BIHAR POLITICS
(1967–1977)

ABSTRACT

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
Doctor of Philosophy
IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY
UPENDRA MISHRA
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Under the Supervision of
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Economically and educationally Bihar is one of the most backward states in the Indian Union. This backwardness has direct bearing on the behaviour of its politics and politicians. Caste and factions also play important roles in the state politics and mould its nature.

This work embodies a study of ministerial politics during 1967 - 1977. An analysis of the composition of the various Councils of Ministers during the period has been made with a view to determining (i) the strength of the constituent parties; (ii) the role of the parties and factions in the formation of the Ministries; (iii) Their role in the break-up of the Ministries. This indicates the behaviour of the constituent parties resulting in the return of the Congress as a dominant party at the end of the period.

Through the analyses of the Ministries from the point of view of (i) political parties; (ii) Caste; (iii) region; (iv) rural/urban bases; (v) age and socio-economic background of Ministers; (vi) representation of women and of minorities, an attempt has been made to find out any trends, if they are visible, pertaining to these aspects of Ministry-making. The immediate reasons and circumstances of the fall of the different governments at different times have also been studied.
Three distinct phases emerge out of the analyses of the Councils of Ministers. The first phase, namely the 'Period of Non-Congressism' from March, 1967 to June, 1968, consists of the non-Congress coalition governments only. During this period of one year and four months, there were three ministerial changes. All ministerial collapses were brought about by large scale defections, the first two involving intra-party splits and the third involving the threat of defection of an entire party from the government. None of the three ministerial crises could be attributed to the withdrawal of support by a party on a question of principle or the performance of the government:

The second phase of 'Mixed Coalitions', extending from February, 1969 to December, 1971, comprises of coalition governments including the Congress Party. There had been five ministerial changes, apart from a 227-day President's Rule during this period. The average life of 5 months 9 days of these governments was sufficient indication of the deep malady of instability that Bihar was suffering from. Since no party commanded a majority in the Assembly, Independents, defectors and mini-parties found an excellent opportunity to fish in troubled waters. Even some of the Ministers were closely watching the situation. As soon as they found that the Ministry, of which they were members, was on the way out,
they quickly jumped the fence and got on to the bandwagon of the probable winner. Amidst all this power politics, public interests and the needs of administration were thrown to the winds.

The third phase is a period of 'One Party Government'. Extending from March, 1972 to April, 1977, this period witnessed factional fights within the ruling Congress leading to the collapses of two Ministries and the establishment of a third one. That three Congress Ministries came to power in a period of three years was a clear testimony of the oligarchic nature of governments in Bihar. The Congress promises — of stability, prosperity and a better life-proved mere sound and fury signifying nothing. Congressmen, maintaining their old legacy, fought endlessly for a share in the ministerial cake. Dissidence was built up over the inclusion in or exclusion from the Ministry of some leaders of factional groups.

An attempt to examine the performance of the governments has also been made. The governments have been classified into two broad categories - the Coalition Governments and the Congress Governments. While most of the Coalition governments came to power on the basis of an agreed common-minimum programme, the Congress governments had their party manifestoes subsequently modified by
different Chief Ministers in order to give priorities to particular items. However, the performance of the successive governments shows that the Coalition and the one party governments were two sides of the same coin. They were basically similar in nature, character and performance. They were not honestly dedicated to the causes of the poor and exploited masses. They had little time to attend to the pressing problems of the State as their main concern was either warding off threats to their governments or the expansion of the Ministries and distribution of portfolios. Their non-performance in some vital fields, namely land ceiling, administrative reform and educational re-orientation was more glaring. What was agonising was that even the minimum of the security of life and honour that a citizen was entitled to could not be guaranteed to him.

The 'Protest Movement', which had its roots in the ministerial instability and the non-performance of the governments, has also been sought to be studied. However, corruption and high prices, which triggered off agitation, gave way to the political demands, viz., resignation of the Ministry and the dissolution of the Assembly. Likewise, students, youth and Sarvodaya workers, who started the movement, were pushed back by the pragmatic, hardboiled and businessminded politicians, for whom the movement was
a pure and simple power game. Though, the movement succeeded in dethroning what was called the authoritarian rule at the Centre and in the whole of North India, but failed to achieve its basic objectives. The pious hope of establishing the control of 'Lok Shanti' (People's power) over the 'Raj Shakti' (State power) remained unfulfilled. The people who came to power followed the same Congress pattern, which they had been criticising day in and day out. Above all, the change of government in 1977 did not succeed in helping to bring about stability to Bihar politics. However, it served a useful purpose by exposing the weakness of the system that had failed to solve the basic problems of the people.

On the whole, therefore, Bihar politics during this period can be said to represent a political system suffering from the acute malady of malfunctioning in all spheres. The basic political structure, however, did not break-up and the State could be said to be moving from a pre-democratic to a democratic stage.
I certify that this thesis entitled, *Bihar Politics, 1967 - 1977*, embodies the result of Mr. Upendra Mishra's original research work in his own writing. He did this in partial fulfilment of the requirement for Ph.D. Degree in the Department of Political Science, A.M.U., Aligarh. He worked under my supervision according to the terms and conditions laid down by the University. I forward this thesis for the examination for the award of Ph.D. Degree.

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Politicians are usually too busy to discuss politics with scholars. However, I sincerely acknowledge the cooperation extended to me by Shri Karpooori Thakur, Darega Prasad Rai, Sardar Harihar Singh (all former Chief Ministers), Krishna Kant Singh, Kapildev Singh, Bhola Prasad Singh, Ram Raj Prasad Singh (all former Cabinet Ministers) and Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, an important Congress leader of the State. They frankly answered different kinds of questions regarding the performances of their governments and regarding causes, achievements and failures of the JP-led movement in Bihar.

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My affectionate thanks are due to my wife, Kusum, who encouraged me in every possible way in the completion of my work. I also owe my affectionate thanks to my younger brother Ram Balak, nephew Rajiv and son Amit, who cheerfully bore whatever neglect my preoccupation with the work entailed.

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UPEendra Mishra

UPENDRA MISHRA
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The politics of Bihar from the years 1967 to 1977 forms the subject matter of this study. This politics could be studied in a number of ways and at various levels. It could be studied from a sociological, economic, administrative or other viewpoints. Likewise, the focus could fall sharply on the village or district level politics, the political party, factions, the caste, strata, class, the political leadership, the bureaucracy or any other aspect. Micro-level studies could lead to broad generalizations about the identification and characteristics of Bihar politics. A single general study attempting to embrace the subject in its totality, however, could run the risk of being euphemeral.

Thus, this study selects, for its main focus, the Ministerial level. For necessary perspective, an outline of the geo-physical and demographic features of Bihar has been provided (Chapter I). This is followed by a brief survey of Ministerial, largely Congress, and caste politics, prior to Independence and from there to 1967 (Chapter II).

With the objective of gaining a better understanding of Bihar politics, therefore, the study seeks to analyse the composition of the various Councils of Ministers of
Bihar during the 1967-1977 period (Chapters III, IV and V). The analyses, in their turn, should help in determining (i) the strength of the constituent parties; (ii) their role in the formation of the Ministries; (iii) their role in the break-up of the Ministries. This can be expected to indicate the behaviour of the constituent parties leading to the reassertion of the Congress as the dominant party at the end of the period.

Another line of enquiry constitutes finding out other aspects of the Ministries, namely, their composition from the points of view of (i) political parties, (ii) castes, (iii) region, (iv) rural/urban bases, (v) age, socio-economic background of Ministers, (vi) representation of women and of minorities, wherever such data have been available. Effort has also been made to find any trends, if they are visible, pertaining to these aspects in Ministry making. The study also seeks to unravel the immediate reasons and circumstances of the fall of the different Ministries at different times.

Furthermore, most governments that came to power during this period had certain declared minimum common programmes. Carrying the researches further, an attempt has been made to examine what measures, legislative or executive, were taken by them to implement the programmes and to see how far such measures came near the avowed
promises (Chapter VI). An evaluation of the political impact of the composition of the Ministries and of the Ministerial changes, as well as the general working of the governments, follows as a corollary.

Another rather unusual and in some measure catalytic factor that influenced the working of the governments, Ministerial composition and leadership, the elections of 1977 and the subsequent developments of Bihar politics has been taken into consideration. This was the protest movement started by the students in 1974 and taken over by Jaya Prakash Narayan and political parties in the Opposition. The essential features of this movement, its direction and its results pertaining to Bihar politics have been sought to be examined (Chapter VII).

As a result of the analysis of the Council of Ministers from different angles, an evaluation of the performance of the governments in the light of their promises and an examination of the protest movement, certain characteristics of the Bihar Ministries during this period emerge. The evaluation of the performance of the governments in the light of their promises and the examination of the protest movement leads to certain conclusions about the main features of Bihar government and the nature of politics in Bihar during the period. Certain trends are also visible. These results are embodied as 'Conclusions' in the last Chapter VIII.
A party-wise, caste-wise analysis of the various Councils of Ministers is a key to the understanding of the interplay of political forces in Bihar politics. Their composition reflects the balance of forces at a given time and their changes indicate political trends. Age-wise, rural/urban and region-wise analysis and the representation of women and of minorities have been regarded as important indicators of the socio-political character of the Ministries. Chapters VI and VII, described above, are expected to reveal the extent of failures or successes of various governments, their stability and legitimacy. We also get analysed, data-based results about what may be called outstanding traits of Bihar politics during the period.

Limitations

It has not been possible, however, for want of time and space to include certain aspects of the problem within the scope of this study. Election-time promises of the political parties and the activities of the governments covered very wide economic, social, educational and cultural areas. A few, however, have been selected for examination in view of their importance, like land ceiling, law and order, prices, educational, administrative and agricultural reforms. It has not been possible either to take stock of the actual effects, if any, of the legislative or executive
steps taken by the various governments on the lives of the poor, nor to measure the extent of the rise or fall in the standard of living of the common man.

A comprehensive questionnaire was presented to, and interviews were sought from many of the Bihar leaders. However, only a few, relatively speaking, could find time for personal interviews and fewer for written answers.

Organization

Following the first two background chapters, the analyses of the Councils of Ministers have been divided into three broad phases; each phase representing a category of governments in power.

The first phase, devoted to the study of the non-Congress coalition governments from March, 1967 to June, 1968, includes the formation of the first United Front non-Congress Government, the bargaining among the constituents and, finally, the defeat of the government. This phase also includes two other governments, namely, the Defectors' Government supported by the Congress and the Second United Front Government. The period highlights the beginning of the politics of defection and threats of withdrawal from the Ministries.

The second phase comprises the mixed coalition
governments including the Congress Party. No less than five different governments came to power during the period extending from February, 1969 to December, 1971. Of these, one government was led by the Undivided Congress and two others were led by the Congress (R). The other two governments were non-Congress coalitions excluding the CPI and the PSP in one of them. The roles of the Congress, Jan Sangh, SSP and other parties and splinter and regional groups in the making and breaking of governments have been analysed.

The third phase extending from March, 1972 to April, 1977 deals with three Congress governments. This period witnessed the increased factional fights within the ruling Congress leading to the ouster of the Pandey and the Ghafoor Ministries and the establishment of Jagannath Mishra's which government, in its turn, was dismissed in April, 1977.

The performance of the governments has also been examined in a chronological order. The governments have been broadly classified into two categories - the Coalition Governments and the Congress Governments. Most of the governments in the former category, excepting the minor ones, came to power on the basis of common-minimum programmes. The Congress governments had their election manifesto, subsequently modified by different Chief Ministers for giving priorities to particular programmes. The field of activities selected for review like law and order, prices, employment,
and various reforms are common to different governments. This provides a basis for a comparative assessment.

The protest movement of 1974-75, without going into the details, have been studied as far as it has relevance for Bihar politics. The emphasis is on the issues involved, the direction of the movement, and the nature of participants in the movement.

Conclusions regarding the Councils of Ministers are followed by results relating to the performance of the governments and the impact of the protest movement. The concluding portion embodies explanatory observations as well as observations about the nature of leadership, the legitimacy of governments and the stability and character of Bihar politics.

**Methodology**

This thesis embodies an empirical study of the governments and politics of Bihar. It attempts a data-based quantitative analysis of the nature and main characteristics of the subject under study. Documentary information and minutes of the legislative debates have been supplemented by written answers from or personal interviews with leading figures who took part in the shaping of Bihar politics during the period. The questionnaire and interviews related to the most significant aspects of Bihar politics.
A quantitative analysis to determine the characteristics of the governments and their performance is not enough. This analysis has been placed in the light of the Bihar's socio-economic perspectives and the evaluation has been made on the basis of the final criterion for any political organization, i.e., the good of the common man.

Sources

The sources of the study comprise the following:

(i) Bihar Government Publications.
(ii) Legislative Assembly Debates
(iii) Election Commission Reports
(iv) Census of India
(v) Publications of Political Parties
(vi) Memoirs of a Chief Minister and other leaders.
(vii) Personal Interviews with political leaders
(viii) Scholarly works on Bihar Politics/Coalition Governments
(ix) Articles in learned journals, and
(x) Newspapers and Periodicals.
The literature dealing with Bihar politics of the period under study is but scanty. However, some literature that deals with certain aspects of politics in Bihar is available and makes valuable contribution toward an understanding of the subject.

The Theory of Political Coalition by W.H. Riker and Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation by Abram De Swaan deal with various theories of coalition making. Coalition in Parliamentary Government by Lawrence C. Dodd deals with cabinet formation in multiparty legislatures and the stability and durability of such cabinets.

Coalition Governments in India: Problems and Prospects edited by K.P. Karunakaran deals with theories and concepts of coalition making, the attitudes of different political parties to coalition and impact of coalition governments on Indian political system.

Coalition Politics in India edited by N.C. Sahni deals with the functioning of some coalition governments in the Indian polity.

Twilight or Dawn: The Political Change in India (1967-1971) by Iqbal Narain deals with the efficacy of the Indian political system, various 'forms of coalition' and the impact of the functioning of coalition governments on political institutions.
State Politics in India (1967) edited by the same author deals with the conditions, constraints and infrastructures of politics in various states and the role of political parties.

State Politics in India (1976) edited again by Iqbal Narain, perhaps the first complete book on state politics in India, covers the period 1967-1971 exhaustively. It is a praiseworthy attempt towards building a theory of state politics in India. This theory growing out of the study finds place toward the end of the volume.

Reflections on Indian Politics by J.C. Johari deals with the politics of Coalitions and defections during 1967-1971. He also deals with what he calls sinister and pernicious trends of Naxalite movement and militant and protective regionalism.

Politics of Defection by Subhash C. Kashyap is concerned with politics of defections in different states and its motivations particularly during the period 1967-1969.

Politics of Power by the same author is devoted to the problem of defection, its motivations and its impact on the party position in the legislatures and the stability of governments. Kashyap also describes the politics of power in some states including Bihar.
Language, Religion and Politics in North India by Paul R. Brass deals with the politics of language, particularly Maithili and Urdu in Bihar, politics of Urdu in Uttar Pradesh and politics of religion in the Punjab.

A Comparison of the SSP and the CPI Radical Politics in South Asia edited by Paul R. Brass and Marcus Franda deals with the nature of Left parties in India and the role of the CPI and the SSP during coalition period in Bihar.

