, there was no water.

Around 1:00 am, the Army stormed the administrative and hostel buildings, ordered everyone out, and forced them to sit on the hostel's courtyard. 250 or so people showed up, approximately.

35 women and 5 children were among the fatalities. Until the curfew was lifted the following evening, the survivors were forced to wait in the Guru Ram Das Hostel's courtyard. They received no food, water, or medical attention. People drank from the blown water tank whatever water was in puddles in the courtyard.

By dawn, all that was left was occasional sniper fire coming from the Akal Takht's ruins. The curfew was relaxed for two hours to let anyone still in hiding to come out since the army had taken complete control of the Temple complex by late in the afternoon.

Operation Blue Star



*Image displaying the activities pertaining to Operation Blue Star that took place on June 5th - June 6th 1984

June 7th 1984:

The bodies of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his closest adherents were found by the troops in the basement of the Akal Takht in the early morning hours.

The army gained effective control of the Harmandir Sahib complex.

Operation Shop and Operation Woodrose

Operation Shop was carried out by a specialised team of intelligence and military personnel with the objective of gathering actionable intelligence, disrupting terrorist activities, and apprehending key leaders of the Sikh militant groups. The operation was conducted with the utmost secrecy, and the operatives were chosen for their expertise in intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism operations.

The mission commenced with meticulous planning and preparation. The operatives were equipped with advanced surveillance and communication equipment, as well as specialised weapons and gear suitable for covert operations. They were briefed on the objectives and potential risks of the mission and developed strategies and tactics to carry out their mission effectively.

The operatives infiltrated into the targeted areas, which were believed to be the operational bases of the Sikh militant groups. They operated undercover, blending into the local population and gathering intelligence on the activities and movements of the militants. The operatives worked closely with local informants and used various techniques such as reconnaissance, surveillance, and human intelligence to gather actionable intelligence.

As the operation progressed, the operatives uncovered a complex network of terrorist activities being carried out by the Sikh militant groups. They discovered hideouts, training camps, and clandestine communication channels used by the militants to plan and execute their attacks. The operatives worked tirelessly to gather evidence, disrupt the militants' activities, and apprehend their leaders.



Operation Blue Star

The Indian Army attacked 42 to 74 Gurdwaras around Punjab, which led to significant casualties in the cities of Moga, Muktsar, Faridkot, Patiala, Ropar, and Chowk Mehta. The precise number of Sikhs slain in the operation is unknown, although 257 people were shot and killed when the Gurdwara Dukhniwaran Sahib in Patiala was stormed.

The operation faced numerous challenges, including the need to maintain secrecy and avoid detection. The militants were known for their radical ideology and determination to carry out attacks, and they posed a significant threat to the operatives. The operatives had to constantly adapt their tactics and strategies to stay ahead of the militants and ensure the success of the operation.

Despite the challenges, the intelligence and evidence gathered during the operation were used to neutralise several key leaders of the Sikh militant groups. The operatives apprehended many militants, seized weapons and explosives, and disrupted their plans to carry out attacks. The operation dealt a significant blow to the terrorist infrastructure in Punjab, severely crippling the activities of the Sikh militant groups and restoring law and order in the region.

Aftermath of Operation Blue Star

The events of Operation Blue Star and Damdami Taksaal's involvement deeply impacted the Sikh community, resulting in widespread anger, resentment, and a sense of betrayal among Sikhs in India and around the world. Many Sikhs viewed the military operation as an attack on their religious and cultural identity, and it had a profound impact on Sikh-Muslim relations and the overall political climate in Punjab and India. The Taksaal's involvement in the events of 1984 led to a significant loss of life, including the death of Bhindranwale and his associates, as well as damage to the Akal Takht, the highest temporal seat of Sikh authority located within the Golden Temple complex.

In retaliation for Operation Blue Star, two bodyguards, Beant Singh and Satwant Singh, shot and assassinated Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984.

In turn, the assassination of the Prime Minister sprouted the 1984 Sikh riots. The assassination fueled widespread anger and resentment among some sections of the majority Hindu community, who blamed the entire Sikh community for the act. What followed was a systematic and organised pogrom against Sikhs, particularly in the national capital, Delhi, but also in other parts of India. October 31st to November 3rd saw more killings. According to reports, 2800 Sikhs perished countrywide, 2100 of them in Delhi.

The 1984 Sikh riots were characterised by brutal violence against Sikhs, with mobs wielding weapons such as sticks, knives, and even petrol bombs. Sikh homes, businesses, and places of worship were targeted, and innocent Sikh men, women, and children were brutally attacked, tortured, and killed. The violence continued unabated for several days, with law enforcement agencies often accused of being complicit or inactive in the face of the violence.

The scale of the violence was immense, with estimates of the number of deaths ranging from 2,000 to 3,000, and thousands more injured, displaced, and traumatised. Sikh women were subjected to horrific acts of violence, adding to the brutality of the riots. The riots left deep scars on the Sikh community, and the trauma of the events continues to haunt the survivors and their families to this day.

The riots had a significant impact on the Sikh community in India and abroad. Many Sikhs lost their loved ones, their homes, and their livelihoods. The trust and sense of belonging towards the Indian state were deeply shaken among the Sikh community, who felt targeted and marginalised. There was a widespread sense of injustice and betrayal among the Sikhs, who had historically played a prominent role in the defence and development of India.

Over 70,000 people were held under emergency terrorist legislation (TADA) in the ten years that followed 1984, although only 1% of them were ultimately found guilty of a crime.



Freeze Date

May 26th 1984,

This date marked the beginning of Operation Blue Star after it was ordered by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and will serve as the Freeze Date for this committee.

