Research Proposal

Presented by Echoes of the Ages

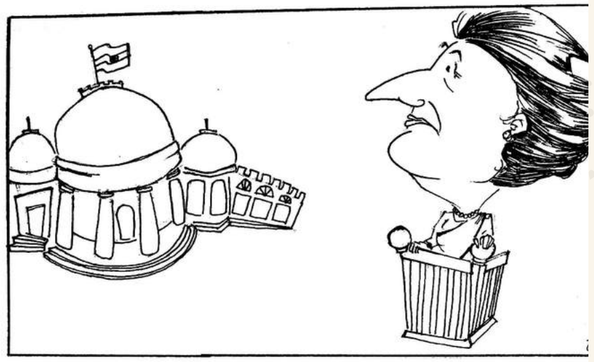
Emergency in India

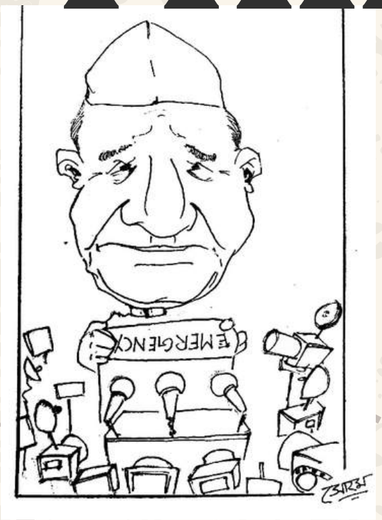
Research Question: The social contexts leading to Emergency in 1975 and the socio-political changes during that period.

Timeline

12 JUNE'75

Allahabad high court found Indira Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractice. Found guilty, she was disqualified, and barred from holding an elected office for six years.



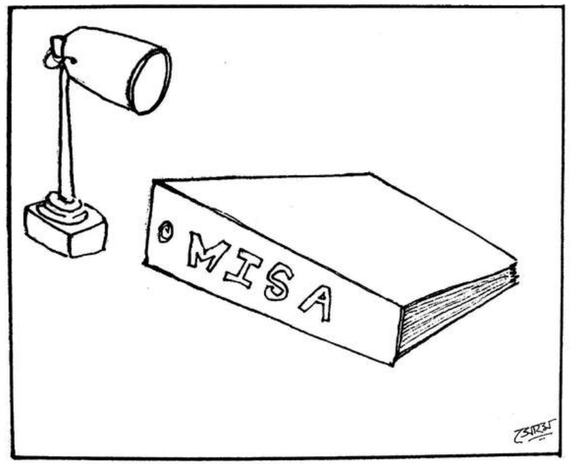


25 JUNE'75

large protest took place in Delhi.
State of Emergency was declared by then president before midnight

30 JUNE'75

Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) was amended to allow the detention of any person who may pose a political threat by voicing opposition, without a trial.



JUNE'75

Indira Gandhi introduced her 20-point programme.
The Rajya Sabha approved the Emergency.
The Lok Sabha also passed the Emergency.

Timeline

NOV 1976

The 42nd amendment, Indian Constitution's most controversial one, was passed

JAN 1977

Indira Gandhi called for fresh Lok Sabha elections. The Lok Sabha was dissolved.

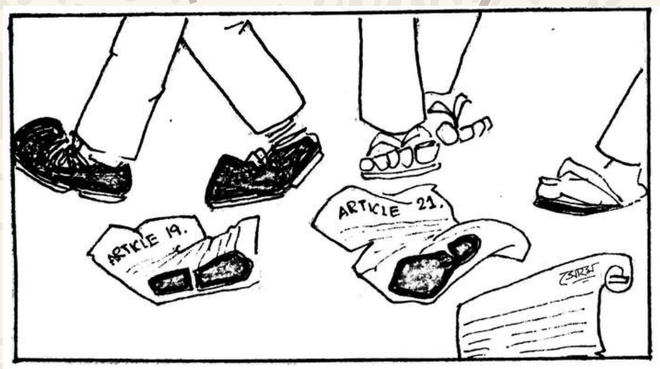
Several members of the opposition united against the Indira Gandhi government to form the Janata Party

MAY 1976

Artists like Kumar and Dev Anand, who were vocally critical of the Emergency, later faced unofficial bans from government

SEP 1976

Sanjay Gandhi's notorious mandatory sterilisation programme was introduced



MARCH 1977

The Emergency was officially withdrawn. Morarji Desai was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India.

