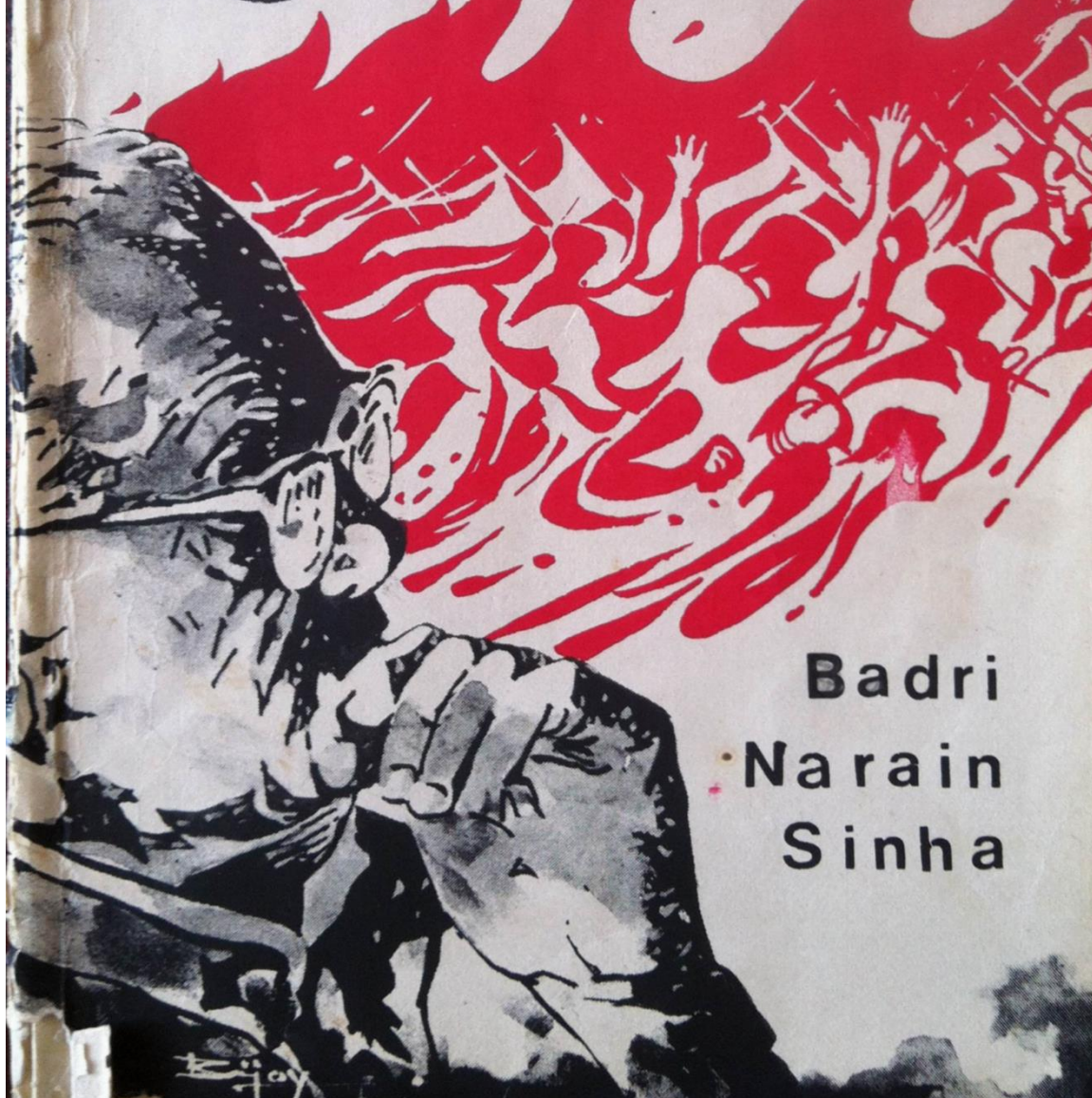


# J.P.'s MOVEMENT



Badri  
Narain  
Sinha

# **J P's MOVEMENT**

C: Smt Indu Prabha Sinha

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*DEDICATION*

**DEDICATED**

**TO THE**

**MARTYRS**

**Known and Unknown**

**of JP's Movement**

**1974-75**





From left to right: JP; Badri Narain Sinha; Jayshree Sinha; Adhar Sinha (behind); Anandvardhan Sinha; Indu Prabha Sinha – photo taken in 1978

# FOREWORD



AMBASSADOR OF INDIA

KATHMANDU (NEPAL)

20.10.1991

This brief but vivid eye-witness account of the great JP movement in Bihar (1974-75) by late Sri Badri Narain Sinha of the Indian police Service, who was at that time serving in Bihar in a senior position, is of great value.

It not only traces the growth of the movement from day to day, with care and attention to every significant detail, but also records the reactions to it of an intelligent as well as sensitive police officer.

The account itself is quite reliable and will be found useful by both the general reader and the researcher.

I heartily commend it to the attention of both.

Bimal Prasad

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This book is based on a lecture given by my father at the Internal Security Academy, Mount Abu (Rajasthan) on 20th and 21st July 1978 at the invitation of the Director of this Academy.

Thanks are due to the Director, Faculty and trainees of the Internal Security Academy, Mount Abu for having given my father an opportunity to present his account of JP's movement before an august and distinguished audience.

I also extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Bimal Prasad, Ambassador of India to Nepal at Kathmandu for his kindness in agreeing to write a very scholarly foreword to this book. I am especially grateful to him as he spared some of his very precious and valuable time in undertaking this task.

I am also grateful to Sri Sachidanand who was Secretary to JP for having written a prologue to this book. His presence on the pages in this work would add to the stature and eminence of the author on behalf of JP who, unfortunately along with this author, is no more.

I also express my thanks to Professor Sidheshwari Ballabh, University Professor and Head of Department of Political Science, Ranchi University for having consented to write a very learned Introduction to the book. He was a close associate of the author including in a personal capacity and a long time friend. This has added to the sentimental value of the book.

I am greatly beholden to the famous artist Sri Vijay Kumar Verma for so elegantly designing the cover of this book. He had also designed the cover of my father's earlier book of verse on Mahatma Gandhi captioned "MAN THOU CAN!"

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to my mother Smt. Indu Prabha Sinha, my wife Smt. Rashmi Sinha and other family members for the encouragement and support in achieving this self-assigned task.



I would express my gratefulness to my father's boss Sri A. K. Ghosh, I.P. who was DG, Police Bihar, during 1974-75 for kindly offering his comments in this work of short notice.

I would also like to thank Sri Gopal Jee Sahay and Sri Rajesh Kumar Srivastava for providing advice and suggestions regarding the general layout and overall getup of this book.

Last but not the least, I would also like to record my sincere thanks and heartfelt appreciation in making possible the publication of this book as regards Sri Binay Prakash Singh, Managing Director, Jayshree Press Private Ltd Buddha Colony, Patna where this book was printed and his manager Sri Birendra Kumar Srivastava. This book would not have been a reality without their active and generous support and co-operation. I thank the other workers of this press for their cooperation

I however apologize to the reading public for not having been able to bring out this book earlier for which I may be kindly be excused by them.

I do hope readers find this book to contain useful and instructive material.

(Anandvardhan Sinha)  
I.A.S

SRI GANPAT SADAN

Boring Canal Road

PATNA

Wednesday, the 10th February, 1993

## **PROLOGUE**

The author has presented in this treatise a factual, though cursory, account of the historic movement led by Lok Nayak Jay Prakash Narayan in the mid-seventies.

Even as a highly placed police officer, duty-bound to preserve law and order, he was keenly interested in the peaceful progress of the movement. And as a keen observer, he took note of the events that shaped what was originally a students'-and-youth agitation into a powerful people's movement pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. He also took intelligent interest in its peaceful processes that had a salutary effect on the mass mind.

There is no denying the fact that he was inspired by JP's charismatic personality as many of the officers in this State were to varying degrees. This made difficult his task as a guardian of law and order. But he managed to fulfil his task creditably without losing sight of his social role in the given situation.

What distinguished him from most other officers in the State was his social conscience that prompted him to see that the genuine interests of the movement which aimed to improve the lot of the common man were not injured. This was permissible in a democracy whereunder the administration had a vital role to play in the context of a movement seeking to transform the entire system- social, political and administrative.

The author has given us a brief account of the long-drawn struggle waged by determined crusaders against an allegedly corrupt establishment armed with a strong political will to rule and even dictate.

I wish he lived longer to write or help write a more comprehensive book on the movement that changed at least the political face of India as a threatened democracy and re-established the rule of law that was sought to be converted into a misrule of law.

And more importantly, it set in motion a historic process of democratic restructuring that imperceptibly worked across the border, in my considered view, "the democratic explosion" (I borrowed this expression from a foreign commentator) that has shaken and uprooted the self-perpetuating and increasingly authoritarian Congress misrule in this country and also unleashed forces that caused explosions and shook the foundations of well-entrenched dictatorships whether authoritarian or totalitarian in Europe and Asia.

The JP's movement was indeed a forerunner of the earth-shaking events that transformed Eastern Europe and overthrew the Soviet Union which disintegrated under the impact of the massive explosion.

A closer and deeper study of the JP movement and its far-reaching effects in the present world context may substantiate the observation I have made.