The delegates of this committee have the fate of the nation and countless lives in their hands, and will need to form effective, logical and feasible solutions to tackle this problem.

All documented events before this date may be used in committee proceedings. Any events that take place after this date are to be considered void and can not be used/brought up in committee proceedings or paperwork. The course of history after the freeze date is to be decided by the delegates presiding in the committee. A progression of events caused by committee actions will be brought to the attention of all delegates, through crisis updates, as the committee progresses.

Crisis Update

Indira Gandhi: “Members of the Union Cabinet as the Prime Minister of India, I deem it necessary to remove Bhindranwale from the Akal Takht through force, in light of negotiations failing. I leave it to your hands to come up with an efficient plan of action, causing no civilian deaths and minimal damage to the infrastructure of the complex.”

Girish Chandra Saxena - Secretary of RAW : “Reports from RAW agents within Pakistan align with the KGB’s tip off - the CIA and ISI seem to be collaborating with Sikh militant separatists, providing them with arms and other supplies. There is even talk of an extraction of Bhindranwale from the Akal Takht. We must act quickly to mitigate the threat that has presented itself to us.”



Paper Work

This committee will be accepting 2 major types of paperwork: Directives and Communiques.

Directives

1. Personal Directives This type of directive uses only your portfolio powers. This type of directive is covert: a covert directive is one that is confidential between the delegate and the EB. The delegate can choose who to tell about covert directives, but the EB will not inform anyone. These can be used to further your interest, be it for the benefit of the committee or both. It is also a great way to build a storyline (also known as a crisis arc) for yourself throughout the committee.
2. Joint Directives: This type of directive is the result of two or more delegates working together. This allows the resources of multiple delegates to be pooled to accomplish wider (usually beneficial to committee) goals. Joint directives are covert.

Both personal and joint directives can be rejected by the EB on the grounds that:

- The directive was not specific enough regarding intention, action or magnitude
- The directive cannot be accomplished with the delegates(s') portfolio powers.
- The directive is unfeasible or far-fetched

In the case that the directive is rejected by the EB, the delegates can choose to retract the directive and or convert it to a committee directive, which can be passed by voting.

- Committee-Wide Directives: A committee-wide directive is similar to a resolution in that it is not covert and the entire committee votes upon it. Committee-wide directives have only signatories, and a minimum of 1/3rd of committee must be a signatory for it to move into voting. It does not contain any preambulatory clauses and is much more concise, stating only the actions being taken and the expected/desired outcomes.

While personal and joint directives can only use the portfolio powers of the delegates at hand, committee directives have a much broader range and the magnitude of action permissible by committee directives is greater. Therefore, if the EB believes that a personal/joint directive is significant to the committee, they will reject it and suggest that it be passed as a committee directive. Once the directive has been introduced to the table, the committee moves directly into the voting procedure. Directives can be amended (amendments can be friendly or unfriendly; if friendly, they are immediately passed; if unfriendly, they are voted upon) and merged with similar directives. A directive requires a simple majority to be passed, with a placard vote being used. Small note: Feel free to make directives interesting by addressing them to someone, formatting them in interesting ways (like letters!)

There is a standard format for a Directive. It is as follows as used in an example(Committee wide directive).



Paper Work

"

Signatories: R&AW minister, Indian ambassador to the UN, Supply and Transport, Finance, Foreign, National Security Advisor, Propaganda, R&D Minister and the Ambassador to China would like to introduce a directive.

Objective: The signatories feel that it is imperative that this issue be put forth to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Plan of Action :

The ministers feel that this Committee should go as per the following points:

- The ambassador to the UN will bring the border dispute issue to the ICJ.
 - Request the issue be supervised, through the ICJ, on the basis of Incidental Jurisdiction.
- Encourages the ICJ to intervene and help solve this issue, as fast as possible, as time is of the essence.
 - Request the Chinese to be represented in the meeting, and submit to certain terms
 - Chinese withdrawal north in NEFA
 - That both sides disengage and withdraw twenty kilometres (12 miles) from present lines of actual control
- It is requested that the ICJ decides on a neutral location for the meeting of the representatives from China and India (Indian ambassador to the UN). During this meeting it is hoped that the two parties discuss the border disputes between the two nations.
- The Indian representative takes the Chinese ambassador's offer up, to claim the whole of NEFA. However, they modify the offer slightly in the sense that they suggest that Aksai Chin be divided based on MacDonald.
 - MacDonald line to become a permanent hard border between China and India
 - McMahon line as a border between NEFA and Tibet.
- India hopes to settle the border disputes peacefully, and hopes to start and maintain friendly relations with China.

"

Communiques

Communiques are used when you wish to communicate with characters in the scenario. You can expect a reply from the EB and use it to further your crisis and show that you are fully immersed in your role. An example is that you could be trying to contact the Prime Minister or negotiate with militant leaders.

Example with format.

"

To : The Prime Minister of India

From : Minister of Agriculture

Subject : Budget for Summer Harvest

Respected PM,

I hope to have found you in good health. With the midsummer harvest coming up, I felt it was only necessary for me to request a greater budget.

Regards,

Agriculture Minister

"



Further Research

It is crucial to note that the Background guide serves only as the foundation for a delegate's research, and each delegate is expected to divulge in their own research to further understand the motives, factors and aftermath of Operation Blue Star, along with the circumstances and events currently occurring in the nation economically, socially and of course, politically. I would recommend reading up on the months and years that led to Operation Blue Star rather than the Operation itself. It is important to know what motivates the actions you are taking. A good place to start would be the rise of Bhindranwale in Punjab.

It is also important for delegates to derive their own solutions and proposals pertaining to how Operation Blue star could have progressed differently, possibly even for the better. This should be done keeping in mind that no pre-written directives are allowed.



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