



NATIONAL EMERGENCY 1975

[The emergency](#) was declared in 1975 by the government of [Indira Gandhi](#) and was in effect for 21 months. The reasons for the declaration were cited as risks to national security and poor economic conditions. "A renowned historian Coomi Kapoor observed, considering it as a black chapter," The number of those in Indira Gandhi's prisons during the Emergency far exceeded the total number imprisoned during the Quit India of 1942."

WHAT WERE THE EVENTS BEFORE THE EMERGENCY THAT LED TO INDIRA GANDHI TO DECLARE A SUDDEN EMERGENCY IN INDIA?

It all started in January 1974 with a youth and students' movement in Gujarat. "The agitation was aimed at the removal of Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel for leading what the protesters called a" corrupt and inept "administration, calling itself the Nav Nirman movement. Morarji Desai, who had lost the race for Prime Minister to Indira Gandhi twice in 1966 and 1967, blessed the campaign. The veteran leader, still nursing his aspirations, saw the unrest of the students as a golden opportunity and plunged himself into the movement's head. At the same time, agitation in Bihar for the removal of Bihar CM Abdul Ghafoor began. This was led by Jayaprakash Narayan, a leader of Sarvodaya, and once a close associate of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the struggle for liberty, who after the mid-1950s kept himself away from politics. He respectfully turned down an offer from Nehru to join his Cabinet. Owing to his spiritual stature, many saw him as his legitimate successor. For what he called "Sampuran Kranti," or complete revolution, JP, as he was popularly known, initiated a nationwide agitation, starting with Bihar.

JP asked students to boycott classes, abandon their schools and colleges for a year, and campaign for his "absolute revolution" to organize the people. He told the students of Bihar: "You will have to make sacrifices, face lathis and bullets misery and fill up gaols." Adding fuel to the fire was George Fernandes, a labor leader who led railway workers in a national strike in 1974 in an attempt to paralyze the transportation system of the country and its economy. JP called on all opposition parties to join his movement, although some of them, like Jan Sangh and the Communists, were ideologically separated from each other.

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