I hope this brief account may encourage studies and provoke longer thinking on the subject.

Sachidanand  
Formerly JP's Secretary

Patna, the 18th January, 1993

# INTRODUCTION

Late Sri B. N. Sinha was not only a highly placed Police Officer but also a litterateur of eminence. But more than that he had a perceptive mind and a sensitive heart.

Even in the midst of performing the humdrum duties of a Police Officer, he kept his cool and could realize the importance of JP's Movement, not only on the plane of its chronology but also on the level of Ideology.

'Ideology' to him is not false conscience of the reality but the nobler and higher abiding values underlying JP's Movement.

JP's journey in the realm of ideas has been long and led to an almost 'Discovery of the Laws of Change' in Political Sociology. He started as a Communist professing faith in the Revolution of Marxist brand. But was soon converted into a Gandhian Socialist. Then his ideas flowered into *Sarvodaya*. From *Bhoodan* to *Jiwandan*, he was engaged in putting into practice his Philosophy of Basic Change, in the psychological attitudes of the people to economic justice and selflessness as the basic postulates of change.

From 1974 till his death he was experimenting with his ideas of Political, Social and Economic change. A political revolution was not good enough. Even in Mao's China a Cultural Revolution was to follow the Political Revolution

His ideas crystallized into what he called the "Total Revolution". He gave his "Seven-point" details of his concept of "Total Revolution".

Even the scholars of the time considered his "Total Revolution" as the cry of an anguished soul when he found a mockery being made of Gandhiji's '*Hind Swaraj*', the Gandhian vision of an Independent India. Ideals for which he lived were found melting before his eyes.

He decided to 'wage a struggle' for the re-acceptance and realization of those ideas and ideals in the same Gandhian manner and he succeeded to a great extent. He did not live long enough to see their realization in actual practice.

But Total Revolution has to be read a bit more carefully.

Two corollaries of Total Revolution are:

- (i) Revolution has to be depended and widened in all spheres of life, and,
- (ii) It has to be a continuous and continuing Revolution.

Words like Static, Stalemate, Status quo and Stationary were not found in the Dictionary of Politics. Time was change and time was continuous flow.

Thus, Total Revolution was not only total transformation of all aspects of social and political life, it was to be a continuing revolution

Late Sri Sinha as was obvious from his book J. P's Movement, even in the detailed narrative of the day-to-day happenings of JP's Movement was conscious of the philosophical values underlying the movement.

Late Sri B. N. Sinha's book has not only filled a gap in the knowledge of JP's Movement, has not only made available valuable authentic research material to the students of Political Philosophy and Political Sociology but also has proved to be a source of inspiration to the votaries of peaceful change and progress in India and abroad.

JP is dead. Long live JP.

(Prof.) Sidheshwari Ballabh  
University Professor & Head,  
Dept. of Political Science,  
Ranchi University,  
Ranchi



## COMMENTS

I had known Sri Badri Narain Sinha from the beginning of his career and particularly when he was S.P. Champaran and I was in-charge of the old Tirhut Division.

I had found him an able police administrator devoted to his duties and a man of wider perspective than the usual bureaucrat governed by routine and rules.

His booklet on JP's movement is a sympathetic study of the genesis and course of the movement.

It is unfortunate that his premature death prevented him from developing his ideas into a full-fledged and definitive study.

We are, thankful to his son, Anandvardhan, for rescuing the typescript from oblivion and publishing it for the benefit of future students of the subject.

A. K. Ghosh, I. P.  
D.G. Police (Retd)  
Bihar, Patna

## A BACKGROUNDER

It all started like a mini-French Revolution complete with its storming of the "'Bastille'" when the students and youth who were the vanguard of the JP Movement had a free run of the Bihar Legislature premises on March 18, 1974 in Patna. Or, in other words, this was the real 'Spring Thunder' unlike the Naxalite debut in March 1967 in North Bengal.

JP's Movement (1974-75) which is also known as the Bihar Agitation was spearhead by

- (i) College & University students and Unemployed Youth,
- (ii) *Sarvodaya* and *Bhoodan* workers,
- (iii) Activists and workers of non-Congress political parties participating without their party banner, and
- (iv) Professionals like teachers, journalists, advocates, doctors etc.

The movement was directed against 1. High Inflation 2. Rising unemployment, and 3. All pervasive corruption

In the short run this movement shook the pillars of Government, Administration and politics in Bihar (1974-75).

In the long run it led to a change in the Government at New Delhi in March, 1977 exactly three years after its start.

It added the title '**Lok Nayak**' to JP's name.

My father happened to occupy a vantage seat in the administration of Bihar at the time of JP's Movement as Deputy Inspector General of Police, Central Range, Patna and had the opportunity to have a ringside view of the events of the movement.

It was his desire to write a long and comprehensive history of this agitation but unfortunately time did not allow him that opportunity. In the process he was only able to write a short history of the JP's Movement which this present book is.

However, it is high time that a detailed and expanded history of the JP's movement was written by either a Scholar or a group of persons who had taken active part in JP Movement. It should include the life sketches and biographical facts in particular of the martyrs of the movement to whom this book is dedicated and who sacrificed their life for the cause of this agitation.

Such a booklet recently come out on the Nepalese struggle for More Party Democracy in 1989-90 wherein the salient facts and life sketches of the martyrs of the agitation against the authoritarian rule in that country have been vividly spelt out.

As has been stressed in the book J.P. movement is an ongoing and continuing movement which has not yet ended, especially the Total Revolution concept.

It would be desirable in the public and national interest of this movement to establish an institute-cum-museum to collect and preserve the various books, articles, booklets, pamphlets, placards, slogans and other artefacts of the movement and also to conduct advance studies and research of the movement and also to conduct advanced studies and research on how to carry on the Total Revolution concept forward and develop its format as well as its area of presentation and participation.

The desirability and feasibility of granting a monthly political pension to the active participants of the JP Movement along with other similar facilities on the lines of the pension given to freedom fighters could also be considered as the activities and workers are political sufferers in the real sense of the term.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a couple of points regarding the events of the movement.

Firstly, I would like to refer to the incident of November 4 1974 when JP was almost hit by a lathi wielded by a CRPF constable at the Income Tax Round-about on Bailey Road in Patna while he was leading a massive public march to Raj Bhavan in course of the agitation. Although the lathi did not touch JP one shudders to think of what would have happened if it had reached its target.

It was due to the quick reflex action of Hawaldar Suresh Singh (now a Sub-Inspector in Bihar Police) who immediately sprang to the rescue of JP and immediately brought out his police service revolver and warded off any threat to JP's life.

Here I would like to recall that Hawaldar Suresh Singh, Hawaldar Jamuna Singh and others were part of a 12 member special Police Security Group which had been placed around JP for his personal security by my father, the writer of this book.

My father had served as Senior Superintendent of Police, Ranchi for a year during 1970-71 and had specially brought this group from Ranchi Police upon his transfer to Patna to provide immediate protection to JP and serve as his ring round.

This group of Police constables and Hawaldars had been specially selected by my father for training in Commando and security operations by the Army in Ranchi, due to the excellent rapport and liaison that he enjoyed with Major General Dalbir Singh who was then General Officer Commanding of the 15th Division at Ranch. This group had been given special and elite training by the Army in commando and security operations. It was a member of this group who saved JP's life on Nov 4, 1974.

The abrupt departure of Shri P K J Menon, then Chief Secretary to Government of Bihar for Delhi on transfer on November 8, 1974 i.e. just four days after this incident tells its own tale and there appears to be much more than meets the eye, especially when Sri Menon had been under transfer since April 1974 itself.

The second incident or would-have-been incident which I would like to narrate is about a stalled meeting on April 5th 1975 between JP and Bihar Chief Minister designate Dr Jagannath Mishra on the eve of the latter assuming the reins of the administration of Bihar.

Readers would kindly recall that JP had declared at a public meeting in Gandhi Maidan Patna on February 18, 1974 that Dr Jagannath Mishra enjoyed the majority in Bihar Congress legislature party.

Taking a cue from this public statement, my father in the larger national and public interest of Bihar and the country had tried to bring about a rapprochement between JP and the other side in Bihar.

In this he had the active support and blessings of then Bihar Governor Sri R. D. Bhandare.

My father had arranged a secret meeting between JP and Dr Jagannath Mishra at our residence Sri Ganpat Sadan, Boring Canal Road, Patna to which only he (my Father), myself and the two leaders were privy.

I remember that we had sent our family members and staff from the house for a day and I had myself placed two chairs one for JP and the other for Dr. Jagannath Mishra in one of the rooms of our house and the two were scheduled to be closeted with each other at 11 'o clock at night.

There was to be a truce between the agitationists and the administration on the ground that the Abdul Gafoor Ministry against which the agitationists had been fighting had already gone out of power following its defeat and reduction into a minority in the Bihar Congress legislature party. Thus the main immediate demand of the movement that the Abdul Gafoor Ministry must go out of office had already been met. It was on this premise as well as JP's public statement referred to above that Dr Jagannath Mishra was to accord to the release of all political prisoners and activists of the movement from the jail and JP was perhaps to announce that the students who had been asked to leave their colleges for a year were to be told to go back to college.

However, Dr Jagannath Mishra developed cold feet at the eleventh hour and called off the meeting just before it was scheduled.