Why this topic?

1. Serves as a cautionary tale on the dangers of leaders wielding excessive power.
2. Emphasizes on Individual Freedoms Protection
3. substantial impact on Indian politics
4. Highlights the pivotal role the Emergency played in shaping Indian society and governance dynamics.

Indira Gandhi : A Democrat or Dictator?

Arrest of Political Leaders

Censorship of Media

Suspension of Constitutional Rights

Mass Sterilisation Programmes

Impact on the Indian economy and development

Slowdown in Economic Growth

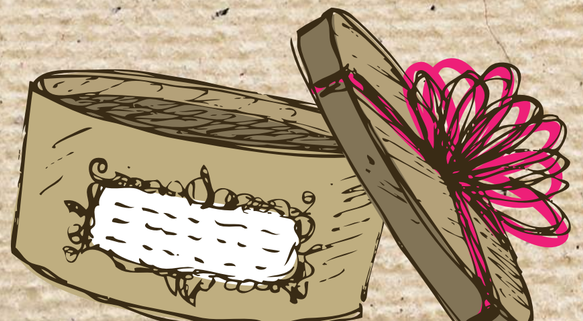
Increased Poverty

Setback in agriculture & infrastructure

Decline in foreign investments

Why Oral History?

- Filling the gaps created by censorship of media
- Personal Perspective
- Diverse Voices
- Emotional Context



What is Oral History?

Sound recording of historical information, obtained through an interview that preserves a person's life history or eyewitness account of a past experience.

Examples of Oral History Projects

1947 Partition Archives

The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive.

South Asian Oral History Project

Sapru House Oral History Series

ORAL HISTORY METHODOLOGY

Sampling

Judgemental,
Snowball and
Stratified Sampling

Locations

New Delhi
Hyderabad
Kolkata
Kochi

Demographics

Current age b/w 60-70,
Not direct political
association,
Both male and female

Method

Semi-guided,
open-ended
interview

Ethical Considerations

Semi guided interviews??

- A qualitative research method incorporating both structured and unstructured elements.
- a very flexible form of interviewing.
- Captures in-depth information on specific themes while fostering a natural flow of conversation.
- It maintains a good balance between consistency and individual experiences.

- Background Information, Awareness and Initial Reactions
- Media and Information
- Political Perception
- Comparitive Insights
- Community and Interpersonal Dynamics
- Closing Thoughts

Primary and Secondary Sources

1. Various scholars, historians and researchers have extensively studied the Emergency Period of India 1975, giving us insights of that time.
2. "The Emergency: A Personal History" by Coomi Kapoor which is a personal reflection on the impact of Emergency on Kapoor and her family.
3. "The Emergency: Indian Democracy's Darkest Hour" by A. Surya Prakash.
4. The Long Emergency Collection, which was primarily conceived as a series of oral history interviews documenting journalistic custom practices around the time of Indian History.
5. Interview of Mark Blaird on 5th May, 2010.

Uses of the Sources

1. These would help us to realise firsthand accounts and the personal narratives of the people of the time, which is exactly what our goal is in an Oral History Project.
2. These credible sources would help us to conduct a comparative analysis of different perspectives and opinions in Emergency, leading to greater resources for the last stage of the Project, i.e., examination and compilation of all work.
3. Assist us in shaping the various viewpoints, thought processes, viewpoints and contradictions that existed in society at that time,

Timeline of the Project

1. Three-Four Months to understand the Background of that time.
2. One-Two Months to prepare the interviews keeping in mind the different kinds of questions to be asked.
3. Five-Six Months Time to Interview People.
4. Three-Four Months for Final Phase involving examination of answers given by all interviewees and performing Case Studies.
5. One Month for Compilation of all work.
6. Total Time required - 1 to 1.5 Years.

Output of the Project

1. Realisation of People as Primary Sources themselves!
2. Study the limitations of Democracy and censorship imposed during that time.
3. Study of Economic aspects of that Time and International Relations of India with the West and the Soviet Union.
4. Final Output – The creation of personal accounts of people of that time and their narratives.

Contribution

AISHANI

- Semi guided interview
- annoted bibliography
- literature review

PRANAV

- Primary sources
- Secondary sources
- Research timeline & output

SAJJA

- Introduction
- importance of the topic
- semi guided interviews

HRISHI

- Oral history
  a. Introduction
  b. Methodology
  c. Ethical considerations