'Mere Samasaran' by Anugrah Narain Sinha deals with the factional politics in the Congress Party and Government in Bihar.


'Jab Main Mukhya Mantri Tha' by Mahamaya Prasad Sinha describes the manoeuvrings, bargainings and pressure tactics by the partners of the first United Front Government of which he was the Chief Minister. It also discusses the conflicts among the constituent parties and its impact on the functioning and stability of the government.
Political Elites and Modernization: The Bihar Politics by Ram Ahuja pays attention to the type, commitment and inter-group relations of the political elites in economic growth and political stability.

Political Elite in Bihar by Shashishekhar Jha deals with the social and political structures from which political elites including Muslims and Tribals emerge. It also deals with the social background and interest affiliation of the legislators and their views regarding various developmental programmes.

The Harijan Elite by Sachchidananda, though does not reflect the situation at the grass-root level, examines the status of educated elites, drawn from five scheduled castes, in their own community and in the society, their mobility and their perception of social transformation and their role in providing leadership for social transformation in their own community.

A detailed study of the governments in Bihar during 1967-1977 - their formation, composition and their breaking up - and the performance of these governments in the perspective of the conditions in the State and the forces at work behind governmental instability has not been made. Such a study with its focus on Bihar has been undertaken in this work.
CHAPTER I

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE: THE ROOTS OF BACKWARDNESS

 Territory

The state of Bihar lies between latitudes 21.58' and 27.31' N and longitudes 93.20' and 58.32' E. The State is entirely landlocked and the nearest point from the sea (Bay of Bengal) is 90 kms. To the north it shares an international frontier of approximately 482 kms. with the independent kingdom of Nepal, to the east its boundary stretches with that of West Bengal for a distance of 482 kms., to the south it is bounded by Orissa for a distance of 421 kms. and to the south-west and west lie the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh with which it shares a border of 260 kms. and 540 kms. respectively. The State is roughly quadrilateral in shape with a maximum distance from north to south being approximately 605 kms. and the east-west distance at its widest point being about 483 kms. With a total area of approximately 1,74,000 sq. kms. (67,196 sq. miles), Bihar covers 5.3 percent of India's land surface and is the eighth largest State in the Indian Union in terms of area.


2. Ibid.
In 1912, the province of Bihar and Orissa was separated from Bengal and again in 1937 Orissa was formed into a separate province. Since then Bihar has continued to function as a province by itself. With the achievement of Independence, the states of Saraikela and KhaYsawan lying geographically within Singhbhum district were integrated with Bihar. On the 1st November, 1956, as a result of the reorganization of States, 8,105 sq. kms. in Purnea and Manbhum districts were transferred to West Bengal State.

Almost half of the total area of the State consists of hills and plateaus with an average altitude varying from 305 to 610 metres above the sea level, alternating with the rivers, valleys and basins separating the hills. The remaining half is flat plain with an average altitude varying between 31 to 61 metres from sea level, with the exception of a small range of hills in the extreme north-west.

Broadly speaking, the plains region is alluvial with gentle slope towards the east. The river Ganga, whose length in Bihar is about 550 kms., divides the plains region into two unequal parts, viz., the North Bihar Plains and the South Bihar Plains.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 13.
The North Bihar Plains comprises the area between Nepal border in the north and the river Ganga in the south and has an area of about 22,000 sq. miles (53.8 thousand sq. kms.). It includes the 16 districts of East Champaran, West Champaran, Saran, Siwan, Gopalganj, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Vaishali, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Samastipur, Begusarai, Saharsa, Purnea, Katihar and portions of Monghyr. With the exception of Someshwar and Dun hills in the extreme north-west, the plains is completely level and at no point does its elevation exceeds 76 metres above sea level.

The South Gangetic Plains comprises the area between the river Ganga and the southern hill-lands. It includes the districts of Rohtas, Bhojpur, Patna, Nalanda, Nawadah, Gaya, Aurangabad, portions of Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Santhal Paragnas. This plains covers an area of approximately 13,000 sq.miles (40.3 thousand sq. kms.). It is wide towards the west and the middle, and extremely narrow towards the west. The south plains differs in many respects from the north Gangetic plains. It is higher in the south and slopes towards the Ganga but the slope is not so gradual as in the north plains. While the north is liable to flood and change, the south Gangetic plains is stable and not subject to flood except in diara (low lying

6. Ibid., p. 25.
area along with river which is subject to fluvial actions).

The Plateau region of Bihar is the second of the great natural divisions in the state and is the north-easterly projection of still order plateau, viz., pensular India. Covering an area of 97.6 thousand sq. kms., comprising 46 percent of Bihar, it includes the districts of Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum, Dhanbad, Palamu, the greater part of Santhal Paragnas as well as portions of Rohtas, Aurangabad, Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts. In contrast to the Bihar plains, the plateau region is quite uneven and consists of a series of plateaus each occurring at a height of different from the other. Whereas the plains part of the state, especially the northern part of it, is predominantly an agricultural area, the plateau part is full of mineral resources and is often viewed as the Ruhr of India. It accounts for 40.47% of India’s mineral production, comprising coal, iron, ore, limestone, mica, copper, kyanite, china-clay, fire-clay and bauxite. Its coal production accounts for 48% of the total coal production of India, its iron ore production for 40% of India’s total, and copper production for 100% of India’s total.

Civilization in Bihar grew along the river Ganga and

8. Enayat Ahmad, Bihar: A Physical, Economic and Regional Geography (Ranchi: Ranchi University, 1965), pp.6-7.
spread towards north and south. In the south, it was checked by the hills and the plateaus of Chotanagpur. The barrier was so formidable that the culture and economic patterns of Chotanagpur remained completely distinct from those of the river valley civilization of the north. The people of Chotanagpur retained their tribal social patterns and methods of production.

Till 1st October, 1972, Bihar was divided into 17 districts within four divisions. Since then three new divisions and 14 new districts have been created, of which two (Gopalganj and Katihar) were created as recently as October, 1973. The names of the new divisions and districts may be seen in the Table I.

**Population**

With 56.35 million (56,353,369 inhabitants) at sunrise on April 1, 1971, Bihar has 10.3 percent of the total Indian population and ranks second (next only to Uttar Pradesh) in the Indian Union by the size of population, although it covers only 5.3 percent of the country's land surface. Its population density of 324 per sq. km. is the third among the States after Kerala (548 per sq. km) and West Bengal (507/sq. km).


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<td>Darbhanga</td>
<td>Larbhang</td>
<td>Madhubani</td>
<td>Darbhanga Samastipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhagalpur</td>
<td>Bhagalpur</td>
<td>Monghyr (Part)</td>
<td>Monghyr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>Nalanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chotanagpur</td>
<td>Hazaribagh</td>
<td>Hazaribagh</td>
<td>Girdih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhanbad</td>
<td>Palamu</td>
<td>Ranchi</td>
<td>Singhbhum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The population of Bihar is unevenly distributed. The North Bihar Plains, with an area of 53.8 thousand sq. kms., has a population of 25.4 million, the South Bihar Plains with an area of 40.3 thousand sq. kms., has a population of 16.7 million and the Chotanagpur plateau region covering 79.6 thousand sq. kms. has a population of 14.2 million.

The population in Bihar is predominantly rural and agricultural. In 1961 census, the proportion of 'urban' population to total population in Bihar was 8.43 percent which went up to 10 percent in the 1971 census. As against this, the ratio of urban population to total population for all-India was 17.91 percent in 1961 which went up to 19.91 percent in 1971. The State is thus only half as urbanised as the country as a whole. The regional variations in the proportion of urban to total population in the State is indicated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Bihar</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bihar</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chotanagpur</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Bihar</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


12. 'Urban' is defined in 1971 census in terms of (1) a population not less than 5,000; (2) density not less than 400 persons per sq. kms; (3) at least three-fourth of the adult male population engaged in non-agricultural livelihood; *Ibid.*, p. 32.

While the northern basin is by far the least urbanised, the relative higher degree of urbanisation in Chotanagpur area is also somewhat deceptive inasmuch as it is on account of a few heavy and mineral based industrial complex forming islands in a vast rural landscape. In the last few years, however, the rate of growth of urban population in the State has been higher than that for the country as a whole. The actual rate of growth being 49.03 percent in the decade 1951-61, and 43.95 percent in 1961-71 as against 27.41 percent and 38.83 percent respectively of the country as a whole.

Among 202 towns, only 9 of them could be categorised as cities with a population of 100,000 or more. With 9 cities, Bihar ranks seventh after Uttar Pradesh (22), Tamilnadu and Maharashtra (17 each), West Bengal (15), Andhra (13), Madhya Pradesh (11) and Karnataka (10). In 1961, Bihar had 153 towns out of which 7 were cities. It is pertinent to note that towns with a population of one lakh and more have been growing at much faster rates than towns and while in 1961 such towns had only 13 percent of total population, in 1971 they had as much as 45 percent of the urban population. Thus,

14. Ibid.
15. Bihar Through Figures, 1977, p. 51. Five of the nine cities - Patna, Biharsharif, Gaya, Monghyr, Bhagalpur are in the South Bihar, two - Muzafarpur and Darbhanga are in the North Bihar, and two - Jamshedpur and Ranchi are in the Chotanagpur belt.
there is a trend towards centralization of population in big towns and urban agglomeration.

**Literacy**

In the field of literacy, Bihar comes very close to the bottom. In 1961, Bihar had 18.40 percent literates as against the all-India average of 24.08 percent. In 1971 while the all-India average of literacy has grown from 24.08 to 29.34, that is, a growth of 22.10 percent, Bihar registered a growth of just 7.52 percent with a rise from 18.40 to 19.77 percent and only two states - Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir are lower in ranks than Bihar in this regard. During the same period, Kerala has taken a big leap from 46.85 to 60.16 percent, West Bengal from 29.28 to 33.05 percent, Maharashtra from 29.82 to 39.08 percent and Tamil Nadu from 31.41 to 39.39 percent.

**The Society**

Bihar is a highly cleavaged society with multiple lines of reinforcing linguistic, religious and caste divisions. Hindus are by far the largest religious community accounting for 83.5 percent of the population of the State. Muslims come

next in numerical strength comprising 13.5 percent. The State has a large Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population. In 1971, the total population of the Scheduled Castes was 7.9 million and that of Scheduled Tribes 4.9 million. The two together constitute 22.9 percent of the total population of the State against 21.5 percent for all-India. The regional variation in Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position to total population</th>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>North Bihar</th>
<th>South Bihar</th>
<th>Chota Nagpur</th>
<th>State of Bihar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes &amp; Scheduled Tribes Combined</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Muslims**

The Hindus and the Muslims are divided into several social stratifications. The Muslims are first divided into two sects - the Shiyas and the Sunnis. Both these two sects are sub-divided traditionally into various stratifications.

including Syeds and Sheikhs and Malliks. Lowest in the stratification are the Julahas, the Lhunias, the Kujars and the Kabaris and distinct from them, the Momin. Though the Muslims claim that their social relations are based on the Islamic principle of equality, in actual practice, they have followed caste-lines. The Sunnis and the Shiyyas ranking above the rest have continued to be guided to some extent, if not wholly, by the traditional social alienation and antagonism between the two sections.

**Hindus**

The Hindus of Bihar have continued to remain divided into three sub-strata - the High Castes or Upper Castes, the Backward and the Scheduled Castes (Harijans and others). In terms of ritual status, the caste system forms a hierarchy with the Brahmins at the top and the Shudras at the bottom with Kshatriyas and Vaishyas in that order — in the middle. The first three varnas jointly constitute the elite Dwija ("twice born") category and can be conveniently referred to as the 'Upper Castes', whereas the Shudras or the 'Backward Castes' and the lower Shudras or the "Scheduled Castes" can be characterised as the lower castes. The Brahmins, the Rajputs, the Bhumihars and the Kayasthas constitute the Upper Caste stratum, the Yadavas, the Kurmis, the Koiris, the Banias, the

Barhis, the Lhanuks, the Kahars, the Kanus, the Kumhars, the Lohars, the Mallahs, the Nai, the Tantwas and the Telis fall in the Backward stratum. The Dusadhs, the Chamars, the Mushars, the Tantis, the Lhobis, the Pasis and the Doms are regarded as the Scheduled Caste stratum.

The caste system is the most salient feature of the Hindu social structure. It divides and stratifies the Hindu society into a large number of sub-groups, separate yet integrated. The separate identities of the various castes are nourished by strict prohibitions on marrying outside the sub-group and sanctions against mobility from one caste to other. Integration among the various castes is maintained by hierarchical gradation and functional inter-dependence among them in a complex system of exchange services and obligations known as the 'Jajmani' system.

Upper Caste: A notable feature of the caste system in Bihar is the predominant position of the Upper Castes in the life of the State inspite of their numerical weakness. They constitute only 13 percent of the State population, but their numerical weakness is compensated to a considerable extent by their higher ritual status, social prestige, economic power and modern education. The Table II shows percentage distribution of castes in various regions of Bihar.

### Table II

Showing percentage distribution of castes in various regions of Bihar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Chota-</th>
<th>State of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>nagpur</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Castes</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Castes or</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Castes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Brahmins enjoy the first position in ritual matters though economically they are the poorest. The Kayasthas, although low on the scale of the ritual status, have 'rivalled the Brahmins in everything connected with the pen'. The Bhumihars and the Rajputs, constituting about 7 percent of the population, are the land-owning gentry accounting for 78.6 percent of the land areas in Bihar and thereby dominate the economic life of the State. The economic

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inequality had its effects in other fields also. In terms of modern skills and education, too, the Upper Castes happened to be the earliest recipient of the modern Western education with the result that they predominate even in the high status modern profession. The 1931 census for Bihar and Orissa reveals that of the four Upper Castes, the Kayasthas have been the most literate caste (372 per 1,000), followed by the Brahmins (195 per 1,000), the Bhumihars (136 per 1,000) and Rajputs (120 per 1,000). Among the Lower Castes, for the Kurmis and the Yadavas there were only 40 + 50 literate persons per thousand, and the Telis had only 52 literate persons per thousand. The census further shows that the Kayasthas are ahead of all other castes in respect of English education. They were followed by Brahmins, Bhumihars and the Rajputs. The gap between the Upper Castes and the Lower Castes is again very wide.

Backward Caste: However, the situation has now changed to a considerable extent, especially after the 1967 elections when 'Backward Caste dominated' politics began in Bihar. Their dominant role in State politics may be borne out by the

26. Ibid.
fact that of the fourteen Chief Ministers since 1967, five have been of Backward Castes, four of Scheduled Castes, one of the Muslim community and the remaining four have been of Upper Castes. Accordingly their share in ministerial posts has also increased considerably. Out of 350 ministers in the period concerned with this study, 103 belonged to the Backward Castes, i.e. 28.6% ministerial berths went to them. After 22 percent reservation in government jobs for them, the situation has further improved in their favour. Thus, the 'cumulative inequality' maintained so far by the Upper Castes has been removed to a very great extent.