My father rang up JP to inform him about this change of events. JP told him to take the matter in its stride.

One wonders what would happened if this meeting had taken place and some sort of understanding would have been reached between the two leaders.

Perhaps the Emergency which followed in June 1975 could have been avoided or at least averted but these are the if's and but's of History.



I fervently hope that the present book although brief would not be found to be lacking in quality and depth of material as well as its originality and gravity and would induce other scholars or activists of the movement to bring out larger works on the subject.

The movement is worthy of having a doctoral thesis written on it. I invite any research scholar of Political Science to take up this topic as an academic assignment.

(Anandvardhan Sinha)  
I.A.S

SRI GANPAT SADAN,  
Boring Canal Road,  
Patna-800 001  
Dated: 11<sup>th</sup> Feb, 1993

## **PREFACE**

There are five fundamental characteristics:-

(a) It was purely a people's movement, not a political cadre's movement.

(b) It was a non-violent movement.

(c) It was not a concession oriented movement or demonstration but a movement for new order which is now called Total Revolution and, therefore, it is an ongoing movement.

(d) It was a projection of JP's own political philosophy in which there are Marxist elements and content as also indigenous relevancies. It was against the style of functioning of the Government.

(e) It was not against any individual or any political party, but against corruption in all spheres.

A movement has an environment, it has a pre-organisational character; it has its strategy; it has its performances and it has a future and JP's movement has to be analysed in this perspective.

Mt Abu  
Rajasthan  
20/21 July 1978

B. N. Sinha  
I. P. S  
D. I. G of Police (OSD)  
Bihar, Patna

# **J. P.'s MOVEMENT**

## **1. THE GENESIS**

JP's movement was a people's movement, not a political cadre's movement in the sense recent Naxalite Movement could be called a movement of ideologically dedicated political workers.

JP did not organise the movement the way political leader of a political party organises a movement.

He was called upon on 19.3.1974 by the activists to lead the movement in the wake of turmoil at Patna on the 18th March, 1974.

He had even appealed to the activists to call off the proposed Bihar Bundh on 23.3.1974 in view of possible violence. When he got the pledge that the movement would be purely non-violent, he agreed to lead the movement.

It is true, JP had addressed the students earlier than the 18th March, 1974 and was in touch with the trends in Bihar and had also visited Ahmedabad on February 11, 1974 where the students' pioneered movement had a mass upsurge and had resulted in the dissolution of the Assembly.

The genesis of the movement could be traced to the students' demands in Bihar which as agitation started and spread, went on becoming broad based and ultimately, moved beyond the original charter of students demands to the political demand for resignation of the then Bihar Ministry and thereafter for even dissolution of the Bihar Assembly.

When JP assumed leadership of the agitation, he gave to it his political philosophy; which is based namely upon the philosophy of involvement of the people in power as distinct from the purely institutionalised government through elected representatives at the State and the Centre. JP has called such a government a 'proxy' Government.

It is the creed of JP which runs as a 'Central thread' through a big process of evolution of ideas of JP.

His stress on Gram Swarajya which he calls 'a new democratic polity' takes to the root of direct involvement of people in exercise of power and when the Bihar movement encompassed the rural people, though it started with the students and people in urban areas, JP saw his dream materializing.

It is in this context that he gave a call for establishing Janata Sarkars at Panchayats and Block levels. His plea for Total Revolution is also tied firmly to this concept of decentralization of power of the State at Panchayat levels or Gram Sabha levels. In this context an all-embracing transformation of peoples is also visualized.

JP clearly says:

**‘When a revolutionary movement is on, its aims should not remain limited to whatever they were at the beginning but, taking advantage of the revolutionary atmosphere, they should be widened to cover as many fields of life as possible’.**

The Total Revolution is a seven-aspect concept, touching political, economic, social, educational, cultural, moral-spiritual and national-environmental frameworks.

JP’s movement was primarily 'a struggle' of the people of all shades, not mere political cadres or *Sarvodaya* cadres, against the Establishment; for, according to JP, originally a Marxist, constitutional means and State action have failed to make any appreciable dent in the moral, social and economic stagnation that the country is now victim of.

The Marxist theory of State ultimately to wither away, though nowhere realised, lingers in JP’s political thesis and his plea for decentralisation of power, giving power to people at grass roots; power of even sponsoring candidates for legislatures and Parliament, reducing State's role in increasing sphere of human activities, is the outcome of the Marxian Statelessness concept.

JP has been called 'anarchist' on this score.

For the means to realise the vision, JP has clearly stated that Mao's famous dictum of power coming out of the barrel of guns was correct; only it is not purposeful because **power remained confined to the hands of only those persons who had guns** and did not result in people's power.

Therefore, he has a view that the people must be involved in the 'struggle' and without this involvement, power will not reach the people.

His disillusionment with communism was disillusionment born out of the communist style of governmental functioning, not disillusionment with Marxism. The lure for the latter has lasted.

JP's deep conviction in people's power, variously called participatory democracy, direct democracy, shaped his current movement as well. When he asked for resignation of the Bihar Ministry and thereafter for dissolution of the Assembly, he did not mean mere changes in the Government.

He embarked upon the realisation of his thesis; people should be given the right to recall their elected representatives and change of established Government through polls.

As early as 1947 when the transfer of power was taking place and the Congress was converted into a parliamentary party, he had warned the nation that a constitutional and administrative machinery might be of use and even necessary, but situated as we were, the people's struggle for a new society must be carried on mainly outside the legislature and the portals of government departments.

JP is a Titanic anti-Establishment figure.

His movement in 1974 was not against any individual or even a political party but against Establishment and, therefore, the inevitable confrontations took place. For overthrow of Government is a legitimacy in any society. It could be an overthrow by people's movement. No Government is infallible and when the people decide to overthrow their Government, there can be no let or hindrance.

Appreciation of this political Philosophy is a prerequisite to a critical review of JP's movement.



## 2. JP's VIEWS ON THE MOVEMENT

JP's views are mirrored in his writings, speeches, hand-outs issued from time to time. To put his movement in the correct perspective it would be fruitful to have excerpts from the same. Without knowing the man and his thoughts, it would be difficult to understand his actions.

JP started as a Marxist. While in United States he wrote a thesis on cultural variations and from a student of science he changed to a student of sociology. In India, on return, his association with the Indian National Congress, the Congress Socialist Party and the *Sarvodaya* are well known to re-capitulate.

It was as a *Jeewandani* and *Sarvodaya* leader that he led the movement in 1974. This brought him into conflict with Acharya Vinoba Bhave who did not advocate '*Satyagraha*' for *Sarvodaya*. To JP, the call of the people was almost super most and a *Sarvodaya* worker could not be 'goody-goody' people.

It may be surmised that bands of *Sarvodaya* workers joined the movement under his leadership, but this movement was not a result of a pre-planned and fully worked out programme of political agitation launched by the *Sarvodaya*. It could be said that *Sarvodaya* workers who subscribed to the theory of *Satyagraha* got sucked in the vortex of movement.

As for himself, JP clearly stated in the same context:

**'I cannot remain a silent spectator to misgovernment, corruption and the rest whether in Patna, Delhi or elsewhere'.**

On the character of the movement JP's own analysis is relevant.

**"The leadership of the movement never passed into the hands of any party or any combination of parties. Both the movements have been largely non-partisan in nature. Irrespective of who was in power they have been for certain things as against certain others".**

On the movement strategy, and objectives, JP's thoughts are very clear.

**“It is a healthy and welcome symptom of our democracy that the people, the real masters, should rise and take recourse to unconstitutional, but peaceful, means to assert themselves and bend the powers that be to their will”.**

But it was also imperative "to forge permanent organs of people's power from the village to the constituency and to the State level".

On the movement itself, JP said:

**“This is a revolutionary movement. Let there be no mistake about it. Do not think for a moment that the aims of eradicating corruption and unemployment, of bringing down prices and radical change in the system of education can be achieved without a social, economic, political, and moral and Cultural Revolution. There have been revolutions in the past, violent revolutions, that brought both good and the evil. Mao is right when he says that power comes from the barrel of gun. But in that case power belongs to those who have the guns. The people do not have guns. Those who have guns carry out a revolution in the name of the people and then establish through violence. It can come only through peaceful means and has to be carried out by the people themselves.”**

The movement was a struggle between students' power and people's power on the one hand and State power on the other. Verily it was confrontation between the people and the Establishment for a change in the politico-socio-economic order. When in the Central Parliament Hall, the new Prime Minister was hailed, JP took only one pledge from the new PM:

**‘His dealings with students and youths championing public causes will not be the same as those of the past regimes’.**

It showed JP visualized confrontations between youths and students and the incoming Establishment as well, for the new order was yet to be realised.

### 3. THE THEN ESTABLISHMENT'S VIEW ON THE MOVEMENT

As any establishment views any challenge to its activities, much less its existence with apprehension and concern, any overt act is inevitably disapproved. In a fully collectivised state, what is normally dreaded and guarded against is a counter subversion. In a democratic State what is dreaded and guarded against is disobedience or organised disobedience.

Therefore, it would be worthwhile remembering all the while that the exercise of authority is surrounded by a penumbra of anarchy. Not only any agitator's commit violence, the authorities also commit violence to curb the former.