It is important to note that among the Backward Castes, Yadavas, Kurmis, Koiris and Banias constitute a separate segment of 'advanced' castes. Indeed, members of these four castes are better-off both economically and politically than some of the Upper Castes in many areas. For instance, the Brahmins in Madhubani district are desperately poor, while the former own most of the land in the district. Similarly, the Yadavas and the Kurmis enjoy the status of dominant castes in some part of the State. The Yadavas, the Koiris and the Kurmis make up 18.5 percent of the population in Bihar or more than three-fifths of the total population of the 128 Backward Castes. The Kurmis, the smallest among the three groups, were, even in 1931, regarded as the most socially conscious of the Backward Castes. The extent to

which these four castes dominate the State in various spheres becomes clear from the fact that of the 94 MLAs belonging to the Backward Castes after the 1977 elections, as many as 91 belonged to them. So was the case with the Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State except the Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur. Among the Parliamentary Secretaries, there was only one who belonged to a different caste. Of the 216 gazetted officers belonging to the Backward Castes, only 7 belonged to other castes. Only 1.4 percent of the stipends and scholarships to students of Backward Castes are enjoyed by those who do not belong to the four castes. It is, therefore, not surprising that the four castes constituted the vanguard of the job reservation agitation.

Scheduled Castes: The 'Lower Castes' known as Scheduled Castes in government vocabulary, who account for 14 percent of the total population include the untouchables or Harijans. They earn their livelihood as sweepers, agricultural labourers and landless labourers. Inspite of having two Chief Ministers, including the second Janata Chief Minister, Ram Sundar Las (the previous one had been the Chief Minister three times), besides their numerical strength,

28. P.C. Gandhi, "Job Reservation in Bihar: Playing for High Stakes", Times of India, April 20, 1978, p. 6. It is to be noted that figures about ministers, Ministers of State and Parliamentary Secretaries are related with the Karpoori Thakur Ministry after 1977 elections.
they have not yet been a political force to reckon with. They are still oppressed not only by the Upper Castes but also by the neo-rich advanced section from among the Backward Castes.

**Scheduled Tribes** : The Scheduled Tribes, accounting for 8.8 percent of the total population continue to suffer on account of their economic and educational backwardness. They are still exploited by the 'Deikus' (outsiders who have settled in Chotanagpur region). But their political leaders have not been very honest to them. No doubt, they very often raise the banner of a separate Jharkhand State, but the moment they get political pelf, they forget their exploited fellows. However, it is heartening that the sleepy tribal region is witnessing the emergence of Adivasi power as a reaction to the age-old exploitation of the tribal masses.

**Languages** :

Linguistically, Bihar is predominantly a Hindi-speaking State (84 percent). Urdu is the largest minority language.

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29. The normally innocent and docile Adivasis have been roused to militancy by Shibu Soren, leader of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, who successfully contested the parliamentary seat in Dumka in 1980 elections with his call for unity against Deikus. Since 1974 movement, he has been holding Adivasi rallies and meetings in the area in support of the demand for a separate state. Enraged by the plight of his kinsman, Soren tells his fellows, "You have to wake up. Unless you agitate nobody in Patna and Delhi will look into your problems", *Times of India*, December 31, 1979. The last such rally was held at Dhanbad on February 4, 1980 in which Shibu Soren and A.K. Roy (both MPs) threatened to shed their blood for fulfilling their demand of a 'Jharkhand State', *Indian Nation*, February 12, 1980.
(7 percent) followed by some very small linguistic minorities (together constituting 19 percent). However, Grierson considered Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri the three main dialects of the Bihari language though sometimes he divided the three dialects into two groups - an eastern group consisting of the closely related dialects of Maithili and Magahi, and a western group consisting of Bhojpuri. Maithili and Magahi are both languages primarily of Bihar whereas the Bhojpuri speakers are divided between Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

The politics of language in Bihar are complicated by the fact that the official language, Hindi, is not the mother tongue of any major population group. It becomes official language of the State because the predominant ethnic groups in Bihar, the Magahi and Bhojpuri peoples, lacking a standard literary language of their own, chose to adopt Hindi as the medium of education, administration and political communication. However, among the Hindus in Bihar (leaving aside the question of Urdu), the language issues involve a competition between two literary languages: one Hindi, which has had the advantage


32. Ibid., p. 69.
of earlier standardization and official status and is the chosen language of a politically important ethnic group; the other, Maithili, an independent literary language and the mother tongue of the largest ethnic group in the State, but an unstandardized language, lacking official status, and spoken in the economically and socially less advanced areas of the State.

With regard to the position of Hindi vis-a-vis Urdu, it is to be noted that in the post-Independence period, Hindi acquired the position of pre-eminence in U.P. and Bihar which Urdu had in the nineteenth century. Hindi in Devnagari script was adopted as the official language of India in the Constitution and the official language of U.P. and Bihar in the Bihar Official Language Act, 1950, and the Uttar Pradesh Official Language Act, 1951. However, the Urdu issue has been the most persistent and the most clearly and consistently articulated issue concerning the Muslims in North India during the past two decades. In recent years, the demand to declare Urdu as the second official language of the States of U.P. and Bihar has become a bitter and divisive issue in the politics of the two north Indian States. But the facilities provided to Urdu speakers in Bihar have been proportionately greater than those provided in U.P. Furthermore, Government policy has been somewhat more favourable to Urdu in principle.

33. Ibid.
The Economy

Economically, Bihar is one of the most backward States. The economy of Bihar has been predominantly agricultural. This is borne out by the fact that about 82 percent of the population of Bihar depends upon agriculture for their livelihood. But agriculture in Bihar is in a poor state. It largely depends for its agriculture on the vagaries of the monsoon. The inadequacy of irrigation facilities and paucity of funds result in low fertilizer consumption and uncertain yields. Absence of advanced methods of farming and uneconomic size of land-holding further result in low productivity.

As land availability is low with a density of 324 persons per sq. km. which is next only to Kerala and West Bengal and is more than twice that of Gujarat and Maharashtra, its excessive dependence on agriculture must depress the living standard of the people.

With per capita income of Rs. 402 in 1969-70, Bihar stands very close to the bottom. Only Orissa with Rs. 326 and Jammu and Kashmir with Rs. 216 are below to Bihar. The economy of Bihar has been aptly described as "from

34. For detail, see ibid., pp. 11-12.

colonial status to colonial status". Bihar does not produce even 5 percent of the cloth it needs and has to depend on outside sources for nearly every item of its consumption. As against this, before the penetration of British commerce, Bihar's industrial production had been impressive. Neither Swadeshi movement nor even Independence could significantly arrest this process of industrial decline in Bihar. The result of the disappearance of its various industries has been that more and more people have been falling back upon its already burdened agriculture as a last resort. This is proved by the comment in the Techno-Economic Survey of Bihar "the proportion of earning population dependent on agriculture has actually increased from 78.7 percent in 1931 to 76.3 percent in 1951, while the proportion of earning population dependent on industry has decreased from 4.3 percent to 2.5 percent indicating in a sense increasing ruralization". Only 2.7 million or 6.7 percent of the Bihar population were located in urban areas as against 17.3 percent for all India, 24 percent for West Bengal and 13.6 percent for Uttar Pradesh. Even by 1961, this situation had not changed much with urban

36. Ibid., p. 73.
37. For detail, see ibid., pp. 73-101.
39. Ibid.
population accounting for only 17.37 percent. The following Table III gives a picture of the situation of Bihar in the years 1961-71 and also its position relative to other states.

### Table III

Statement showing percentage of urban population to total population in India and some other states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Percentage of urban population to total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>17.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>7.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>8.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>25.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>17.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>6.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>15.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>28.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>22.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>5.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>23.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>16.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
<td>26.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>12.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>24.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>17.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40. Census of India, 1971, Provisional Population Totals (Series I), Statement 3, p. 5.
From the above Table, it becomes clear that while there has been a marginal change in Bihar towards urbanisation, the change has been slower than in India as a whole and is still almost half of the all India average for the urban percentage of population. Further, Maharashtra's and Tamilnadu's percentages are three times that of Bihar; and West Bengal; Punjab; and Gujarat; around two and a half times that of Bihar. Even more striking is the fact that while in the whole of India the percentage of those engaged in activities other than agriculture has grown slightly from 30.51 in 1961 to 31.37 in 1971, in Bihar there has been a marked decline from 23.16 to 19.80 during the corresponding year. An alarming effect of this process of economic decay has been that between 1961 and 1971 the percentage of landless agricultural workers has swelled by more than 16 percent, from 24.37 to 40.84. Since agriculture has remained largely stagnant it is clear that the entire addition to the number of landless workers consists of unemployed who are sharing the available work days with other agricultural workers and thereby increasing their miseries.

The reason for this slow decay of Bihar is that though the British rule ended in 1947, Bihar never knew a break in the intensity of its colonial exploitation. As the role of the British capital declined, the Indian capitalists from outside Bihar jumped in the breach to continue the tradition of colonial loot. Even before the British, the Parsi, the
Marwari and the Gujarati businessmen descended in large number to exploit its enormous resources and make quick profits. Besides, a large number of technicians, professional men, executives, educationalists and others from neighbouring Bengal and from other distant provinces, who had the benefit of English education, swarmed to Bihar with a view to making easy careers amidst a people, who had been left behind in the process of westernisation. These businessmen have not only influenced New Delhi to frustrate attempts by the State Government to put a curb on their prerogatives, but they have often tried to influence the party in power in the State in the election of its leaders. As most industries come within the purview of the Centre, the industrialists can very conveniently ignore the interests of the local people. Thus, one set of colonial exploiters was silently replaced by another to continue the loot of the State wealth. Another major factor contributing to the backwardness of Bihar is its land tenure. Distribution of land is so unjust that a large majority of people are mere landless labourers; the land holding of many are too small and uneconomic while a few own huge areas of hundreds of acres. The land ceiling law remained a dead letter. There are still the Sahus of Parbatta, Kursela estate, the Mahants of Bodh Gaya and the Raja of Ramgarh who own thousands of acres each.

41. Sachchidanand Sinha, op.cit., p. 76.

42. Link, August 8, 1971, p. 20; November 28, 1971, p. 21; April 23, 1972, p. 20; Times of India, January 1 and October 31, 1972. See also Chapter VI of this study.
This exploitation of the State becomes even more glaring in view of its potential wealth. Bihar is the most important mineral bearing State in India and accounts for 40.57 percent of its mineral production. Minerals with significant production are: coal, iron ore, lime stone, mica, copper, kyanite, china clay, fire clay and bauxite. Chotanagpur Plateau which is the richest mineral belt in India, contains 80 percent of India's known deposits of coal and 100 percent of its cooking coal. Even at its present level of development the mineral products of this State account for between rupees hundred to hundred and twenty crores annually. Just at the southern part of the State is rich in its mineral resources, the central and the northern parts possess rich alluvial soil for agriculture. The entire land in this rich gangetic plains is criss-crossed by a large number of rivers, most of which have water all through the year. Every inch of Bihar's land can thus be easily brought under one or other form of perennial irrigation. There is poverty in the land of plenty. This is indicative of serious defects in the political and economic organization of the State. This backwardness has direct bearing on the political behaviour of its politicians.

44. Sachchidanand Sinha, op. cit., p. 84.
CHAPTER II

CONGRESS POLITICS UPTO 1967: CASTE BASED FACTIONALISM

For twenty years following Independence Bihar's political system was dominated by the Congress Party. It was a system in which a single 'party of consensus' (i.e. the Congress Party) occupied the dominant, central position, with the minor Opposition parties acting from the margin as 'parties of pressure' without providing an alternation of power. A one-party dominance system, however, does not mean the absence of political competition as minor national or regional parties constantly pose a threat to the 'dominant party'. It only makes competition unequal. It is a system in which "other parties exist legally but for reasons largely unrelated to legal questions of government coercion, find themselves unable to challenge effectively the dominant party's hold on public


2. Here "dominant party" has been used in the sense Maurice Duverger has used in his book, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. 307-312.

3. In the case of Bihar the dominance of the Congress Party was threatened by the Jharkhand and the Janata Party as regional parties and by the parties of left Opposition, namely the Socialist and Communist parties as national parties.

26
The Congress was, however, an open system - an 'open umbrella', which in order to maintain its dominant position brought into its fold a variety of social and economic interests which were neither compatible nor homogenous. But dominance and accommodation cannot go together. "To dominate, the Congress must accommodate, yet accommodation encourages in coherence which destroys the capacity to dominate".

The Congress Party, established in 1908 in Bihar, functioned until 1947 as an integrative force by bringing together diverse elements from different geographical and cultural regions. It submerged local and regional loyalties in the overweening national identity with national freedom as its primary objective.

This is not to deny the existence of differences, tensions and divisions in the Congress of the pre-Independence days. Factional conflicts have always been a part of the


6. Ibid.

Congress in pre as well as post-Independence period. It is to be noted that even before Independence the Congress sometimes assumed dual roles. In addition to being a movement poised against alien rule, it at times acquired governmental powers at different levels in the State. In the nineteen-twenties, the Congress first came to power at the municipal and district levels and in the thirties, at the State level. Thus, while in office, the party also represented a 'power structure', through which various interests could achieve their ends. This resulted in the emergence of factionalism, indiscipline and of parochial interests in the party.

With the emergence of the Congress as a structure of power and with the prospect of political power becoming a reality, the aims of the organization or of larger group became secondary to sectional or personal goals. Thus, the Congress became of playground for sectional and personal interests even before the objective of national freedom was achieved. The full implications of this change became manifest, however, in the post-Independence period when the Congress was transformed into a ruling party.

Since Independence the Congress as a political party has had to contend with such interest groups trying to get

control of the organizational apparatus and the organs of the government. The compulsion to depend on votes as an essential condition for remaining in power made it all the more essential for the Congress to seek support from diverse socio-economic groups of the society. Further, the relatively weaker position of the Opposition until 1967, caused almost all the politically significant groups and interests to be drawn to the Congress. This resulted into a situation in which intra-factional competition and conflict become significant for the political process "making the Congress Party a highly competitive sub-system which must tolerate internal conflict and acquiesce to factional demands in order to prevent them from colliding with the party's grand design for power".

Once personal ambitions and fulfilment of sectarian interests were accepted as suitable goals, the formation of alliances and coalitions became the pattern of the Congress organization. Conflicting claims and counter-claims acted as catalysts. The process of fractionalization of the party structure into factions and sub-coalitions began. "Regional loyalties, caste considerations, diverse economic interests and personal ambition all provided bases for formation of alliances". It is important that personal ambition was the guiding force which exploited diverse affinities - of which

9. Ibid.

Caste was the most important factor in making political alliances. Caste distinctions were the most important factor for mobilising political support. Political rivalry among the Upper Castes and, as a result, the gradual involvement of other caste groups in Congress politics is a characteristic feature of politics in Bihar. In the early years, the Congress leadership, apart from the Muslims, came from the Kayasthas, who had received English education earlier and in larger numbers as compared to other States. But their dominance came to be challenged by the Bhumihars, who were more numerous and economically more influential. The rising aspirations of the Bhumihars brought home to the Kayasthas the fear of dislodgement from the position of power. They responded to this threat by entering into an alliance with yet another emerging caste, the Rajputs. Alliances led to counter alliances, the leading castes coopted men from politically inarticulate castes to positions of second rank leadership in an obvious bid to consolidate their own positions. This brought more and more castes into the vortex of politics. Thus the tensions and conflicts among the combined forces of Kayasthas, Rajputs and Bhumihars guided the course of Congress politics in


Bihar up till 1947.