*"The events in Gujarat of early 1974, the Bihar agitation which followed Gujarat, the concerted efforts by certain opposition parties under the inspiration and leadership of Sri Jay Prakash Narayan to spread the movement to other parts of the country, the plans and programmes of the National Coordination Committee of People's struggle culminating in the decision taken by them in their Delhi Meetings of June, 1975, were all deliberately aimed at undermining the Constitution and destroying the very institutions through whose instrumentality a democracy can flourish. They expose in all their nakedness the deep and widespread conspiracy which has been brewing against the Prime Minister and the Government led by her. In the name of democracy, it had been sought to negate the very functioning of democracy. A function and force was used to compel members to resign in order to dissolve duly elected Legislative Assemblies. A systematic campaign of hatred, vilification and calumny had been let loose by these opposition parties to spread disaffection among the people and disrupt law and order throughout the country on a wide scale. The actions of a few were endangering the rights of a vast majority. No Government worth the name could stand by all this and allow the country's security, stability and economy to be imperilled, as the nation's interests demanded firm and decisive action."*

It is clear the appraisal reflected the overall views of the Establishment towards the JP movement, which beginning with the charter of purely public distribution demands had broadened itself to encompass political demands.

The JP movement focuses the perennial conflict between the Establishment and the people. The conflict is implied in any government and calls for orientations and valuations on the part of the people who exercise power.

#### **4. THE CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS**

There are two aspects of the Bihar movement which must not escape notice; for it is these two aspects which distinguish this crusade for a total revolution from other similar agitations and movements.

##### **TWO DISTINCT ASPECTS OF THE BIHAR MOVEMENT**

The first aspect is that it is a movement which was primarily started by University and college students. Secondly, the students were fortunate enough in that they succeeded in persuading JP to accept the direct leadership of the movement.

When one comes to study the genesis of the student revolt in Bihar one easily notices the difference between the origin and character of the student uprising in Gujarat and that in Bihar. For one thing, the student leaders in Gujarat had no affiliations with any political parties.

Secondly, it started with the question of increase in the mess charges in the hostels of Engineering Colleges and ended with the dislodging of the Ministry and dissolution of the Gujarat assembly. But Nav Nirman Samiti, the adhoc organisation of the students of Gujarat, failed to capitalise on its remarkable success and to switch over to some wider and more permanent objectives and ideals.

JP had warned them while in Ahmedabad that they must have clear objectives before them to pursue, after the achievement of their immediate objectives of the dismissal of the Ministry and dissolution of the Assembly. The movement fizzled out.

The students had been agitating for the redressal of their grievances since December 1973. There had been demonstrations and gheraos of the Vice-chancellor. Student leaders had also gone on hunger strike before the Chhajjubagh residence of the Chief Minister, Mr A. Gafoor (his official residence was at 3, King George Avenue). The Chief Minister had agreed to concede their demands. There was also a Cabinet decision to this effect, which was announced in the Assembly by the Minister of State for Education Mr Nitishwar Prasad Sinha.

The students alleged that these orders were never implemented. They felt frustrated and had no faith in the administration. Things were allowed to drift and the students' unrest grew.

In early March, 1974, student leaders of various Universities of Bihar met in Patna and formulated a 12-point charter of demands. The charter included bringing down prices, ensuring supply of essential commodities which had become scarce, cheaper text-books and exercise-books, better hostel accommodation and better food, eradication of corruption, jobs for the educated unemployed, and action against hoarders, profiteers and blackmarketeers.

The meeting also announced the formation of the Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti (Student's Action Committee). Those included in it belonged to the youth wings of the Sanyukta Socialist Party, the Socialist Party, the Jansangh, the Congress (O), C.P.I and the C.P.I. (M). Soon hijacking of buses and demonstrations in the University areas became frequent.

Finding their just demands ignored and, on the contrary finding armed police in the campuses of the Colleges and the Patna University, the angry students gave a call for the gherao of the Assembly on the opening day of its Budget Session on March 18, 1974.

The Youth Wings of the CPI and CPI (M) dissociated themselves from the call and formed a Bihar Rajya Chhatra Naw Jawan Morcha of their own. It was an attempt of the C.P.I to wrest the initiative. A pamphlet issued on its behalf showed that the student's wing of the CPI (ML) was also in the Morcha.



The Morcha charged the Samiti with indulging in shadow-fighting and announced that they would organise a separate demonstration at the Collectorate in Bettiah headquarters town of West Champaran district and also before the residence of the Education Minister of Bihar on, March 16. There was an attempt on that day to storm the Bettiah Collectorate by a mixed mob. This led to Police firings in which 7 persons were killed.

The same evening about 200 members of the Morcha gheraoed the residence of the Education Minister in Patna. The Education Minister came out to meet the demonstrators immediately and an attempt was made to kidnap him. In the melee his jacket was torn. Someone tried to strike a blow on his head with a lathi. But before it could fall on his head, it was snatched away by a Police constable. The Education Minister said later that a large section of the mob comprised non students having "vicious looks".

Soon brick batting started and a bomb also exploded. The Police intervened, made lathi charges and burst tear-gas shells and dispersed the mob.

That very night the retreating members of the mob brick-batted the buildings of the *Searchlight* and the *Indian Nation*, the two English dailies of Patna, the *Pradeep* and the *Aryavarta* the Hindi counterparts of these two dailies, were also housed in the same respective buildings.

### **THE FATEFUL DAY OF MARCH 18, 1974**

Then came the fateful day of March 18. It sparked off a State-wide agitation, which soon turned into a mass movement and created a mass upsurge under the leadership of JP.

Over thirty thousand students and youths of Bihar had come to participate in the gherao of the Assembly. Quite a sizeable number of them had managed to break through the barricades and the Police cordons while others were held at bay outside.

A delegation of half a dozen Samiti workers headed by the President and General Secretary of the Patna University Students Union Mr Lalu Prasad Yadav and Mr Sushil Kumar Modi, went to Raj Bhavan to meet the Governor, Mr Ramchandra Dhondiba Bhandare, about half an hour before the commencement of the session.

They were allowed to meet the Governor, who received them politely and offered them tea. He did not, however, agree to their request not to go to the Assembly. He told them that as Governor of the State he had certain duties to perform which he could not abrogate.

The distance from Raj Bhavan to the Assembly is about 7 furlongs. It is a straight drive from east to west through the western gates of the Secretariat. To prevent the Governor from going to the Assembly a group of Samiti demonstrators squatted before the eastern gates of the Raj Bhavan. Showering of brick bats started from all sides and the Police too resorted to repeated lathi charges and teargasing. The police later alleged that brick batting had started even before the squatters had been removed. But this was not corroborated by independent eye witnesses. It shows that the Police had to respect distinction between the intentions and overact and could not cross the line in apprehension.

JP had publicly asked them to desist from organising the Bihar Bundh because of the turn that their agitation had taken. They did not pay heed, and mob violence again erupted in different parts of the State in the wake of the Bihar Bundh. The Samiti had given the call for Bihar Bundh in protest against the repressive action of the Government on the Assembly Gherao Day and the large scale arrests of youths and students.

The whole State of Bihar was on fire.

There were numerous lathi-charges, teargasing and Police firing as a result of which at least 25 persons were killed and over two hundred injured. This is according to official version given at the time. Curfew was clamped in a dozen towns. In Patna there was day-curfew as well and night curfew with a brief break in between. It took about a week for the situation to return to normal

The Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti included youths who were not students, it was also called for some time as Chhatra Yuwa Sangharsh Samiti. Some members of its steering committee included a college teacher, a lawyer and some others who were leaders of the youth wings of the Congress (O), the Socialist Party and the SSP. But in the end the name Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti stuck.

The violence and confrontation led to introspection and the Samiti tried hard to keep its agitation peaceful. This was reflected in their week long programme of Satyagraha launched on March 30 when they observed state wide fast from sunrise to sunset at street corners in improvised camps.

They now put forward, for the first time a new demand, the resignation of the Ministry. Placards bearing this demand hung on roadside clotheslines, excellent impromptu mass media started wafting in the pre-summer breeze carrying the message far and wide.

The Samiti leaders had been visiting J.P. since March 21 and urging him to lead them. Always JP insisted that they must pledge themselves to remain peaceful and they agreed. It was announced on April 7, that next day JP would lead a silent procession of Sarvodaya workers and youths and students to demonstrate to the Government by the people their peaceful intentions and that they were against forces of violence which indulged in destructive activities and arson.

JP came out on the streets and led a huge silent procession of students, youths, women, Sarvodaya and social workers in the afternoon of April 8. The processionists, including JP, who was in a jeep, had their lips sealed with saffron or pieces of dark cotton cloth. Many also had their hands tied behind their backs.

Central and Western Patna came out on the streets to watch the progress of this unique procession and flower petals were showered from house tops as it wended its way from the Congress Maidan in Kadamkuan, where JP's residence is located, via Station Road, Frazer Road, Gandhi Maidan Road, Ashok Raj Path, Govind Mitra Road and the Ram Krishna Avenue before returning to its starting-point and dispersing peacefully.

Several hundred women, including girl students, formed vanguard of the procession. It was followed by workers of the Sarvodaya Mandal. The Tarun Shanti Sena, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, students and youth carrying placards "*Hamla Chahe Jo Bhi Ho, Hath hamara Nahi Uthega*" (Whatever the provocation, won't raise our hands in retaliation).

When it reached the Patna Central Jail a large number of youths, arrested in connection with the agitation, gave silent salute to JP from the roof of the prison.

On the following evening, addressing a mammoth meeting at Gandhi Maidan, JP called upon the youth to be prepared to sacrifice all for ending the political, economic and social evils and rampant corruption. He said that what he was leading now was not an agitation but a movement. He felt mere change in the Ministry would not do any good to the country. The Ruling Party as well as the opposition parties had failed to serve the cause of the people. The situation was going from bad to worse. The whole set-up had to be overhauled by involving the people in the task of rebuilding the nation. He thus briefly indicated what he would later expound and elaborate as "*Sampurna Kranti*" or Total Revolution.

Addressing the All India Conference of citizens for Democracy at Delhi on April 14, JP described the happenings in Gujarat and Bihar as the first signs of the people bestirring themselves at long last to resist misrule and corruption at high places. He felt a concrete pattern emerging.

This was a welcome sign as far as it went and he had no doubt that students and youths would be in the Vanguard of all such resistance movements.

The paralyse-the-government movement had already been launched in Bihar on April 9.

At Gaya, Satyagraha led to Police firings. According to official reports, at least eight persons had been killed and fifteen injured in three separate police firings on April 12.

JP left for Vellore on April 23 to have his enlarged prostate gland operated.

JP spelled out some do's and don'ts for the participants in the movement before his departure.

- He said they must eschew violence in word and deed whatever the provocation might be.
- Raising of abusive slogans must stop.

- The slogans must be such as to appeal to the people and explain the objectives of the struggle.
- If there was to be condemnation of anything, it must be in dignified language.
- No one should be forced to do anything against his will and fasts, gheraos and dharna must not assume coercive character.
- The families of Ministers, legislators and businessmen must not be harassed or ill-treated.

Releasing the programme, JP said that the first week of May should be devoted to building up and strengthening of the organs of the struggle.

The second week should be devoted to the objective of voicing the demand for the resignation of the Ministry and the dissolution of the State Assembly.

The third week should be observed as anti-corruption week in which sons and daughters of corrupt persons including Ministers, bureaucrats, businessmen, hoarders and profiteers should be persuaded to observe a 12-hour fast in their homes to impress upon their elders to tread the narrow but straight path of virtue and not to indulge in dishonest practices.

One day should be devoted by the youths and students for taking pledges not to indulge in any corrupt practices.

The fourth week should be observed to highlight system to link academic learning with manual labour and training in Skills needed in farms and factories. The first two days of June should be devoted to review the progress of their work and plan for the future.

JP returned from Vellore to Patna on June 2.

The agitation had continued during his absence and many youths, besides leaders of Non-Communist parties, had been jailed.

## **JUNE 5 MARCH TO RAJ BHAVAN**

On June 5, a mammoth march to Raj Bhavan from Gandhi Maidan was scheduled to be organised to present to the Governor over one crore signatures of citizens of Bihar demanding the dissolution of the Bihar Assembly. (The CPI organised a huge procession on June 3 to demand summoning of the assembly).

When the procession was returning from Raj Bhavan, fire was opened (eight rounds) from the Bailey Road flat of a Congress M.L.A. Mr Phulena Rai, by members of an Organisation known as the Indira Brigade. JP escaped but a Police driver and sixteen members of the procession were injured.

The Police led by the City Superintendent of Police at once swung into action and arrested 17 persons, mostly young men, from the flat of Mr Phulena Rai, who could not be traced. The Police also recovered from the flat one DBBL gun, two single-barrel guns, five pistols, some ammunitions and large number of liquor bottles besides some pornographic pictures.

The procession returned to Gandhi Maidan after the shooting incident and a rally was held.

It was at this rally that JP was named "**Lok Nayak**" (Supreme leader of the people).

The whole Maidan reverberated with thunderous cries of "Lok Nayak Zindabad".

Addressing the rally, JP called upon the people to stop payment of taxes to the Government as it had lost their confidence. He also directed the students to ensure the closure of the colleges and the universities of Bihar by boycotting their classes and examinations for a year and to participate actively in the agitation (the colleges and universities were to open from mid-July).

He announced that from June 7 onward demonstrations and picketing would be held peacefully before the gates of the Assembly to prevent the legislators and Ministers from attending the legislature. He warned the M.L.As to resign within a week or face peaceful gherao of their residence. He said the students and youths would continue to fill the jails till the demand for the dissolution of the Assembly was conceded.

It was at this rally that JP called upon the Chhatra Sangharsh Samities and the Jan Sangharsh Samities to build their Organisation from the Block to the State level to prepare the ground for the victory of their nominees at the time of the next Assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

By this time, 13 out of 24 Jan Sangh MLAs and 7 out of 17 SP MLAs had resigned. The Jan Sangh had also expelled its remaining 11 MLAs from the party. Mr Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, a former Chief Minister in the United Front Government, was the only Congress MLA to resign at the call of JP.

As announced by JP the Satyagraha before the Assembly commenced on June 7 and 53 Satyagrahis, including 24 Sarvodaya workers, were arrested on the first day.

The Satyagraha was offered in batches. The first batch of 24 Sarvodaya workers arrived at the Assembly gates at 7.45 a.m. and were promptly nabbed (it was a Friday when the Assembly sits from 9 a.m.) The second and third batches of Satyagrahis were arrested between 9 and 9.30 a.m. The last batch included Mr Bijoy Kumar Mitra, a Janasangh leader and an Ex-Minister.

### **SPECTACULAR SECOND PHASE OF THE AGITATION**

The first phase of the agitation concluded with the end of the Satyagraha before the Assembly from the third week of July and the Second and more intensive phase of state-wide agitation was launched from August 1, when the scene shifted from the Assembly to the districts, blocks, panchayats and Assembly constituencies.

Though not spectacular, the first phase proved to be quite effective despite the fact that it could not bring about the dissolution of the Assembly. A section of the youthful agitators had a feeling that they had not achieved much and were, therefore, itching for a more showy form of agitation.

Since JP took upon himself the responsibility of guiding the agitation, it remained, barring stray cases, peaceful. He personally used to administer a pledge to the Satyagrahis sent out to the Assembly to remain peaceful in the face of all provocation. The Satyagrahis dutifully went to the Assembly gates, shouted slogans and courted arrest.

Between June 7 and July 2 when this Satyagraha was called off, over 3,400 Satyagrahis had been arrested.

During this phase, though the centre looked askance at the agitators, the local administration did not treat them harshly. The magistrates and the police politely asked them to board the waiting buses, where they provided with lunch packets to ensure that they did not go hungry, and then whisked off. During the last three days of the Satyagraha, they were taken into custody but returned to their hometowns and released. The Satyagrahis came from various districts to participate in the Satyagraha.

There was no alternative for the government but to release them because neither the Patna Central Jail nor the Phulwari Camp Jail not even the district jails which also were full (because the agitation was continuing in district towns too) could accommodate them. The government also appeared to be considerate because the Satyagrahis did not create trouble.

The demand for the dissolution of the assembly and the resignation of the Ministry was not contained in the original 12 point demand of the students formulated in the month of March. It had been subsequently added because of the repressive role of the "Corrupt Government" to suppress a democratic agitation.

JP referred to it in a signed article in the weekly "*Everyman*" after he gave his call for Satyagrah in which he said that he had been compelled by events to support the demand for dissolution of the Assembly and the resignation of the Ministry even though he knew it would not solve the state's problems.

He said this demand was added only (a) when political and administrative corruption in the State showed no sign of abatement, (b) when the people's interests suffered because of infighting among Congress legislators, and, (c) the Bihar Government stumbled from one misdeed and failure to another in dealing with the peaceful movement of the students and people of Bihar.



Whenever the youths and students strayed from the path of peace, JP did not hesitate publicly to condemn such action. When four legislators were manhandled outside the Assembly on June, 12 (the issue was raised in the house) JP condemned the action and apologised (in a letter) to the Speaker for the incidents, though his own reports were that outsiders were responsible for it.

On June 21, JP said at Allahabad that if the Bihar agitation failed, it would mean the end of democracy in the country. He said the entire country was on the verge of an explosion. If the mass upsurge in Bihar failed as in Gujarat after initial success the people would be left without any hope. He also suggested Bihar type of agitation in UP.

Although the achievements of the people's struggle spearheaded by Jan Sangharsh and Chhatra Sangharsh Samities had so far been considerable, JP felt it was not enough. He felt that where ever the Jan Sangharsh Samities had been organised, the struggle had achieved some success. In his view, the movement was still disorganised. He wanted it to be fully organised throughout the State from the village to the State level because his aim was total revolution. In consultation with leaders of the Sangharsh Samities and Sarvodaya workers, he drew up a detailed programme by expanding his programme of June 5. He prepared its blue-print in Calcutta and released it in Patna after the programme of Satyagraha before the Assembly called off.

From August, 1, the movement aimed at completely paralysing the government by ensuring suspension of work in all government offices and non-payment of taxes. The Samities had to see to it that not a paisa was paid by the villagers towards land rent, water rent etc. Agricultural loans were not repaid. The non-cooperation of the people with the government was thus total. In the cities and towns excise shops were vigorously picketed by Satyagrahis because excise was a big source of government revenue. Addicts were also persuaded to give up taking drugs and alcohol as it was ruinous for them. Cooperation was also sought from government employees for paralysing government work in the block, subdivisions and districts. It was explained to government employees that the agitation was meant for their good as it sought to replace the present rotten system with a better system of administration.