In the course of the political mobilisation of caste groups in the Congress politics, the process of selection of Congress candidates for elections to the legislature, local self-governing bodies and party hierarchy at different levels created intense intra-party conflicts. "Many Congress workers ... started assessing their services in terms of rewards in the form of membership of a Legislative Assembly, municipal or district board or at least a place of honour and power in a Congress Committee". Claims of office were pressed and considered on grounds of caste, geographical, religious and personal bases.

By the time the first Congress ministry was formed in Bihar in 1937, the Congress leadership in the State had split into two factions, each composed of several caste groups. One was headed by Shri Krishna Sinha, a Bhumihar from Monghyr district and the other by Anugrah Narayan Sinha, a Rajput from Gaya district. Attempts to capture important positions and to favour one's own supporters in the selection of Congress candidates for contesting elections, appointments and nominations


created an atmosphere of envy and jealousy which gradually eroded mutual confidence, trust and solidarity among top-ranking leaders of the State Congress. The presence of suspicion and jealousy was mainly responsible for discontinuance of weekly meetings of the Council of Ministers. After the elections to the distinct boards were over in 1939, the Ministry had split further on the question of government nominations to the district boards.

The first open division in the Congress leadership in the State appeared in December, 1939, when a bid for the unanimous election of the members of the Bihar Pradesh Congress Working Committee (BPCWC) failed. The next two years were marked by intense factional rivalry. The Congress High Command had to take note of the situation and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was sent to Patna by the High Command in February, 1942 in a vain bid to patch up the differences between the two groups. The intensity of group rivalry was further sharpened one month later at the time of the reconstruction of the Pradesh Working Committee. The supporters of S.K. Sinha - Ram Charitra Sinha, Sarangdhar Sinha, Shyama Prasad Singh, Sardar Harihar Singh and Dewavarat Shastri alleged that the Working Committee


was packed by supporters of A.N. Sinha. In June, Ram Charitra Sinha and Shyama Prasad Singh resigned from the Working Committee in protest. Thus the growing heterogeneity in the Congress reflecting the increasing political mobilisation of cross sections of the society and their conflicting claims to positions of power in the party hierarchy as well as in the government, adversely affected the cohesiveness of the top leadership. By 1942 it had split into two opposing camps.

The two sub-coalitions, dominated by the Rajputs and the Bhumihars continued to function in the Bihar Congress till 1946. But after the formation of the Congress Ministry in 1946, alienation and defections from the ruling group started and got accelerated further in 1952. The formation of the new Ministry disappointed some of the non-Bhumihar supporters of S.K. Sinha, who were expecting to be rewarded with the ministerial gaddis in their support to the Bhumihar Chief Minister, Sarangdhar Singh, a Rajput, was particularly confident of being picked up as a Minister, but was disappointed.

The formation of the Congress Ministry in 1952 gave a further shock to the supporters of S.K. Sinha and accelerated the process of defection. One of the important factors was the inclusion of Mahesh Prasad Sinha, a Bhumihar and a close relation of S.K. Sinha, in the Ministry. M.P. Sinha's rise

20. Ibid., p. 410.
to power made Krishna Ballabh Sahay, a Kayastha lieutenant of S.K. Sinha, whom the latter had earlier weaned away from the Rajput – Kayastha alliance and who aspired to be Chief Minister, apprehensive of the intentions of the Chief Minister. It quickened the alienation of the Chief Minister’s non-Bhumihar lieutenants who had been passed over for ministerial positions in both 1946 and 1952. M.P. Sinha soon started denigrating K.B. Sahay and the non-Bhumihar favourites of the Chief Minister and replacing them with persons from his own caste. M.P. Sinha and K.B. Sahay rivalry intensified caste rivalry.

The bifactional structure came to an end by 1953 when almost all the important non-Bhumihar supporters of the Chief Minister S.K. Sinha deserted his camp and formed a ‘Centrist’ group. This group got busy in discrediting M.P. Sinha, holding him responsible for their grievances. However, it is interesting

21. Referring to the impact of his efforts to push K.B. Sahay, S.K. Sinha says, "For nearly twenty years I gave Krishna Ballabh Babu a position in the government which Mahesh Babu could not even dream of. Some people thought that I was doing a foolish thing and now I realize that it was foolish of me to have given him so much latitude. Some of my old friends got annoyed with me and deserted me only because I was giving so much encouragement to Krishna Ballabh Babu". "Jay Prakash Narayan – Shri Krishna Sinha Correspondence", Indian Nation, August 8, 1959, quoted in Ramashray Roy, "Intra-Party Conflict in the Bihar Congress", op. cit., p. 711.


to note that the Bhumihar supporters of the Chief Minister, by and large, stuck to him even in cases where they failed to get rewarded by ministerial positions. Presumably the reason was the psychological satisfaction they derived from belonging to the 'ruling caste'. The revolt of the Centrist group was directed mainly against the ruling Bhumihar faction. This group, apart from impressing upon the Congress High Command the need for taking action against the Bhumihar leaders, was busy in creating public opinion against them. The group further provided a forum for other disgruntled elements, both within and outside the party, for criticising the ruling Congress leadership in the State.

In the meantime the rivalry between M.P. Sinha and K.B. Sahay affected the Congress Party's activities ranging from organizational elections to the general elections in 1957. "K.B. Sahay's ambitions have been mounting so much that his mischief would push the Congress into the ditch and the administration would become dictatorial". M.P. Sinha also developed ambitions and the two engaged in bitter fratricidal warfare. They used each and every trick to outwit and


outmanoeuvre each other. In the selection of candidates for the General Elections in 1967, many members of the Centrist group were not recommended for the Congress tickets. They, therefore, left the Congress and formed the Jan Congress.

The rivalry between M.P. Sinha and K.B. Sahay culminated in their defeat in the 1967 elections mainly because, as the Patakar Report points out, worked against each other.

For the first time in the history of the Bihar Congress, a contest for leadership of the Congress Legislature Party took place between the old rivals - S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha. K.B. Sahay openly aligned with the Rajput group, along with the remnants of the Centrist group. However, A.N. Sinha lost as supporters of Sahay deserted him. The death of A.N. Sinha in July 1957 left his group without a recognised leader capable of winning support from other communities. Consequently, the Rajput group, under the stewardship of S.N. Sinha son of A.N. Sinha, was reduced simply to a caste group. The other caste elements of the Rajput group were reorganized under the leadership of Binoda Nand Jha,

28. Ibid.
a Brahmin and a camp follower of A.N. Sinha. Thus, bifactional structure of the State Congress was changed to a multifactional structure.

The death of S.K. Sinha in January, 1961 again changed the balance of factional forces. The ruling Bhumihar sub-coalition, under the leadership of M.P. Sinha, lost to a new sub-coalition of Brahmans, Rajputs, Kayasthas and a majority of Lower Castes, Scheduled Castes, Muslims and others under the leadership of B.N. Jha. As the leader of the majority group, B.N. Jha became the second Chief Minister of Bihar.

It is to be noted here that so long as the stalwarts like S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha were in positions of political predominance, the typical Congress politics of 'winning over' and 'patching up' paid dividends. But after their death, alignments began to show new trends. An important factor affecting the group alignments was the increasing number of Backward Castes in the Congress as well as in the Legislative Assembly. This numerical strength of the Backward Castes compelled leaders from the Upper Castes to accede to their demand for a meaningful share in the formal institutional


in set up. The sudden rise of Lower Caste members in the Bihar Pradesh Committee resulted in the slow decline in dominance of the Upper Castes. In the Legislative Assembly also the Lower Castes including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, emerged as the most crucial group - their percentage increased from 39.48 in 1967 to 49.53 in 1962. The representation of Brahmins also increased. A Brahmin, Backward Caste coalition was perhaps the result of this development. It was due to this combination that B.N. Jha succeeded in defeating M.P. Sinha. The following Table I shows the caste-wise composition of Congress Party members in the Legislative Assembly in 1957 and 1962:

### TABLE I


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>1957</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>1962</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>9.54</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhumiars</td>
<td>16.19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.77</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.23</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayasthas</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes &amp; Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>17.62</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27.46</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Castes</td>
<td>22.86</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22.06</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>11.43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not known and others</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. Shree Nagesh Jha, op.cit., p.344; also Chetkar Jha, op.cit., p.583.
Thus, the post-1957 factional rivalry included a new sub-coalition consisting of Brahmins, who were earlier camp followers of S.K. Sinha with the exception of B.N. Jha, and Lower Castes. Thus, the 'internal' struggle among Kayasthas, Bhumihars and Rajputs no longer contained the whole story.

However, tension within the ministerialist sub-coalition developed from the very beginning as K.B. Sahay was not taken into the Cabinet. He also became apprehensive of the growing influence of S.N. Sinha in the Cabinet. As a result, K.B. Sahay crossed over to M.P. Sinha group just four days before the Pradesh Election Committee (PEC) met to nominate Congress candidates for 1962 General Elections. This tilted the balance in favour of M.P. Sinha. The PEC was divided into six to four with the ministerialist in the minority. This defection had, however, little immediate effect on the fortunes of the Jha group which continued to be in the dominant position until April, 1963 when Jha's nominees for some key posts in the Congress Legislature Party were defeated because of the desertion of a number of his Rajput supporters.

After B.N. Jha was 'Kamraged' out in October, 1963, a

new alignment of factions came into being. S.N. Sinha and his followers deserted the Jha camp and joined the Sahay-M.P. Sinha sub-coalition. The sub-coalition of Bhumihars, Rajputs, Kayasthas and a majority of Backward Castes, Scheduled Castes and Tribes members defeated Bir Chand Patel, a Backward (Kurmi) Caste lieutenant of Jha in the contest for leadership of the Congress Legislature Party. Sahay, as the leader of the new sub-coalition, was thus able to fulfil his long-cherished ambition of becoming the Chief Minister of Bihar. An earlier attempt by Jha group to build up an entirely new base of support through the merger of the Jharkhand Party with the Congress in the summer of 1963 did not fully succeed. Finding himself out of office immediately after the merger, B.N. Jha failed to prevent a majority of his Jharkhand followers from defecting to the new Chief Minister's faction, ever willing to oblige them with patronage.

In view of his limitation as leader of the numerically smaller Kayastha Caste as compared to his Brahmin, Rajput and Bhumihar rivals, K.B. Sahay, in a bid to create a viable support base in the party, began to woo the numerically stronger Backward communities by promising greater political share for them in the party as well as in the government and

38. Mahendra P. Singh, *op. cit.*., p. 64.
by promoting their members to position of leadership. He appointed Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, an important Yadav Caste politician, a Cabinet Minister in his government and gave him the portfolio of Public Works Department (PWD). Sahay also won over the influential Kurmi leader Deo Sharan Singh, the Chairman of the Vidhan Parishad (the Upper House of Bihar Legislature). This strategy of Sahay, which was aimed at weakening the power position of other leaders accelerated internal fighting within the sub-coalition. The coming 1967 General Elections sharpened it. In the formation of the DEC in June, 1966, M.P. Sinha, one of the important members of the sub-coalition and the leader of the Bhumihar group defected to Jha group. K.B. Sahay, nonetheless, succeeded in capturing six elective seats in the DEC against four bagged by the dissidents. He did also succeed in keeping the ministerialist in power by retaining the support of a section of the Bhumihar group led by Shiva Shankar Sinha, son of the former Chief Minister S.K. Sinha. The selection of candidates to contest the 1967 General Elections reflected intense factional fights with each faction leader competing with others in snatching the largest number of party nominations for their own followers. In the process S.N. Sinha


deserted the ruling sub-coalition to join the dissidents in the M.P. Sinha - B.N. Jha camp reducing the former to a minority of 5 to 7 in the PEC. When attempts to prepare an agreed list of candidates failed, the rival sub-coalitions submitted separate lists of candidates to the Central Election Committee (CEC). The final selection failed to satisfy any group in the party. However, two groups felt more dissatisfied with the decision of the CEC because, in their view, their due share in the Congress nomination was denied by it. These groups were: (i) Raja of Ramgarh-led erstwhile Janata Party group and (ii) the Jha faction.

The group of Ramgarh Raja as well as Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, a former Congress President, left the party and formed Jan Kranti Dal to fight the elections against their formal political partners. However, B.N. Jha did not desert the party though only 11 of his 48 supporters in the last Vidhan Sabha were renominated.

Thus, proliferation of factions has been an important hallmark of the Congress Party in Bihar. In the course of twenty years the bipolarity of factionalism transformed into multi-polarity, each faction getting exclusive or major

41. Ibid., p. 66.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., p. 67.
support from one caste or group of castes. In this way power in the Congress Party came to be distributed among several caste-based factions. The compulsions of the political situation forced the belligerent factions to convert themselves into two sub-coalitions to help them to compete for the control of power apparatus. But within each sub-coalition each constituent faction was a contender for power, and alliances and alignments were made and broken on the basis of profitable bargaining and convenience.

Proliferation of factions and the intra-factional struggle to control the dominant Congress Party, interestingly, had not originated on the basis of any differences on ideology and programme. Caste unities and differences were the crucial driving force behind factional politics in the Bihar Congress. Economic, regional and geographical differences might have been there to divide Congressmen but they did not provide as sound a base as did the Caste differences in the organization of political groups.

However, it is important to note that these differences were fully exploited by the professional politicians for the fulfilment of their own political ambitions. The lack of ideology in factional alliances and the frequency with which men jumped from one group to another was sufficient proof that politicians were guided more by personal interests than by group commitment. This is borne out also by the fact that
out of a total of 60 prominent Congress leaders in Bihar as much as 30 leaders changed sides twice during the period of twenty years. Of these 30, ten leaders changed sides more than twice. The personal basis of factions has been observed also by Ghanshyam Singh Gupta, special representative of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), there are two main groups in the (Bihar) State Congress Organization - one of Shri Krishna Sinha and the other of Shri Anugrah Narain Sinha. The differences between them do not lie in any marked degree on their political policies and programmes or even in their outlook or approach to them. It is personal. The virus is more pronounced amongst those who claim to follow them.

A notable feature of the Congress politics during 1937-1967 had been the domination of Bhumihars, Rajputs, Brahmins and Kayasthas despite the numerical superiority of the Lower Castes in the State. One reason responsible for this was the earlier political mobilization of the economically well off and educationally superior Upper Castes. However,


the Upper Caste political elites were forced by increasing competition in their political game to broaden their support. This they did by recruiting men from other Lower Castes and raising them to the elite status who later on became leaders in their own right. This process, while it widened the circle of political participation, also worked to divide the emerging castes which functioned as reservoir of support for the contending Upper Caste groups.

The cumulative result of this factional balkanization was that the cohesion and the organizational viability were seriously threatened by the end of 1966. The accommodative and integrative capability of the Congress organization came to be exhausted and indiscipline and personal ambitions of the factional leaders ran riot. All this led to the calamitous defeat of the dominant party in the 1967 General Elections.