JP exempted from the purview of this programme courts, banks, railways, post and telegraphs offices, supply and ration offices and the like as these concerned the everyday life of the people. The exemption was necessary because the Samities were expected not to do anything which might cause unnecessary inconvenience to the people. For the same reason, he also exempted Secretariat for the time being, particularly because visitation of floods had already been reported.

Other tasks given to the Samiti by JP included

(1) Prevention of profiteering, black marketing and hoarding from the village to the State level;

(2) Careful watch on the functions of the ration shops and government distribution agencies to ensure that they functioned properly (he felt women were best suited for this task);

(3) Holding of processions and demonstrations in the constituency to put pressure on members of the Assembly who had not resigned; and

(4) Peaceful gherao of the MLAs in their homes at the conclusion of the session of the Assembly on July 12 (gherao of family members of MLAs, however was banned).

At JP's call on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Black day was observed. It included a 12 hour mass fast in protest against "repression let loose on peaceful Satyagrahis by the government". JP himself led the fast before he left for Lucknow by the evening train. Procession was also taken out in the evening by Samiti volunteers wearing black arm-bands.

It was decided to intensify the struggle from October, 2 the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Consultative Committee of the representative of political parties supporting the movement. JP supported it. The programme drawn up by the Committee envisaged gherao, strike, bundhs and dharna before government offices. The aim of the programme was to paralyse work in all government and semi government institutions. The representatives of the SSFP, Jan Sangh, the Socialist party and the Congress (O) decided to make necessary preparations for the intensified struggle.

The programme envisaged more and more involvement of small farmers, landless workers, Harijans, Adivasi, Muslims and women in the struggle. It laid down some socio-economic object like land to the landless, fair wages for agricultural labourer, lowering of land rent and water rates and ending usurious money-lending by Mahajan's in the villages. The Jana and Chhatra Sangharsh Samities were directed to build up their organisation from Panchayat upwards.

JP gave a call to the people to enrol as Satyagrahis of the movement to paralyse the government. Subsequently, a call was given for a three day Bihar Bundh commencing October 3. A statement issued by JP is relevant:

**"The Bihar struggle is no longer a State issue. It has acquired an all India importance and the country's fate has come to be bound up with its success or failure. At the moment when the Bihar struggle is about to enter a decisive phase and particularly in view of the fact that it is not confronted with the tottering government of Bihar but with the power of Delhi itself, the support of other states would take a more decisive form and its direction too should be towards Delhi."**

By this time JP movement had widened itself and its waves were touching Delhi as well.

During the unprecedented three-day Bihar Bundh commencing October 3, life in most parts of the State was completely paralysed. Buses, taxis, cycle rickshaws, and tam-tams remained off the road. The shops and markets were all closed. The train did not run on the Eastern and Northern Eastern Railways in Bihar due to squatting on railway tracks, removal of fishplates, tampering with tracks and disruption of telecommunications. Train services of the North East Frontier Railway were also seriously affected. Only the South Eastern Railway remained largely unaffected.

Work in government offices from State to the Block level came to a grinding halt. In Patna in the Old Secretariat attendance of employees, other than officer, was negligible. Life remained normal only in Singhbhum district, and partially normal in Ranchi district.

Mob violence did erupt in different parts of the State resulting police firings at Patna City, Ekma, Masaaki, Dishware, Tribeniganj, Bidhupur, Patahi, Saharan, Bhavanpur, Gidhaur, Nasriganj and two other places. At least a dozen persons were killed and many injured, according to official reports.

Patna City (east Patna) was the scene of the worst disturbance. Repeated tear-gassing, lathi charges and firings from riot guns (for first time in Bihar) failed to dislodge a 10,000 strong mob which had taken control of the Patna City railway Station and made movements of trains impossible by squatting on the tracks. Sections of the mob also set on fire the east cabin and the nearly Begumpur Post Office. Four persons were officially reported to have been killed (riot guns having proved ineffective because rubber pellets had been used, heavy rifle was soon resorted to and at least sixty injured). Mob violence also led to the imposition of curfew in at least six town including Patna City, where it was imposed at 1 p.m. on October 5 and lifted on October 8. It was relaxed only for a few hours every day till the situation became near normal.

The main targets of mob fury were the Eastern and North Eastern Railways. In the mufasil areas violence broke out as the consequence of gheraos of block offices or police stations but it was not planned in the use of the railways. On the eastern Railway signalling equipment were damaged at 34 stations, eight signal posts uprooted as telephone wires cut in almost all sections in Danapore Division. Telephone cable of the posts and Telegraph Department were also cut at many places. Several railway cabins were set on fire. The most disturbed area from the point of view of the Eastern Railways Grand Chord Section was Rohtas District.

On the North Eastern railway the tracks had been tampered with or uprooted at 105 places during the three-day Bundh. The Pasraha Maheshkhunt section was the worst affected. On the third and last day of the Bundh the railway track had been uprooted at 22 places in this section.

Other badly affected spots listed by a spokesman of the Railway were Narayanpur in Chapra Section, Thana Bihpur in Mansi Section and Teghra in Barauni Section; on this section many railway cabins were also damaged.

But even the worst critics of JP did not suggest that he had instigated the violence.

In fact before leading a procession of Satyagraha to offer dharna before the Secretariat on October 3, JP reminded his followers that whatever be the provocation, we shall not lift our hands in retaliation".

Ironically enough at that very moment the Patna city railway station was under siege by a huge mob which had already set fire to the east cabin and nearby post office and indulged in heavy brick- batting.

Top Congress leaders alleged that the movement had passed into the hand of the Ananda Marg and the R.S.S. JP himself felt nothing wrong with the association of the R.S.S. with his movement though he disclaimed any knowledge of the participation of the followers of the Ananda Marg.

Mr Satya Narain Singh, leader of one faction of the Naxalite, was in sympathy with JP's movement and had met him more than once. From his talks, it was clear that JP was not prepared to take his help unless he promised to eschew violence completely.

There was another group of young, hot-heads. On June 25, a self- styled "armed Revolutionary students Organisation" circulated a pamphlet in Bihar rejecting the 'peaceful agitation led by JP and threatening to launch armed struggle to "dislodge the corrupt Ministry and demolish the 'establishments". While placing on record their regard for JP they declared "we differ from the non-violent means adopted by JP because we know Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship would crush all democratic forms of struggle". Their stand was controversial but their foresight prophetic.

At JP's suggestion, 24 hour relay fasts were organised by batches of Satyagrahis before the Bihar Assembly gates for 11 days commencing October 7. About 1,200 Satyagrahis participated in these fasts.

The Satyagrahis included JP, Mr. Sidhraj Dhaddha, President, All India Sarva Seva Sangh, Mr Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, Mrs Sarla Bhadoria MP, Mr Sayendra Narain Sinha MP, Mr Basawan Sinha, Socialist Leader and Mr Jagbandhu Adhikari, MLC General Secretary of the State Jansangh.

JP announced on October 14 a four-fold programme of action after watching the situation, two of which were continuing actions while two were new.

The programme to paralyse administrative work in Government offices from Block to district level was to be continued. Courts would be allowed to function. Government offices and departments directly concerned with the people's welfare would also be allowed to function for as long as might be necessary. The program to keep liquor shops and depots closed would also continue. Taxes were not to be paid.

Wherever the movement had gained enough strength, the programme for people's administration would be implemented. People's administration would function at village, Panchayat and Block levels or at any of the three levels. All the adults in a village would constitute the Gram Sabha. Village representatives would constitute the Panchayat Janasabha. One duly elected representative or Mukhia from each Panchayat would constitute the Block Jan Sabha. Gram Sabhas and Jan Sabhas would elect Sanchalaks (directors) to be responsible for different types of work. All elections, as far as possible, would be held by consensus.

JP was laying the foundation of the society which would help bring about "*Sampurna Kranti*" or Total Revolution.

In the first phase, the main tasks of the people's administration would be boycott of Police stations and organisation of Gram Shanti Dal for the village for equal treatment to Harijans and prevention of their eviction from homesteads, and attempts to increase employment opportunities.

The people's administrations were to take up other programmes to serve the people according to local needs. No one was to be punished or humiliated in any way. Social boycott might, however, be imposed. Youth would be given prominence at every level and adequate representation given to women, Harijans, Muslim, Adivasi and the poor in general.

People's administration would function with the help of voluntary contributions but taxes might be paid to it, if so decided by consensus.

## **PATNA CHALO CALL ON NOVEMBER 4**

He gave a "Patna Chalo" call for a massive demonstration of people's power on November 4 in Patna to force the Ministry and Assembly to go.

It was becoming clearer and clearer every day that the confrontation of the movement was no longer with the Bihar Ministry but with the Central Ministry.

The Congress Working Committee itself underscored this by taking a "firm decision" to launch a nation-wide counter-offensive.