**INTRA-FACTIONAL CONFLICT IN THE MINISTRY-MAKING, 1937-1963**

Greed for power had been the most important factor responsible for the emergence of caste-oriented factional politics in the Bihar Congress. So, it is pertinent to analyse intra-factional conflict in relation to the ministry making in Bihar. It is to be mentioned here that as prospects of acquiring power appeared first at the district level, factionalism also developed first in the District Congress Committees (D.C.C.s) following generally the caste divisions in the districts. Later, when the Congress came into power
at the State level, pressures from below for the fulfilment of factional goals affected the cohesiveness of the State leadership.

The top leaders of the Congress Party in Bihar, for the first time, tasted the glory of power at the State level in 1937, when a Congress Ministry was formed under the Government of India Act, 1936. A contest for Chief Ministership between the two sub-coalition leaders S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha was averted by Rajendra Prasad who was authorised by the Congress High Command to ascertain the consensus of the members. As A.N. Sinha expressed his desire not to be considered, S.K. Sinha was unanimously elected. The former was elected the Deputy Leader unanimously.

However, the formation of the Ministry proved a ticklish problem. Pressures for inclusion in the Ministry began to be applied on the leadership. Some Harijan leaders demanded a Harijan member in the Ministry. There was pressure from the legislators of the Chotanagpur belt for the inclusion of a Minister in the Cabinet from that area. Apart from Syed Mahmud and Ram Dayalu Singh, who were in the field right from the election of the party leader, Ram Charitra Singh, Abdul Bari and Baldeo Sahay were also in the race for ministership.

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The selection of Ministers became more difficult in view of the desirability of having only a four-member Cabinet. Rajendra Prasad recounts in his Autobiography, "The selection of ministers was a knotty problem. The Governor's Executive Council had only four members, and I thought if four men could do the job then, four ministers ought to be sufficient to run the Congress Government now". In a clever move, as it appears, the leadership decided to avoid bickering in the party, to appoint some important men as Parliamentary Secretaries, and some others to other high positions. In the middle of July, 1937, four important leaders of the Congress - Rajendra Prasad, S.K. Sinha, A.N. Sinha and Abdul Bari - met at Chapra at the residence of Chandradeo Narain, an advocate, and decided to have only four men in the Cabinet. Abdul Bari's proposal that S.K. Sinha, A.N. Sinha, Syed Mahmud and a Harijan be made Ministers and Ram Layalu Singh the Speaker, was accepted. It remained, however, undecided as to which of the two Harijan leaders namely Jagjiwan Ram and Jaglal Chaudhary were to be made a Minister. Finally, it was decided to appoint Jaglal Chaudhary as a Minister and Jagjiwan Ram as a Parliamentary Secretary. After a lot of discussion, the


49. Ram Layalu Singh and Abdul Bari were elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker. Laldeo Sahay was appointed Advocate General; Bameshwar Singh, op. cit., p. 133.


names of Parliamentary Secretaries was finally decided on July 16, 1937. The following Table II shows the names and castes of the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

**TABLE II**

Showing names and castes of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries of the first Congress Ministry before Independence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syed Mahmud</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagal Chaudhary</td>
<td>Harijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.B. Sahay</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharangdhar Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimut Bahan</td>
<td>Bihari Bengali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivanandan Prasad Mandal</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagjiwan Ram</td>
<td>Harijan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binodanand Jha</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadiqul Haque</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagat Narain Lal</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It, thus, appears that although factionalism had its role to play in the Ministry-making, it had not become very strong. The leadership showed the spirit of accommodation and was able to adjust counter-claims while taking into consideration the claims of castes, regions and personalities. Most of the aspirants for high offices were accommodated as Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries or as the Speaker or Deputy Speaker or Advocate General.

In the making of the Congress Ministry in 1946, again factionalism did not have an important say. Following elections, conflicts over the leadership of the Congress Legislature Party between S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha again developed. But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then Congress President, with the help of Rajendra Prasad, the then UPCC President, managed to get S.K. Sinha elected unanimously. In the selection of the members to be sworn in as Ministers, factional claims had to be considered by the Congress leadership both at the national and the State level. The spirit of accommodation was compromised in the claims and counter-claims of factions. As a result, most of the members selected as Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries belonged to one or the other of the factions. The Table IX given below shows the factional position of the Ministry. It would appear from the Table that in the 19-man Ministry, S.K. Sinha's faction was in a dominant position. It is also clear that the faction leaders tried to accommodate, within their faction, as many second rank leaders.

belonging to other castes as was possible.

54

TABLE III

Showing factional alignment of the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries along with their castes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factions</th>
<th>Cabinet Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries and their Caste/Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>(1) K.B. Sahay (Kayastha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Abdul Quayum Ansari (Pasht)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Jaglal Chaudhary (Pasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>(1) Badrinath Verma (Kayastha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Binodanand Jha (Maithil Brahmin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factional allegiance not clear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Syed Mahmud (Muslim)</th>
<th>(1) Boniface Lakra (Adivasi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) Ram Charitra Singh (Bhumihar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54. Bameshwar Singh, op. cit., p. 139.
Factional politics assumed serious proportions in the 1952 and 1957 Ministry making. Factional activities were intensified to such a degree in 1952 that the High Command had to intervene by sending three Central Ministers from Bihar to patch up differences. They, however, failed and it was the intervention of the Prime Minister and the AICC President, Jawaharlal Nehru, which led to the unanimous election of S.K. Sinha as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party.

However, the formation of Ministry presented a lot of difficulties. Most of the major caste groups in the CLP pressed their claims for their respective shares in the Ministry by holding meetings and by carrying on various kinds of canvassing. Some important interest groups, such as Muslims, Harijans, Adivasis and the members of the fair sex became active and pressed their claims also. The question of geographical representation was also raised. However, it was the adjustment of factional claims which created the real problem. The two main factional leaders - S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha - met as many as eight times without success. It was their ninth meeting which produced an agreed list of Cabinet Ministers. An amusing way of advancing factional claims and counter-claims was that

55. Mahendra P. Singh, op. cit., p. 61; Chetkar Jha, op. cit., p. 578.
57. Ibid., pp. 247-249.
if the name of a particular person from a particular caste was proposed by one faction, the other faction too, proposed the name of some other person from the same caste. For example, when the name of Deo Sharan Singh, a Kurmi MLA, was proposed by S.K. Sinha, A.N. Sinha put forward the name of Birchand Patel, another MLA belonging to the same caste. The selection of Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries also led to serious factional conflicts. It was only after protracted discussions between the two faction leaders that list of Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries could be finalised. The difficulties in deciding the names of Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries could be understood by the fact that the former took their oath of office about six months later than the Cabinet Ministers and the latter over a year thereafter. The following Table IV shows caste/community, region and the factions to which they belonged.

It is clear from the Table that S.K. Sinha faction was in the majority in the Council of Ministers. It had five men in the Cabinet, two Deputy Ministers and two Parliamentary Secretaries, while A.N. Sinha faction had four Cabinet Ministers, one Deputy Minister and one Parliamentary Secretary.

The S.K. Sinha faction included two Bhumihars, one Kayastha, one Brahmin, one Harijan (all Cabinet Ministers),

58. Ibid., p. 248.
TABLE IV

Showing Caste/Community, region and factional allegiance of the Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries of the First Congress Ministry formed after 1952 elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Oath taken on</th>
<th>Faction Leader</th>
<th>Constituency/District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harinath Mishra (MLA, Maithil Brahmin)</td>
<td>18.4.1952</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Madhubani (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bholo Paswam Shastri (MLA, Dusadh Harijan)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Dhamdaha (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Shafi (MLA, Muslim)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>Benipatti West (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Charitra Singh (MLA, Bhumihar)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Teghra (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Narain Singh (MLA, Rajput)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Mahnar (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahesh Prasad Singh (MLA, Bhumihar)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Muzaffarpur-cum-Sakra (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.K. Sinha (MLA, Bhumihar)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Factions Leader</td>
<td>Kharagpur (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.N. Sinha (MLA, Rajput)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Factions Leader</td>
<td>Nabinagar (Gaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badrinath Varma (MLA, Kayastha)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Patna City-cum- Naubatpur (Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivnandan Prasad Mandal (MLA, Yadav)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Murliganj (Bhagalpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chotanagpur</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.E. Sahay (MLA, Kayastha)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Giridih-cum-Dumri (Hazaribagh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sah Ozair Munimi (MLC, Muslim)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEPUTY MINISTERS

North Plains

A.A.M. Noor (MLA, Muslim) 4.10.1952 S.K. Sinha (Purnea)
Birchand Patel (MLA, Kurmi) -do- A.N. Sinha (Muzaffarpur)

South Plains

Nirpada Mukherjee (MLA, Behari Bengali) -do- S.K. Sinha Monghyr Town (Monghyr)

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

North Plains

Chandrika Ram (MLA, Chamar(Harijan) 9.11.1953 A.N. Sinha Katea-cum-Bhore (Saran)
Chhotanagpur

Bhagirath Singh (MLA, Adivasi) -do- S.K. Sinha Latehar-cum-Manatu (Palamu)
Devendranath Mahto (MLA, Koiri) 30.11.1953 -do- Jhalda (Manbhum)

59. (a) The name and date of oath-taking of Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Bihar Civil List (A half-yearly publication, Government of Bihar Publications, Patna), 1953, p. 1; and of Parliamentary Secretaries from Bihar Civil List, 1955, p. 2.

(b) Caste and factional allegiance, Bameshwar Singh, op.cit., pp. 146-147.

one Muslim, one Bengali (both Deputy Ministers), one Adivasi
and one Koiri (both Parliamentary Secretaries). The A.N.Sinha
group had nominated two Rajputs, one Kayastha, one Yadav
(all Cabinet Ministers), one Kurmi (Deputy Minister) and one
Harijan (Parliamentary Secretary). Among the three Ministers,
whose factional loyalty was not clear, two were Muslims and
one a Bhumihar.

So far as geographical representation was concerned,
North Bihar had as many as nine berths in the Council of
Ministers; six of them were Cabinet Ministers, two Deputy
Ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary. South Bihar had
got five seats, four Cabinet Ministers and one Deputy Minister.
Both S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha belonged to this region. There
were three men in the Council of Ministers (one Cabinet
Minister and two Parliamentary Secretaries) who belonged to
Chotanagpur region.

Following the 1957 General Elections, a direct contest
between S.K. Sinha and A.N. Sinha for the Congress Legislature
Party leadership could not be avoided. All efforts of the
High Command to settle the matter amicably were in vain, for
neither was prepared to accept any compromise. In the first
open contest A.N. Sinha lost and subsequently accepted
Deputy Leadership.

The formation of the Ministry again caused feverish
activity on the part of the factional leaders. All kinds of
caste groups, interest groups and groups of self-seekers became active for ministerial spoils. Finally, the choices of the Ministers were made at the intervention of the Congress High Command. It is worth mentioning that the S.K. Sinha sub-coalition had to face several problems in the selection of Ministers. Caste groups, pressure groups and important individuals pressed their claim to ministerial posts. On the contrary, the A.N. Sinha faction had no such problem and the choices of Ministers to be included in the Ministry were left to its leader. It is also important that the S.K. Sinha faction, this time, negotiated from the point of strength, as it was victorious, and succeeded in having a lion's share of ministerial posts. Among the nine Cabinet members, only three, including A.N. Sinha, were from his group. Almost all Deputy Ministers belonged to the S.K. Sinha faction. The following Table V shows caste and factional allegiance of the members of the Ministry apart from its geographical representation.

From the Table it is clear that being a victorious group, the S.K. Sinha faction successfully restricted the entry of the A.N. Sinha's supporters into the Ministry. A significant feature of this Ministry making was that more and more groups and individuals started demanding rewards for their support to the Chief Minister.

61. Ibid., pp. 256-258.
Showing caste/community, region and factional allegiance of the members of the second S.K. Sinha Ministry, 1957.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Oath taken</th>
<th>Faction Leader</th>
<th>Constituency/District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CABINET MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhola Paswan Shastri (MLA, Dusadh (SC))</td>
<td>6.5.1957</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Dhamdaha (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birchand Patel (MLA, Kurmi)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Lalganj South (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.K. Sinha (MLA, Bhumihar)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Fractional Leader</td>
<td>Sheikhpura (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.N. Sinha (MLA, Rajput)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Fractional Leader</td>
<td>Nabinagar (Gaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binoda Nand Jha (MLA, Maithil Brahmin)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Rajmahal (Santhal Paragnas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagat Narayan Lal (MLA, Kayastha)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Danapur (Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maqbool Ahmad (MLA, Muslim)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Colgong (Bhagalpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sah Ozair Munimi (MLC, Muslim)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumar Ganga Nand Singh (MLC, Brahmin)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEPUTY MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A.M. Noor (MLA, Muslim)</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Baisi (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td>Date of Appointment</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedar Pande</td>
<td>6.6.1957</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Bagaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laliteshwar Prasad Sahi</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Lalganj North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hirdya Narain Chaudhary</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Darbhanga North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahdeo Mahto</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Samastipur East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishna Kant Singh</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Basantpur West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandrika Ram</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>Bhore (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laroja Prasad Rai</td>
<td>22.9.1959</td>
<td>A.N. Sinha</td>
<td>Parasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deo Narain Yadav</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Jainagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambika Saran Singh</td>
<td>6.5.1957</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>Arrah Muffasal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rani Jyotirmayee</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Pakur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syed Mohammad Aquil</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Bihar North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chotanagpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Rajeshwar Saroj Las</td>
<td>22.9.1959</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Garhwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radha Govind Prasad</td>
<td>6.5.1957</td>
<td>S.K. Sinha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The A.N. Sinha faction had nominated one Rajput, one Brahmin and one Kurmi as Cabinet Ministers and a Yadav as Deputy Minister. After the death of A.N. Sinha, his group included another Rajput, Deep Narain Singh, in his place. Among the two Deputy Ministers, whose factional allegiance was not clear, one was a Rajput and the other a Harijan. Thus, the second 23-man S.K. Sinha Ministry was dominated by the forward castemen. There were eleven forward castemen - four Brahmins, three Bhumihars, two Rajputs and two Kayasthas, four backward castemen, two Yadavas, one Kurmi and one Kolri, two Scheduled Castemen, one Scheduled tribeman and four Muslims in his Ministry. The remaining one was a Bihari Bengali.

As regards regional representation, the North Plains had eleven representatives - two Cabinet and nine Deputy Ministers - in the Council of Ministers. It was followed by the South Plains which had eight members - five Cabinet and three Deputy Ministers - in the Ministry. The Chotanagpur belt had only one representation.

After S.K. Sinha's death and following B.N. Jha's election as the leader of the Congress Legislative Party, factional claims for the allotment of ministerial berths were pressed again. Both the factional leaders - B.N. Jha and M.P. Sinha requested the High Command a maximum number of their supporters should be accommodated in the Ministry. This time, the leader

63. Indian Nation (Patna), February 13, 14, 15, 1961.
of the Legislature Party, B.N. Jha asserted his right to choose his colleagues. He told the Congress President Nilam Sanjiva Reddy, who was keen to have a composite Ministry, that if any choice was forced upon him, it would be difficult for him to carry on. However, he met M.P. Sinha on February 15, 1961 in New Delhi and asked him to suggest two names of his choice for the Cabinet. Earlier on February 13, the Congress High Command decided to have a nine-man Cabinet - seven from B.N. Jha camp and two from M.P. Sinha faction. They again met on February 16 but did not reach any agreement. M.P. Sinha was insistent on having three Cabinet posts and retaining all the five Deputy Ministers of his faction. B.N. Jha submitted a list of seven Cabinet Ministers (all from his group) and nine Deputy Ministers (including two from M.P. Sinha faction) to the Governor. All of them, barring Sinha's supporters, took their oath on February 18, 1961.

The situation turned serious. Abdul Qayum Ansari, the BPCC President and Deep Narain Singh, Irrigation Minister, separately tried to mediate between the two factions but they

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64. Bameshwar Singh, op. cit., p. 268.
did not succeed. The High Command was also anxious to settle the matter. When on March 10, B.N. Jha and his two colleagues went to Delhi for discussions on Cabinet expansion, he was advised to broaden his ministry by including members from the M.P. Sinha faction. It was decided that two Cabinet Ministers and five Deputy Ministers would be taken from the Sinha faction. B.N. Jha expanded his Ministry on April 3, 1961 when only Zawar Hussain (Cabinet Minister) took oath. Members from the M.P. Sinha faction did not take their oath again. Ultimately, they had to join the Ministry on April 19, 1961 after receiving serious warning from the High Command.

Thus, the Ministry formation was completed in three months' time as a result of the hardening of the attitude of the High Command. Both the factions aggressively pressed their claims up to the last moment. More than anything else, factional consideration was taken into account in the formation of the Ministry. B.N. Jha, having a majority of his men in the Ministry, did not include any member from the opposite camp while appointing ten Parliamentary Secretaries on April 4, 1961. The following Table VI shows the dominant position of the Jha faction in the Ministry.

70. Search Light, April 4, 1961.
71. Ibid., April 20, 1961.
### TABLE VI

Showing caste/community, region and factional loyalty of the members of the B.N. Jha Ministry, 1961.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Faction</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CABINET MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhola Paswan Shastri (MLA)</td>
<td>Dusadh (SC)</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Dhamdaha (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birchand Patel (MLA)</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Lalganj South (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Narain Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Hajipur (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zawar Hussain (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>M.P. Sinha</td>
<td>Zeradie (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janaki Raman Mishra (MLA)</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>M.P. Sinha</td>
<td>Darbhanga South (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binoda Nand Jha (MLA)</td>
<td>Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td>Factional Leader</td>
<td>Rajmahal (Santhal Paragnas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satyendra Narain Sinha (MP)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Aurangabad (Gaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jafar Imam (MLC)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Prakash Lal (MLC)</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPUTY MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A.M. Noor (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Baisi (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedar Pandey (MLA)</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Bagaha (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>MLA/MLC</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandrika Ram (MLA)</td>
<td>Chamar(SC)</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Bhoore (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daroga Prasad Rai (MLA)</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Parasa (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deonarain Yadav (MLA)</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Jainagar (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdul Ghafoor (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Barnuli (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamaldeo Narain Singh Knyastha (MLA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Purneea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laliteshwar Prasad Sahi Ehumihar (MLA)</td>
<td>M.P.Sinha</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lalganj North (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahdeo Mahto (MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>M.P.Sinha</td>
<td>Samastipur East (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawal Kishore Pu.Sinha Ehumihar (MLA)</td>
<td>M.P.Sinha</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daro (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**South Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA/MLC</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambika Sharan Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Arrah Muffasal (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chotanagpur**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>MLA/MLC</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samu Charan Tubid (MLC)</td>
<td>Adivasi(ST)</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokesh Nath Jha (MLC)</td>
<td>Maithil</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungeri Lal (MLC)</td>
<td>Lasadh(SC)</td>
<td>M.P.Sinha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Parliamentary Secretaries**

**North Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA/MLC</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prabhawati Gupta (MLA) Bania</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Kesaria (Champaran)</td>
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</table>

**South Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA/MLC</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Sumitra Devi (MLA) Koiri</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>B.N.Jha</td>
<td>Prio (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Manorama Pandey (MLA) Brahmin</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.Jha</td>
<td>Bikramganj (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lal Singh Tyagi (MLA) Kuzmi</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.Jha</td>
<td>Hilsa (Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Shekhar Singh (MLA) Rajput</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.N.Jha</td>
<td>Jhajha (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Footnotes:

72. Caste and factional allegiance, Bameshwar Singh, op. cit., pp.152-154; Constituency, Vide Supra, Chapter II, footnote 63(c); Name and Membership of the Legislature of the Ministers, Bihar Civil List, September, 1961, pp.1-2.
The dominant position of B.N. Jha group was natural in the sense that K.B. Sahay and S.N. Sinha faction were with him in the game of power.

**Caste-wise Break-up**

The B.N. Jha Ministry was also dominated by the forward castemen. There were fourteen men belonging to these castes - five Cabinet Ministers, six Ministers of State and three Parliamentary Secretaries. There were eight Ministers belonging to the Backward Castes - one Cabinet Minister, three Ministers of State and four Parliamentary Secretaries. The Scheduled Castes had six men - one Cabinet Minister, two Ministers of State and three Parliamentary Secretaries in the Ministry. The Muslim community had four men - two Cabinet and two Ministers of State in the Jha Ministry. However, the Scheduled Tribes had only one man. The above Table shows that the four Forward and four Backward Castes were represented, while there were three Scheduled Castes. There was one Schedule Tribe.

**Region-wise Break-up**

The North Bihar plains had the highest number of representatives in the Ministry, i.e., twenty. Among them, five were Cabinet Ministers, ten Ministers of State and four Parliamentary Secretaries. The South Bihar plains had two Cabinet Ministers, one Minister of State and five Parliamentary Secretaries. The tribal belt of Chotanagpur had one representative as a Minister of State.
The Second B.N. Jha Ministry, 1962

After the 1962 General Elections, a trial of strength between the ministerialists and the dissidents took place over the CLP leadership. The dissidents put up K.B. Sahay against B.N. Jha but lost once more despite the K.B. Sahay - M.P. Sinha combination.

Ministry-making, this time, was not a long drawn battle inspite of factional claims and counter claims for ministerial berths. One of the reasons perhaps was that the dominant faction was not so dominant after the defection of K.B. Sahay. Secondly, the factional leaders were more pragmatic and accommodative. B.N. Jha himself wanted the Ministry to be broad-based and he publicly expressed the view that he had no prejudice against anybody who had voted against him. The dissidents also were not taking any offensive action, perhaps, because of their two consecutive defeats. M.P. Sinha's statement that "B.N. Jha is the undisputed leader of the Bihar Congress Legislature Party. He is alone to decide the strength and nature of the Cabinet" was a clear proof of this. When B.N. Jha held discussions with the rival faction leaders with regard to Ministry-making and sought their approval in joining the Ministry, the latter reciprocated by deciding to join along with all those whose

73. Indian Nation, March 10 and 11, 1961.
74. Ibid., March 10, 1962.
co-operation was being sought by the former. The third and one of the most important reasons was the attitude of the Congress High Command which wanted a homogeneous Ministry represented by all sections. In its meeting on March 9, 1962 the Central Parliamentary Board (CPB) decided that wherever there were factions, the leader of the CLP should form a broad-base Cabinet and strive for bringing unity in the party.

B.N. Jha was told this when he discussed Ministry formation with the members of the High Command.

However, the factional leaders did their best to secure as many ministerial posts as was possible in order to reward their supporters. In the process some differences remained unresolved up to the last moment. The K.B. Sahay – M.P. Sinha faction wanted to have four berths in the Cabinet but the B.N. Jha faction was not ready to concede this demand. B.N. Jha had succeeded in rewarding most of his supporters by taking them in the Ministry. Even then, in an obvious bid to meet the ambitions of some more of them, he appointed six Parliamentary Secretaries from his faction. The Table VII shows the factional position of the Ministry.

76. Search Light, March 10 and 11, 1962.
77. Ibid., March 12, 1962.
TABLE VII

Showing caste/community, region and factional allegiance of the members of the second B.N. Jha Ministry, 1962.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Faction</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CABINET MINISTERS**

**North Plains**

**Deep Narain Singh (MLA)**
  - Caste: Rajput
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Hajipur (Muzaffarpur)

**Bhola Paswan Shastri (MLA)**
  - Caste: Dusad (SC)
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Banmakhi (Purnea)

**Bir Chand Patel (MLA)**
  - Caste: Kurmi
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Lalganj South (Muzaffarpur)

**Mahesh Prasad Sinha (MLA)**
  - Caste: Bhumihar
  - Faction: K.B.-M.P.
  - Constituency: Sakra (Muzaffarpur)

**Harinath Mishra (MLA)**
  - Caste: Maithil
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Bahera (Darbhanga)

**South Plains**

**B.N. Jha (MLA)**
  - Caste: Brahmin
  - Factional Leader: Rajmahal (Santhal Paragnas)

**Satyendra Narain Sinha (MLA)**
  - Caste: Rajput
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Nabinagar (Gaya)

**Badrinath Verma (MLA)**
  - Caste: Kayastha
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Patna South (Patna)

**Abdul Qayum Ansari (MLA)**
  - Caste: Muslim
  - Faction: K.B.-M.P.
  - Constituency: Dehri-on-Sone (Shahabad)

**K.B. Sahay (MLA)**
  - Caste: Kayastha
  - Faction: K.B.-M.P.
  - Constituency: Patna West (Patna)

**Chotanagpur**

**Shayama Charan Tubid (MLC)**
  - Caste: Adivasi (ST)
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Local bodies (Chotanagpur)

**Jaipal Singh Yadav (MP)**
  - Caste: Adivasi (ST)
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Ranchi West (Chotanagpur)

**MINISTERS OF STATE**

**North Plains**

**Daroga Prasad Rai (MLA)**
  - Caste: Yadav
  - Faction: B.N. Jha
  - Constituency: Parasa (Saran)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rirish Tiwari (MLA)</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Manjhi (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nand Kumar Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Kharagpur (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A.M. Noor (MLC)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEPUTY MINISTERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdul Ghafoor (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Gopalganj (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamal Deo Narain Sinha (MLA)</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>K.B.-M.P.</td>
<td>Purba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahdeo Mahto (MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>K.B.-M.P.</td>
<td>Samastipur East (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambika Sharan Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Arrah Muffasal (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokesh Nath Jha</td>
<td>Maithila</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungeri Lal (MLC)</td>
<td>Dusad (SC)</td>
<td>K.B.-M.P.</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>MLA</th>
<th>Region</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baleshwor Ram (MLA)</td>
<td>Dusad (SC)</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Balsinghsarai (Larbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baidya Nath Mehta (MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Kishanpur (Saharsa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumar Lal Baitha (MLA)</td>
<td>Dhobi (SC)</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Narpatganj (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunitra Devi (MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Arrah (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manorama Pande (MLA)</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Bikramganj (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardeo Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>B.N. Jha</td>
<td>Gaya Muffasal (Gaya)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factional Position

The dissidents were given three berths in the Cabinet and three of their supporters were appointed as Deputy Ministers. None of their camp followers were taken as Parliamentary Secretaries. K.B. Sahay, one of the two important leaders of the rival faction, was appointed as a member of the Cabinet on June 29, 1962 along with Shyama Sharan Tubid (three and a half months after the formation of the Ministry. B.N. Jha further expanded his Cabinet and appointed Jaipal Singh on September 3, 1962 after the merger of the Jharkhand Party with the Congress. He did this to consolidate his position in the Congress Legislature party.

Caste-wise Position

Though B.N. Jha had forged an alliance with the Backward Castes, his Ministry was again packed with Forward Castes men. There were fourteen Ministers belonging to the Forward and five to the Backward Castes. The Scheduled Castes had four men in the Jha Ministry (one Cabinet, one Deputy Minister and two Parliamentary Secretaries). The Scheduled Tribes had two men (both Cabinet Ministers) in the Council of Ministers, while the Muslims had three berths.

80. Ibid.
Among the Forward Castes there were five Brahmins, five Rajputs, three Kayasthas and one Bhumihar. This was the first occasion after S.K. Sinha's death that Bhumihars were reduced to such a miserable minority, while B.N. Jha had raised the strength of his own Castemen from four to five and that of Kayasthas from two to three. Among the backward Castes, Kurmis were given a place of importance by being included in the Cabinet. One Yadav was made a Minister of State. There were three Koiris (one Deputy Minister and two Parliamentary Secretaries). Among the Scheduled Castes, Dusadhs were given three posts (one Cabinet, one Deputy Minister and one Parliamentary Secretary) and Dhobis one (Parliamentary Secretary).

Region-wise Analysis

For the first time in the history of the Congress Ministries, members from the Chotanagpur region were included in the Cabinet. Its two representatives were made Cabinet Ministers. The North Plains were again given the highest number of seats in the Ministry. There were thirteen Ministers (five Cabinet Ministers, two Ministers of State, three Deputy Ministers and three Parliamentary Secretaries) belonging to this region. The South Plains got ten berths (five Cabinet, one Minister of State, one Deputy Minister and three Parliamentary Secretaries).

The K.B. Sahay Ministry

Leadership Contest

Following B.N. Jha's resignation in 1963 under the Kamraj
Plan, a fresh Contest for Chief Ministership occurred between K.B. Sahay - M.P. Sinha - S.N. Sinha combine and B.N. Jha faction. Bir Chand Patel, a Backward Caste (Kurmi) lieutenant of Jha, lost the contest to K.B. Sahay, who became the third Chief Minister of Bihar since India became a Republic. There were some striking features of this contest. For the first time in the factional history of the Bihar Congress, Kayasthas, Bhumihars and Rajputs came together to defeat B.N. Jha faction. In the contest, members of the Backward Castes/Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes were sharply divided. R.L. Singh Yadav, Leader of Yadavas, and S.K. Bag, Leader of Scheduled Tribe, were with Kayastha - Bhumihar - Rajput alliance. The B.N. Jha faction was further isolated by the desertation of Bhola Paswan Shastri, an influential Harijan leader of Bihar, who conveyed his support to Sahay through A.A.M. Noor, an influential Muslim supporter of B.N. Jha.

Ministry-Making

Factional warfare started over the formation of the Ministry, but the firm handling by the Congress High Command saved the situation. In view of the past activities of the factional leaders of the Bihar Congress, the High Command was seized of the problem from the very beginning. It invited both group leaders for a discussion on the formation of the

Ministry and warned them that if they failed to agree, the CPB would prepare the list. In spite of K.B. Sahay's insistence on 27, the High Command decided to have a 20-member Ministry consisting only of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State. Keeping in mind the High Command's attitude, K.B. Sahay and Bir Chand Patel met twice on October 1, 1963, first at the residence of K.K. Shah, the AICC General Secretary, and then at the residence of Lal Bahadur Shastri, and prepared an agreed list. The Ministers took their oath on October 2, 1963.

From Table VIII, given below, it is clear that only two Ministers were taken from the B.N. Jha faction. No Minister of State was included from his faction, though Bir Chand Patel had put forward the claim of three Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. The rest of ministerial berths was shared by three leaders of the Kayastha - Bhumihar - Rajput combine. However, K.B. Sahay took away six Cabinet and three Minister of State posts, this being the highest number of berths taken by any of the group leaders.