The Bihar Government, obviously under instruction from the Centre, initiated measures almost on a war scale a week before the scheduled November 4 massive gherao of the Bihar Assembly and the residences of Ministers and MLAs. JP had called upon the people to march to Patna to participate in the gherao. Barricades built in West Patna, particularly the Raj Bhavan, Secretariat, Assembly and MLA flats complex were extended to other parts of the town. Thousands of B.S.F., C.R.P. jawans and state constabulary were pressed into service to guard all strategic points. Barricades were put up even on both sides of the main line of the eastern Railway from Danapur in the west to Fatwa in the east for a distance of 20 miles. Large number of check posts were set up to prevent the ingress of demonstrators from outside.

On November 1, JP's talks with the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, lasting 90 minutes, failed mainly on the issue of dissolution of the Bihar Assembly.

JP told waiting pressmen after his talk "No agreement has been reached." He said no further meeting was expected and he was leaving for Patna. He said he had discussed various issues like corruption, inflation, rising prices, electoral and educational reforms, besides the dismissal of the Bihar Ministry and the dissolution of the Assembly. Mr Jagjiwan Ram was also present during the last half hour of the talks. JP announced that the agitation would continue.

The same day in Bihar the Police launched a state-wide drive to check trains, buses, trucks and steamers to prevent the journey of "unauthorised persons" to Patna.

Pamphlets were airdropped from planes warning the people not to participate in the demonstration. Thousands of suspects were detained by November 3 at various check-post and many arrested. The Government asked the Divisional Commissioners to open camp jails to house those arrested in connection with the proposed gherao and the Patna March. Spotter planes went up in the air carrying top officials to watch the movement of the people by river and road. Several hundred country boats on the Ganga were seized while river police started patrolling the Ganga and the Gandak on motor launches.

Yet thousands of people from different parts of Bihar managed to converge on Patna carrying their own food to participate in the great gherao. Many came on foot from the neighbouring districts

A call for the Delhi Bundh had also been given on November 4 by the Delhi Rajya Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti in support of JP's agitation. Over one thousand Jana Sangh and RSS workers were arrested the Delhi Bundh eve

As regards the assault and lathi charge on JP, the matter is under enquiry, therefore no opinion can be given. However, there were statements from the P.M., JP and the Home Minister in regard to the incident.

The month of November became the month of competition in processions and rallies for demonstrating the strength of popular support for and against JP's movement.

On November 11, the CPI organised a procession and rally with full support of the government. The processionists were allowed to come out of the Gandhi Maidan with bows and arrows, lathi and spears. The CPI demonstrators had come by steamer, trains and bus without tickets while the government had turned a blind eye to free tripping. Every facility was provided by the government to enable the CPI to collect crowds from outside to swell the ranks of processions.

The Congress had turned the Gandhi Maidan into a city of tents to provide accommodation to the demonstrators who were to take part in the procession of November 16. On the evening of November 15, when newsmen visited the camps, they found most of them empty.



By late night, pro-Congress demonstrators, suspected by JP to be mostly hired men, started arriving by trucks, steamers, trains and state transport buses from the neighbouring countryside. In spite of all this, the Congress put up a poor show.

It was different picture altogether on November 18, when JP addressed a public meeting at only two days' notice. In a 120 minute speech JP accepted the challenge of the Prime Minister to seek the verdict of the people at the next general elections to settle the Issue. He said, Mrs Gandhi herself had given a call to make the elections a battlefield and he was confident that the opposition parties supporting his movement would give her a fitting reply though he himself would not contest. He said he was confident that there would be only two contesting parties when the elections came- the Congress and the CPI on the one side and those dedicated to his cause on the other.

On November 27, at a largely attended public meeting, JP announced the launching of a people's movement in Haryana State at Kurukshetra. He referred to the venue of the meeting and said it was good that the agitation was being launched at Kurukshetra where the battle of Mahabharata had been fought. He said UP was next on the list for launching the movement.

The Samiti boys kept their plan secret till the opening of the session lest Government foiled it by taking preventive counter measures. Samiti workers from Nawadah and Rohtas districts suddenly appeared before the residences of Ministers, legislators and the Assembly gates December 4 and started offering dharna, Satyagraha and courting arrest. In all about 300 of them were arrested that day. This programme of Satyagraha continued till the Assembly session lasted and many Samiti volunteers were detained and sent to jail.

JP announced a four phase Bihar type movement for Uttar Pradesh. It was to commence on January 2, 1975 with the submission of a memorandum of seven demands to the Chief Minister of U.P. The announcement was made by JP at Varanasi on December 27. He listed the following demands: (1) Safeguarding of democracy; (2) end of anti-farmer policies; (3) ending unemployment; (4) ensuring honest and just administration; (5) eradication of corruption; (6) introduction of educational reforms and (7) removal of social evils.

Lalit Narain Mishra, Union Railway Minister, died at the Danapur Railway Hospital (West Patna) on January 3 of injuries sustained in a grenade blast at Samastipur.

A two day Sarvodaya workers conference, which concluded at the Shekhodeora Ashram of JP in Gaya district on January 12, decided to set up Janata Sarkars (local people's administration) in the villages and Panchayats and even at higher levels, if possible, within three months to demonstrate that these would be better than the Panchayat and even the government in Bihar.

It also decided to establish a 1,00,000 strong Gram Sangharsh Vahini to bring about peaceful revolution in the villages. Youths of the age group of 14-30 were to be admitted in the Vahini and they were to be trained by Mr Pratap Rao Saheb of Maharashtra, an ex-army Major. The Vahini was established but the number of youths joining it was less than expected.

On January 26, the Chhatra and Jana Sangharsh Samiti all over Bihar boycotted the official Republic Day Celebrations and held separate Celebrations of their own.

## **THE COUNTDOWN TO EMERGENCY**

On March 6, 1975 non-Communist opposition parties and youths and students organised the biggest ever anti-government demonstration in India's capital.

All the methods adopted by the Bihar Government to deter the people from joining the march to Patna on November 4 were applied by the Central government and every possible hurdle put on the way of the marchers. But in spite of all such efforts, the procession that came out of the ramparts of the Red Fort had never before been witnessed in Delhi.

Rows and rows of men and women, young and old, from Bengal to Punjab and Jammu to Mysore joined the procession led by JP in a jeep followed by Chaudhary Charan Singh, Piloo Modi, S. M. Joshi, Madhu Limaye, Samar Guha, Madhu Dandavate, N. G. Goray, Ashok Mehta, George Fernandez, Prakash Singh Badal, Tridib Chaudhary, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L. K. Advani and other opposition leaders.

The pride of place in the procession was given to the youths of the Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti. After them came the Gujarat Contingent and participants from other states.

How big the procession was, could be estimated from the fact that it took three and a half hours to reach the Boat Club from the Red Fort.

The processionists carried banners of their respective states and placards bearing the slogans:

*"Singhasan Khali Karo, Janata Aati hai".*

*"Bihar agitation is continuing, the turn of Delhi has come now".*

*"Janata March to Parliament is for bringing about Total Revolution".*

*"The Janata has come to tell the Parliament what they want".*

*"Bring down prices".*

*"End corruption".*

*"We have no quarrel with the police, they are our brothers".*

*"Whatever be the provocation we won't raise our little finger".*

*"Leave the chairs and gaddis, you are no longer our representative".*

*"This freedom is false because we are hungry".*

Almost entire Delhi came out on the streets to watch the progress of the procession.

A delegation on behalf of the marchers led by JP went from the Boat Club to Parliament and submitted a memorandum of the demands of the citizens to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Mr Dhillon, and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Mr Jatti.

It expressed the solidarity of the people of India with the Bihar movement, which symbolised the feelings of the nation. The time had come when the people of the entire country felt it their duty to oppose the move of the rulers to trample under foot their basic rights and to fight for justice and saving democracy.

It demanded that the Bihar Ministry be dismissed, the Bihar Assembly dissolved and fresh elections be held in Bihar and Gujarat.

It also demanded that the prices of essential commodities be brought within the reach of the poorest of people, fixation of minimum wages and flooring and ceiling on incomes, redistribution of land and acceptance of the right to the tillers, assurance to provide jobs for jobless and improvement in rural economy.

Its political demands included restoration of full Civil liberties and withdrawal of the Maintenance of internal Security Act and the Defence of India Rules, revocation of the external emergency, electoral reforms and the right of the electorate to recall representatives who failed them.

It also demanded educational reforms, strengthening of Panchayats and District Boards, the decentralisation of power, eradication of corruption from Public life and the appointment of Lok Pal and Lok Ayuktas with no exemption of the Prime Minister or the Chief Ministers from probes into charges of corruption against them.

Addressing a mammoth rally at the Boat Club later, JP described the demonstration of March 6 as a historic event and said that during its 27 years of rule, the ruling party had failed the people completely.

He warned the people that the rulers wanted to incite them to violence and that they should never walk into the trap as it would enable the government to impose dictatorship through massive counter-violence.

They must follow the path of non-violence shown by Mahatma Gandhi whatever be the provocation.

The students' trouble spread in Uttar Pradesh and Orissa in the month of March, 1975. Both the Banaras Hindu University and the Gorakhpur University were closed sine die. The Utkal University was also closed on the eve of JP's visit to Orissa.

At a press conference in Patna on May 24, 1975 JP announced a three-month programme for the setting up of Janata Sarkars in all the 587 Blocks of Bihar between May and the end of July. If it took a little more time, he would be satisfied if such Sarkars were established by the end of September.