82. Indian Nation, September 29, 30 and October 1, 1963.
84. Ibid., p. 284.
86. Search Light, October 1, 1963.
TABLE VIII

Showing caste/community, region and factional allegiance of the members of the K.B. Sahay Ministry, 1963.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Faction</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CABINET MINISTERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.P. Sinha (MLA)</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Factional leader Sakra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of Kayastha-Bhumihar- (Muzaffarpur)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bir Chand Patel</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Factional leader Lalganj South</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>of Z.N. Jha (Muzaffarpur) group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harinath Mishra</td>
<td>Maithil</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Bahera West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA)</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.B. Sahay (MLA)</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>Factional leader Patna West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of Kayastha-Bhumihar-(Patna) Rajput</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.N. Sinha (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Nabinagar</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Gaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Sumitra Devi</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>K.B. Sahay</td>
<td>Arrah</td>
</tr>
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<td>(MLA)</td>
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<td>(Shahabad)</td>
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<td>Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav Yadav (MLA)</td>
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<td>K.B. Sahay</td>
<td>Paliganj</td>
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<td>Shushil Kumar Bage</td>
<td>Adivasi (ST)</td>
<td>K.B. Sahay</td>
<td>Kolibera</td>
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<td>(MLA)</td>
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<td>(Ranchi)</td>
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<td>Dusadh (SC)</td>
<td>M.P. Sinha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jafar Imam (MLC)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>K.B. Sahay</td>
<td>Region not known</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MINISTERS OF STATE

North Plains

Dyamarlal Baitha (MLA) Dhobi (SC) S.N. Sinha Narpatganj (Purnea)
Nawal kishor Prasad Sinha (MLA) Bhumiwar M.P. Sinha Sahebganj (Muzaffarpur)
Sahdeo Mahto (MLA) Koiri M.P. Sinha Samastipur East (Larbhanga)
Baleshwar Ram (MLA) Dusadh(SC) M.P. Sinha Dalsingh Sarai (Darbhanga)
Girish Tiwari (MLA) Brahmin K.B. Sahay Manjhi (Saran)

South Plains

Ambika Sharan Singh (MLA) Rajput S.N. Sinha Arrah Muffasal (Shahabad)
Raghvendra Narain Singh (MLA) Rajput S.N. Sinha Barhar (Bhogalpur)
Bariar Hembrum (MLA) Adivasi(ST) K.B. Sahay Shikaripara (Santhal Paragnas)
Shiva Shankar Singh (MLA) Bhumihar K.B. Sahay Sheikhpura (Monghyr)

87. (a) Name and membership of the Legislature of the Ministers, Bihar Civil List, September, 1964, pp.1-2.
(b) Caste and factional allegiance, Bameshwar Singh, op. cit., p. 159.
(c) Constituencies, Vide Supra, Chapter II, footnote 78 (c).
Caste-wise Analysis

This Ministry, unlike the past, was not dominated by the Forward Castemen. On the contrary, the Backward Castes had increased their strength considerably in the Cabinet, which rose to three, one short of the Forward Caste's strength. One of their men was included as a Minister of State. There were nine Forward Castes men (four Cabinet and five Ministers of State) in the K.B. Sahay Ministry. Among them, three came each from Bhumihars and Rajputs, two from Brahmins and one from Kayasthas. Among the Backward Castes, one came each from Yadavas and Koiris and two from Kurmis. There were three Scheduled Caste men (one Dhobi and two Lusads) in the last undivided Congress Ministry. The Scheduled Tribes and the Muslims each had two members in the Ministry.

Region-wise Analysis

As regards regional representation in the Sahay Ministry, the South Plains had nine representatives, while the North Plains had eight men. The Chotanagpur belt had only one representative.

Observations

Thus, political expediency, guided by personal interests and ambitions was the main reason of the factional conflicts. This is indicated by the foregoing analysis of Ministry formation. From the above account, it seems clear that Upper Castes
did not form a single cohesive and coherent group. Each unit of the Upper Castes was serious contender for political power. Despite all this, there seems to have been an unwritten agreement among them to keep political power in their hands. The Upper Caste leaders of the main factions within Congress, who used to group and re-group among themselves, managed to keep real power away from the Backward Castes. It is among the Upper Castes that a major portion of political rewards in terms of political leadership was distributed. All Chief Ministers during the period belonged to Upper Castes. Though, B.N. Jha, to keep himself in power, had forged an alliance with the backward Caste men in the Legislature, it was K.B. Sahay, who brought them to the centre of power. While the former had included one man from these Castes in each of his two Cabinets, the latter had taken three of their men in the Cabinet and allotted a very important portfolio, PWl, to one of them. The Scheduled Castes and the Muslims continued to be in a better position. The Scheduled Tribes were given a place of honour as late as in 1962, when B.N. Jha formed his second Ministry. There was, thus, a shift in the direction of greater participation by the Backward Caste elites in the game of politics in Bihar.

Most of the members of the Ministries formed during this period came from the North Plains. But all the Chief
Ministers belonged to the South Plains. The latter continued to receive a fairly good number of ministerial berths. It is only the tribal belt of Chotanagpur, which continued to get the lowest number of berths in all the Ministries.
The Year 1967

The fourth General Elections, held in February 1967, proved to be a momentous year from the point of view of Indian political development. The results clearly showed that the hold of the monolithic Congress in a large number of states was greatly diminished. The defeat of the Congress Party and the emergence of a number of other political parties on the post-election scene, thus, provides a watershed in the post-independence Indian politics.

The Congress Party failed either to secure the requisite majority in Assemblies in various states or subsequently members elected on Congress tickets left the fold of the Congress to form splinter groups. What many observers had predicted for the fifth General Elections in 1972 happened in 1967. One party dominant system was not succeeded by two-party or three-party or multi-party system, but rather by a cross-party system of dubious value. Thus, after the 1967 General Elections, Indian politics centered a "second stage",

1. In 7 out of the 17 states - Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Madras (Now Tamil Nadu), Punjab, Rajasthan, Kerala (and later in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh for a short period) the Congress lost absolute majority.


3. Paul R. Brass, "Coalition Politics in North India", The American Political Science Review, Vol. 62, No. 4 (December, 1968), p. 1177. Brass considers 1964 as a first stage when the National Congress leadership handled smoothly for the first time the process of legitimizing democratic political authority, that is, transferring power from a charismatic leader to his successor within the dominant party.
concerned with the problems of transferring power from the previously dominant Congress Party to diverse parties and party coalitions in more than half of the Indian States. The Congress dominated party system was replaced, particularly in North India, by a highly complex system in which 'parties, factions and individuals' all played important roles according to the logic inherent in particular situations. The monopoly was broken and the 'market' was thrown open. As a result, the Opposition party managers entered the political market effectively for the first time and negotiated deals among themselves.

There were some other features of this competitive market. First, Coalition governments, which came into being in the aftermath of the fourth General Elections, were themselves small markets in which negotiations and bargaining continued unabated for ministerial and other profitable positions. Some Chief Ministers took the course of unending expansions of their Ministries. It is important to note that Congress

4. Ibid.

leaders in the States were also often preoccupied with similar adjustments within the Party. Secondly, the new tug of war between the Congress and the non-Congress sides introduced a pretty regular and continuous 'defectors' market. Thirdly, the market of politics was further expanded by the participation of new groups in the governments. Thus, it may be said that those who were gambling outside the market now shifted their stalls inside. Fourthly, by being in office these parties were confronted with new tensions and found new areas for negotiations. One of the areas of tensions existed between party's representatives in the government and another between the Central and State leaders. Fifthly, the political parties, placed in such a market, could do business only through manipulation, underhand tactics and high handed salesmanship, and gave party competition an unseemly form. Both the parties in office and those out of it played the toppling game by trading the legislators, who were open to easy inducements. This became instrumental in making a mockery of the electoral verdict as well as of the constitutional procedures for the establishment of governments.

**Congress Debacle in Bihar**

In Bihar the Congress was reduced, after the 1967

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Elections, to a minority in the State Assembly. At the same time it emerged as the largest single party in the Legislature. Table I shows the percentage of total votes and seats won by different political parties in the 1967 Elections for the Legislative Assembly in Bihar.

Bihar was the traditional stronghold of the Congress Party and as the Elections of 1967 approached, a few observers could suspect the Congress to lose. Inspite of the continuing decline in organizational cohesion and an intensification of internal factional strife, the Congress Party appeared to have strengthened its hold in Bihar after the 1962 Elections. It did so by the merger with the Congress Party of the Jharkhand Party of Adivasi and Christians in 1963 and of the Janata Party of the Raja of Ramgarh in May, 1966. Both these parties had strong support in the Chotanagpur region where the Congress following was thin.

However, on the eve of the Elections political trends in Bihar appeared to be hostile to the Congress Party. The Congress after nearly two decades as the dominant party with a virtual monopoly of governmental power had become soft, a house divided against itself, open to the charge of moving away from the people, of weak leadership (after Nehru), of corruption and of incompetence. The key factor responsible for the rout of the Congress Party is to be found in the 'breakdown of the Congress organization itself' and the


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Percentage of votes</th>
<th>Number of seats won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress Party</td>
<td>33.08</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samyukta Socialist Party(SSP)</td>
<td>17.62</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praja Socialist Party(PSP)</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh (JS)</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India(CPI)</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India(Marxist)</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Kranti Dal</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party of India(RPI)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.99</strong></td>
<td><strong>318</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. India, Election Commissioner: *Report on the Fourth General Elections in India, 1967, Vol. II (Statistical)*. Thirteen Independents were actually associated with the JKL. So, the real strength of the JKL immediately after the Elections was 26; *Indian Nation*, February 27, 1967.
consequent breach in the 'consensus' represented by the Congress.

There had already taken place a considerable 'loss of touch' with the people. 'Bread and butter' issues of daily importance were allowed to accumulate as the Congress rank and file was no longer performing its traditional role of carrying the grievances of the people at the lower levels into the Councils of the Government and the party. Lack of planning as regards availability of essential commodities, inefficient distribution of the same and the increasing greed of the middlemen were allowed to accumulate without a significant voice of protest from the Congressmen.

The consensus on which the party had built its foundations became weak and hesitant and its common idiom disappeared. The party had always lacked cohesion but what failed by 1967 was the working of its internal 'thermostat' by which the various forces at work were contained and overall balance maintained. With the passing away of skilled balancers at the top and with the High Command itself considerably divided, the factional structure of the Congress Party developed into an endless struggle for power. This resulted in one of the

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
greatest failures of the Congress Party, namely its inability to build a viable mass organization, consisting of an effective hierarchy of party cadres and active channels of communication with the various strata of the population. The party appeared to be too preoccupied with internal politics at all levels to give any attention to a purposive organization for its mass campaigns.

One of the most important manifestations of the Congress Party's organizational failure was to be found in the break up of the party itself. The old process of forming 'dissident groups' within the party or of organizational versus ministerial 'wings' was replaced by breakaway of large numbers of Congressmen from the party and their active association with new parties. The formation of the Jan Kranti Lal in Bihar was a major step in the slow disintegration of the Congress Party's all-encompassing character.

Caste-based and personality oriented factions and infighting had been the highlight of the Congress politics, but it became worse and took an ugly shape at the time of the Elections. The main factions within the Congress Party before the elections were those led by (i) the Chief Minister K.B. Sahay, (ii) the former Chief Minister B.N. Jha, (iii) the Irrigation Minister M.P. Sinha and (iv) the Education Minister S.N. Sinha. It was the internal 'competition and bargaining between groups in semi-institutionalized form', which was

responsible to a very great extent of the 1967 Congress debacle of the Congress Party in Bihar. These four leaders, who were aspiring to become Chief Minister after the elections, contrived to get defeated as many as possible of the Congress candidates supporting their rivals. It appeared that each leader was more concerned with reducing the strength of his rival than with the defeat of those who were opposing Congress candidates. Even S.N. Sinha had to concede that it was not "so much the Opposition forces which have defeated the Congress but factions inside the Congress itself". It was also alleged that Congress group leaders gave financial assistance to Opposition candidates in the constituencies where Congress candidates were not to their liking. According to B.N. Jha, "the party election fund has been used to sabotage the election of the Congress candidates".

The bitterness of factional politics increased to such an extent that the PEC could not recommend an agreed list of prospective candidates to the Central Election Committee (CEC). The manner in which the CEC selected the candidates only made the situation worse. A little before the elections, on December 31, 1966 the group led by Mahamaya Prasad Sinha and the Raja

of Ramgarh rebelled against the dominant K.B. Sahay group, left the Congress and formed a new party named Jan Kranti Dal. The situation in the Congress Party on the eve of the elections was aptly described by the Editor of Indian Nation: "And where was the Congress in Bihar on the eve of the General Elections? There were the majority and minority groups with a number of sub-groups..." Dissident Congressmen also played an important part in the weakening of the party at the polls. The Congressmen, who were denied tickets, had no interest in the electoral victory of their party. On the contrary, they did everything to defeat the official candidates. Thus, weakened by the pre-election dissertations by about 3,000 disgruntled applicants and aspirants for Congress tickets, the Congress Party found its capacity to organize its election campaign in a coordinated and effective manner greatly diminished.

The Congress Party betrayed a wide gap between its profession and practice. "While professing to be dedicated to the building of a Socialist society, it has provided refuge to scoundrels and agents of Big Business and foreign interests inimical to the common people of this country, and today these

elements who have nothing in common with the kind of Congress, which in the public mind was associated with Gandhiji and Nehru, are the dominant factors in the higher echelons of the organization*. This was also confessed by the Congress President, K. Kamraj, who said in 1966 that, "We have been talking of Socialism without doing anything substantial about it".

The unhealthy reliance on the 'politics of patronage' for too long a time has led to fixed centres of power in the form of Ministers, party managers and regional 'bosses' against whom popular resentment found expression in the elections. Alienation of public opinion from the Congress Party and the tendency to take the people for granted were themselves a result of lack of a direct mass base for the party and its excessive reliance on informal networks of patronage. The party failed to maintain its traditional linkages with strategic sectors of the population such as the minority communities, labour, the youth and the students, the economically deprived castes in the villages and the lower middle classes in urban areas— all these just at a time when the logic of economic development was leading to increasing hardships and an


Increasing sense of frustration. Thus, the tarnished image of the Congress Party resulting from its continuing dependence on mere patronage relationships on the one hand and the loss of unity and will on the part of the Central leadership on the other, contributed considerably to the fragmentation of the party at the time of the elections.

In spite of all its crises and divisions, the Congress would not have fared so badly had the Opposition groups and parties not been successful in 1967 in forming anti-Congress coalitions. For the first time, some important Opposition parties showed resistance and the ability to forge a United Front against the Congress. The father of the new strategy of non-Congressism was the SSP leader Ram Manohar Lohia, who in an obvious bid to match the 'catch-all' character of the Congress Party put forward the thesis of a 'catch-all' Opposition irrespective of ideologies and policies for the purpose of dislodging the Congress from power. In pursuance of this strategy, the SSP, the CPI, the CPI(M), the RSP, the Jharkhand Party and the Socialist Unity Centre (SUC) formed a United Opposition Front to make adjustments to avoid electoral contest among themselves. Consequently the multi-cornered 'contests,

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22. Rajni Kothari, op. cit., p. 16.

which had greatly benefitted the Congress Party in the previous elections by dividing Opposition votes, were in 1967 greatly reduced.