He tried to remove some popular misconceptions about the Janata Sarkars. Barring the non-tax-campaign, the government, he said, could take no exception to its other functions, which were regulatory, correctional and judicial.

The Janata Sarkar was meant amicably to settle village disputes out of courts.

Its aim was also to keep a watch on the public distribution system to see that essential commodities were distributed equitably at fixed prices and to prevent black marketing and profiteering.

The Janata Sarkar would also ensure that teachers in middle and primary schools and government employees attended to their duties. It would also look after repair of school buildings, roads etc. and prevent theft of power.

Another important task of the Janata Sarkar, he said, would be to prepare land records in the villages to ensure distribution of surplus lands beyond the ceiling among the landless

On June 4, 1975 JP led a mammoth march in Calcutta and addressed a rally of half a million people. Seven opposition parties, including the CPI (M) and even a section of the extremists, joined the procession. The marchers did not carry any party flag. Mr P. C. Sen and Mr Jyoti Basu followed behind JP.

The organisers alleged that thousands of people coming from different parts of West Bengal had been prevented by the Police from reaching Calcutta. JP repeated his call given earlier at Tamluk for the organisation of Jana Sangram and Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini from the village to the State level.

It has been suggested by some writers that the JP Movement had petered out even before the Emergency. This uninformed assumption is totally wrong. The movement did not die out even during the Emergency.

It went underground, as it had to in the given situation.

The movement conducted by the Akhil Bhartiya Lok Sangharsh Samiti has been described in recent Hindi book titled "Bhumigat Andolan".

## **5. THE OBJECTIVES**

JP's movement was neither a series of demonstrations nor a mere student revolt.

It was a non-violent total revolution which embodies popular agitation, people's struggle and also attempt at a peaceful political transformation.

The movement, in brief stands for:-

- (i) The preservation of democracy,
- (ii) Free and fair elections,
- (iii) Ushering in the politics of service thus replacing the present politics of power,
- (iv) Helping the voter exercise his right to vote without fear and coercion,
- (v) Curbing the use of big money in elections,
- (vi) Working to bring about decentralisation of power by developing people's power through people's Committees at the lowest level in the rural areas and through people's committees in mohalla and wards in towns and cities,
- (vii) Establishing true people's democracy in place of the present merely formal representative democracy, and finally
- (viii) Destroying peacefully, step by step the present unjust and exploitative social system and helping to evolve a more egalitarian, communitarian, non-exploitative and, therefore, non violent social order in its place.

The objectives of the JP's movement were not mere concessions-oriented.

The movement acquired a conference of its own and was marked by the craze for a new order. Immediate objectives were dissolution of the Bihar Assembly and ultimate ones were what JP himself repeated, realisation of Total Revolution.

## 6. THE FUTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

JP's health has definitely caused a break in the continuance but those who are not in the establishment are seriously working out his programmes.

The Election manifesto of the Janata Party in the concluding paragraph says:

**"The new Society the Janata Party promises it will build from the bottom upwards before all else to raise the marginal man above the poverty line in consonance with the Gandhian ideal of 'Antyodaya'. This calls for a new type of planning, a new approach to administration, new values and altogether new ethics."**

The implementation of the manifesto will result in vast realisation of the objectives.

As for the total achievement of the vision of Total Revolution, much will depend on the will and stamina of persons who participated in the movement as activists and those who abide by the same goal.

## 7. TOTAL REVOLUTION

Total Revolution is a combination of seven revolutions: social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual.

All these could be either assimilated or be further split up into sub-sections.

### MORAL SPIRITUAL

Man is both matter and spirit. His life must fulfil both his material and his spiritual needs. Material needs must be fulfilled, food, clothing, dwelling.

Food should be adequate, simple, nourishing and tasteful but it should not be excessive.

Clothes should be enough for all weathers, there should be no craze for fashion, no wastefulness.

Dwellings should be modest have healthy ventilation, sun-light but large ostentation dwellings should be shunned.

Luxury in living should be discouraged.

This implies voluntary limit on consumption which is a moral concept.

## **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Regrouping of villages has to be done; small villages to be merged, large village to be redistributed; Adivasi area, hills and forests and plains. Optimum size of villages in the plains.

Optimum size of cities. Radial towns, small towns and from where road, power services etc. radiate to the countryside. Bank store-houses and hospital to be located.

## **ECONOMIC**

The aim of economic development should be Man.

Work for every adult or head of family has to be assured and standard of living has to be minimum.

In India we have enough of large scale modern technology, capital-intensive Industries. These should be called to halt except for the needs of defence.

The costly showy, non-utilitarian enterprises such as the satellite developments, moon going should be given up.

Industrial development should take the line of medium industry, small industry and rural Industry development. This should require upgrading of the technology in use in the rural and small Industries.

Ownership pattern: individual (family), self-employed, product community ownership (village) co-operative ownership, private profit-based small entrepreneur ownership who employs a moderate number of worker and pays adequately in terms of prevailing or legal minimum wages.

Larger enterprises may be capitalist in pattern within certain restraints but public corporation pattern should be more prevalent.

Ceiling and land distribution laws have to be implemented.



## **POLITICAL**

The fundamental freedoms have to be sustained.

Decentralization of power at the village level and Prakhanda and District levels had to be achieved through transfer of exercise of authority to people representatives.

Recall has to be accepted as a right of the people. Its modalities have to be fixed up. Electoral reforms have to be made and set up has to be communitarian.

A great deal of fundamental change is required to bring the administration to the people. This could be done by making administration responsible to people who should have a direct say in the running of the administration. For this, people's committees should be formed in every mohalla, in every village.

## **EDUCATIONAL**

A rural school is necessity.

Agriculture, rural industry, economics, sociology (meaningful for the students of the area), Science, language and literature, cooperation, Co-operatives, gram Sabha (decision-making and enforcement), gram adalat, accounts and book keeping, hygiene, sanitation, bacteria, biology (relating to rural frame), horticulture, Zoology, food and nutrition, gas plant, compost, urine, manure have to be taught.

## **SOCIAL**

Caste-system has to be replaced by inter-caste marriages and with stress on recognition of Man on all fronts.

## **CULTURAL**

It embraces revolution in religious attitudes and practices, customs, manners, revolution in the individuals' life as well as in the life of the front and in the life of society.

The Cultural Revolution in India will be judged by the changes it brings about in the rural society, where the most obstinate obstacle is the caste system.

The people should not slip back into the habit of leaving things to the government, of sitting back and complaining that the Governments are not doing enough instead of doing more themselves.

Unless the people play an active and direct role, freedom will not be safe. That way people will complete the revolution.

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## THE AUTHOR



Born 4th April, 1930 at Darbhanga

Earlier Lecturer in English at C. M. College Darbhanga and later at Ranchi College, Ranchi

Appointed to the Indian Police Service in 1952.

Served as Superintendent of Police, Champaran (1958-63) and Bhagalpur (1965-68).

Was Superintendent of Railway Police Muzaffarpur (1968-70) and Senior Superintendent at Police, Ranchi (1970-71)

Was appointed Deputy Inspector-General of Police and Member Secretary, Bihar Police Manual Revision Committee in June 1971

Was Deputy Inspector General of Police, Central Range, Patna (1974-77) and later D.I.G. of Police, Criminal Investigation Department till his death in harness on 7th November, 1979

Was awarded the **Indian Police Medal in 1971** for his meritorious and distinguished services

Was decorated with the **President's Police Medal in August, 1979.**

Was an acclaimed literary critic and reputed writer in the field of Hindi Literature.

Started his literary pursuits as a teenager.

Authored "*PRATHMIKI*" a landmark work in Hindi criticism in 1965 and followed it up with "*AJ TAK KEE*", its companion volume.

Published "*TATKA ADAM*" a book of modern Hindi poetry and a book in Hindi "*AB BAHU SE SAB JAN HITAY*" with the life of Mahatma Gandhi as its subject.

Wrote "*STUDENTS' REVOLT*", a concise book on student unrest.

Was Founder-Editor of "*BIHAR POLICE PATRIKA*" the official organ of the Bihar Police, a mantle which he carried till his premature end.

Was awarded **Special Prize** by the Uttar Pradesh Government for his magnum-opus on criminology "*AAPRADHIKI*" in 1976. This pioneering work, the first of its kind written originally in Hindi, won the "**Best Book of the year Award**" from the Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad in 1978.

His epic on Mahatma Gandhi captioned "*MAN THOU CAN*" was got published posthumously in the year 1982 by his eldest son Sri Anandvardhan Sinha, IAS and the book was released by the then Governor of Bihar Dr. A. R. Kidwai in August 1983.

Lectured at Sardar Vallabh Patel National Police Academy Mount Abu and later Hyderabad, Administrative Training Institute, Ranchi, Police Training College, Hazaribagh, Internal Security Academy, Mount Abu and Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta.

Contributor to the journal of Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie.

His collection of poems in Hindi captioned "*AGANTUKA*" was published by his eldest son Sri Anandvardhan Sinha, IAS from his own financial resources in the year 1984

Unpublished works include "*The Naxalite Movement: A Study of the Naxalite Movement in India with special reference to Bihar*", *HEY GANGEY* (his spiritual diary) and *JHANKIYAN* (a compilation of short stories written by him from time to time.)

A spiritualist and a humanist.