Apart from these general factors, there were also certain immediate reasons which brought about the rout of the Congress Party. The economic situations in the country had worsened after the wars with China in 1962 and Pakistan in 1965. It was further aggravated in Bihar by a wide-spread famine in 1966-67 causing misery and starvation to the people. The prices of food grains and other essential commodities soared high. The Government employees, particularly the non-gazetted ones, launched an agitation for an increase in their dearness allowances. The newly formed United Opposition Front organized 'Bihar Bund' on August 9, 1966, and staged successful demonstrations throughout the State to express their public support to the employees. The demonstration in Patna, in particular, was so successful that it unnerved the Government. As a result three prominent Opposition leaders, who were later to become Ministers in the First United Front Government - Karpoori Thakur, Ramanand Tiwari (both SSP) and Chandra Shekhar Singh (CPI) were deliberately and mercilessly lathicharged at a public meeting at the Patna Gandhi Maidan.

The police firings upon students at Muzaffarpur, Patna, Samastipur and some other places in December, 1966 and January 1967 and the arrogant attitude adopted by the Chief Minister
K.B. Sahay, played an important part in the humiliation of the Government at the polls. The students launched a State-wide agitation to expose further the alleged 'cruelty', high-handedness' and 'misdeeds' of the Government. With the universities, colleges and schools throughout the State closed 'indefinitely' on account of 'disturbances', the students fanned out of the educational institutions and turned themselves into the vanguard of the 'Defeat the Congress and Save Democracy' movement. On January 8, 1967, a largely attended convention of University teachers and students held at Muzaffarpur resolved to mobilize the students and teachers against the Congress in the ensuing elections. The Secondary School Teachers Association, which had already been under the influence of the CPI, joined hands with the forces opposed to the Congress.

Thus, just on the eve of the elections, feeling of dissatisfaction against the Congress was fast spreading. For the common people the Congress Party had become, as pointed out earlier, a symbol of corruption, casteism, favouritism, inefficiency and repression. Monopoly of power had lulled them

24. Ibid., p. 72.
into a false sense of security while intrigue and incompetence within the Cabinet had seriously crippled the administrative machinery. Thus, the loss of fervour among Congressmen, lust for power and the sordid game of power politics, the non-too-satisfactory showing of the successive Congress Governments, the gradual alienation of Congressmen from the people, corruption among quite a few Congressmen (including ex-Ministers) were the factors that went against the Congress.

**Emergence of the First United Front Government**

It is in this background that the formation of the new United Front (UF) Government can be studied. In the elections, the Congress Party suffered major reverses and could secure only 128 out of 318 Assembly seats. The Congress had been losing 30 seats per General Elections, but this time it lost about 60. In terms of seats secured, the most spectacular performance had been that of the SSP which increased its strength nearly ten times from seven in the outgoing Assembly to 68 seats in the new one. The Jan Sangh which had only 3 seats in the old House could now boast of 26. The Communists had

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doubled their strength from 12 to 28 - CPI 24 and the CPI(M) 4. The rebel Congressmen (JKD) had bagged 26. The PSP had not fared well. Its leaders Basawan Singh and Suraj Narain Singh lost, while its strength came down from 29 to 18. But this was due to the merger of a big chunk of the former PSP workers under the leadership of Ramanand Tiwari and Karpoori Thakur. The strength of the Swatantra Party was also reduced from 60 to 3, but this was again because its founder in the State, the Raja of Ramgarh Kamakhya Narain Singh had already reduced its positive strength a great deal by joining the Congress. However, the Independents had increased their strength from 12 to 20.

The results of the elections were, thus, indecisive. The Congress was defeated but not decisively beaten. While losing the majority of seats in the Assembly it managed to win them in the Lok Sabha. Further, no party opposed to the Congress was in a position to form a government on its own. Moreover, neither a combination of the Left parties nor a combination of Right parties were in a position to do so. Thus, the elections "have produced a mixed bag altogether. It is amply clear that the electorate does not want the Congress. It is not very clear what it does want". The people seemed to have worked under

31. Previous strength of political parties in the Assembly, Navneeth, op. cit., p. 1312; Chetakar Jha, op. cit., p.145.
32. Sunday Standard (New Delhi), March 12, 1967.
the naive understanding that once they defeated the Congress everything will be alright. Hence, they did not bother to decide the question as to which party or combination of parties should replace the Congress.

Despite being the largest single party, the Congress was unable to form a government due to internal bickering, which continued unabated. The Governor had first called upon M.P. Sinha, leader of the CLP, to form a Ministry. Although M.P. Sinha was eager to form a Ministry, he could not do so, since B.N. Jha, who was defeated by one vote by M.P. Sinha in the contest for CLP, along with 34 other Congress legislators, made it clear in a joint statement to the press that if M.P. Sinha had any idea of forming a government, they would not support him. S.N. Sinha had also written to the Governor in a similar vein. This was revealed by the Governor, Ananth Sayanam Ayyangar, himself in his farewell speech at the Gandhi Maidan, Patna, on November 30, 1967. This provided an opportune moment to the parties opposed to the Congress to coalesce and provide an alternative popular non-Congress Government. The SSP, as the largest single non-Congress party in the Assembly and also the most vocal exponent of non-Congressism took the initiative in forming a non-Congress coalition. Bhupesh Gupta

33. Indian Nation, March 5, 1967.
and Atal Behari Vajpayee, leaders of the CPI and the Jan Sangh respectively also contributed to the efforts of making coalition Ministry. Ultimately, a United Front - Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) - with all the nine parties of the erstwhile Opposition and of some Independents was formed on the basis of common minimum programme. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, Chairman of the JKD, and Karpoori Thakur of the SSP were chosen leader and Deputy leader, respectively.

However, the matter of the formation of a Coalition Government consisting of such political parties which had till yesterday refused to cooperate against the Congress for ideological reasons, got into rough weather. This was caused by the uncompromising attitude of the Jan Sangh and of the CPI and hesitation on the part of the PSP. Subsequently, however, they changed their stand. In addition to the 'desire of office',


37. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha was a proven giant-killer. In 1957, he took up the challenge of the powerful Minister Mahesh Prasad Sinha and humbled him in his home town, Muzaffarpur. In 1967, he opposed K.B. Sahay in Patna West constituency and defeated him by almost the same margin - 20,000 votes - by which K.B. Sahay was elected to the Assembly in 1962 from the same constituency. In 1972 Assembly elections, he defeated another giant, Krishna Kant Singh, a prominent leader of the Congress(O) in his own den, Goreakothi Assembly constituency in Saran District. In 1977 Parliamentary Elections he humbled another giant, Ramavtar Shastri of the CPI in Patna Parliamentary constituency.

38. Indian Nation, March 1, 1967.
there were four main considerations which influenced the decisions of the parties to coalesce - Popular demand for such coalition, the abilities of the parties to formulate minimum common programme, pragmatic and accommodative tendencies in the parties and the recognition of the necessity for adjustment to local conditions.

**Bargainings in the Formation of the Coalition**

The formation of the Coalition Government was not an easy task. It entailed hard political bargainings and hectic behind the scene activities. The SSP, the CPI and the JKD, no doubt, had formed a loose front to fight the elections, but they had never visualized that their representatives would share governmental power. The Jan Sangh and the Communist Party, which had fought each other in the elections, could not be thought of as comrades in a Coalition. But they realised that if they did anything to jeopardize the chances of the formation of a non-Congress government, they would be dubbed as disruptors by their electoral allies. They would also be accused by the people, who had voted for them and against the Congress.

**Samyukta Socialist Party**

It was only the SSP, which under the leadership of Ram Manohar Lohia, had persistently called for such an alliance

before and after the elections to defeat and remove the Congress from power. It, therefore, needed no justification in joining the proposed Coalition. The party was entitled as the largest constituent to the leadership of the Front, but it sacrificed even this to ensure the formation of the Coalition Government.

Communist Party of India

The CPI was also anxious to overcome any difficulty that might come in the way of a Coalition. It was ready even to stay out of the Government if it would accommodate the Jan Sangh in the Ministry provided the latter agreed to join it on the basis of an agreed minimum programme. Bhupesh Gupta, who was summoned by his comrades to Patna, also accepted the force of the argument that any party, that stood in the way of anti-Congress Coalition, would be repudiated by a large section of its supporters. Ram Manohar Lohia, the most prominent and active exponent of a purely non-Congress Front, was reported to have said that 'those who do not positively join the Coalition, when the offer is made, might be described as narrow-minded and sectarian lot.'


42. Ibid.
Jan Sangh

The Jan Sangh leaders were also not far behind in realizing that slightest gesture of non-cooperation would be unpopular not only among the political parties, but also among the masses of the people. Despite the contrary view of Thakur Prasad, President of the State Party, Atal Behari Bajpayee was of the view that keeping out of Coalition Government would amount to applying brakes to what he called "Democratic revolution brewing out in the country". The party had another reason also for joining the Coalition Government, for if it did not do so, the SSP in U.P., where the Jan Sangh was the largest Opposition party, would not extend its support to the Coalition.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist)

The CPI(M) was also favourably disposed to a Coalition making. It signed the programme and pledged all support to the new government but did not join it because of the inclusion of the Jan Sangh as a full partner. As a matter of fact, the leaders of the Bihar Unit of the CPI(M) were, as reported the New Age, ready to join the Ministry but at the last moment the General Secretary of their party, P. Sundarayya asked them to stay out of the Government.

43. Indian Nation, April 24, 1967.
44. Haridwar Rai and Jawaharlal Pandey, op.cit., p. 63.
45. Indian Nation, March 5, 1967.
Swatantra

The Swatantra was ready to join any non-Congress Government, but having fared badly in the elections had no significant say in the formation of the Government. It was rather gratified that its cooperation was being sought.

Jan Kranti Lal

The JKL was not only ready to join the Coalition Government, but also played an important role in the making of the Ministry. Due largely to the shrewdness of the Raja of Ramgarh and the personality of Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, it succeeded in snatching the leadership of the United Front from the SSP.

Praja Socialist Party

The PSP, in its turn, showed considerable ambivalence before deciding to join the UF Government. However, they finally joined on the ground that by keeping out of the Government it would simply cut off from the people and be charged with helping the Congress to come to power. An SSP Minister commented that "they (PSP leaders) thought that they would be nowhere if they went against the wishes of the people, who wanted a non-Congress Government. However, their attitude

47. Haridwar Rai and Jawaharlal Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
caused considerable delay in their joining the Ministry.

Thus, the non-Congress parties came together to form the first non-Congress SVD Government in Bihar under the pressure of public opinion. This was reflected in the reply of a Jan Sangh Minister, who on being asked how long he thought the non-Congress Government would last, said, "I think it will last because we all are afraid of this public opinion ... No party will dare to take the blame of deserting the Government". Moreover, the party leaders asserted that no compromise on basic principles was involved in the formation of the non-Congress Coalition Government, because all parties had agreed upon a minimum common programme, which did not go against their ideologies. Ram Manohar Lohia also believed that the non-Congress Coalition Government need not have a common political ideology and likemindedness but rather a few common policies. This fact was clear from the comments of the two most sharply opposed partners in the Coalition - the Jan Sangh and the Communists. "People wanted an alternative to Congress. We prepared an agreed programme. Keeping our respective ideologies apart, we decided to implement the programme".

50. The PSP joined the Ministry on March 15, 1967, while the members belonging to other parties were sworn-in on March 5, 1967.


With the exception of one point, no substantial disagreements arose initially on any of the points in the 33-point minimum programme. Recognition of Urdu as the second official language of Bihar was the only issue on which there was disagreement among the Coalition partners. Several partners in the Coalition Government felt themselves committed by their previous statements to including this point in the common programme. But the Jan Sangh refused to commit itself to this point and submitted a note of dissent at the meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Ur which finalised the 33-point common programme on March 3, 1967. The Jan Sangh leaders were prepared to make some concessions toward the encouragement of the Urdu language, but they were unwilling to provide symbolic satisfaction to Muslim minority of having Urdu declared as the second official language. However, the inclusion of this point in the common programme did not prevent the Jan Sangh from joining the Coalition, nor did it prevent other parties from joining hands with the Jan Sangh. Thus, the party leaders adopted superficially a "pragmatic and accommodative attitudes" as they claimed, in the formation of the Coalition Government. A Jan Sangh Minister voiced this attitude: "So, all the Right and the Left have come together. We are neither Right nor Left.

54. Ibid., p. 1180.


We approach the problems straightway”.

**Bickerings in the Congress Party**

It is worth mentioning that the continuous bickerings within the Congress also negatively helped the formation of the non-Congress Coalition. A new alignment of groups had taken place in the Congress. The K.B. Sahay faction joined hands with M.P. Sinha while S.N. Sinha joined B.J. Jha camp. The election of M.P. Sinha as the leader of the CLP by defeating B.N. Jha by one vote (97 to 96) also strengthened the ‘internal cohesion’ of the non-Congress Coalition. If Jha had won the leadership, he would have been in a stronger position because of his close links with some of the leaders of the JKD.

According to Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, B.N. Jha was to resign from the Congress a few days after the former’s resignation, but subsequently he changed his mind. He had earlier counselled Mahamaya Prasad Sinha to resign from the Congress. It was, perhaps, because of his close links with the JKD leaders that B.N. Jha had given his blessings to the Mahamaya Ministry.

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57. Ibid.
This became clear when five Congress defectors, who till the other day had been ardent supporters of B.N. Jha, were made Ministers in the Mahamaya Ministry in the first week of September, 1967. It might be that because of his sympathetic attitude, the UF Government did not constitute a Commission of Inquiry against B.N. Jha and his group.

Composition of the Ministry

On March 5, 1967, Bihar politics entered the second phase - the phase of Coalition politics - when a non-Congress Ministry headed by Mahamaya Prasad Sinha was sworn-in. It consisted of fourteen Ministers - eleven Cabinet Ministers and three Ministers of State - to begin with. Subsequently, on March 16, 1967, four Ministers of Cabinet rank and three Ministers of State were sworn-in, thus raising the strength of the Ministry to twenty-one. The following Table II shows the party-wise position of the UF Ministry as on March 5 and after its expansion on March 16, 1967.

From the Table it is clear that no nominee of the PSP was sworn-in on March 5, 1967, because the party by then had not taken a final decision about joining the Ministry. Similarly, the SSP could not decide on all of its nominees to be represented in the Ministry. However, the selection of Ministers proved to be a hard task. The individual constituents had to take into

63. Indian Nation, March 6, 1967.

64. Ibid., March 17, 1967.
# TABLE II

Showing Party-wise Break-up of the Coalition Ministry as on March 5, 1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Ministers of State</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>JKD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
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Party-wise Break-up after Expansion on March 16, 1967

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Ministers of State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JKD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Indian Nation*, March 6 and 17, 1967.
account such conflicting claims as those of 'seniority, caste, region and political expediency' before taking final decisions. This was particularly the case with the SSP, because it was keen on appointing a woman, a Harijan, and an Adivasi as Ministers besides giving weightage to Backward communities in pursuance of its policy. It was, however, not averse to accommodating members of the Upper Castes lest it should alienate politically conscious and economically advanced section of the society. Consequently, the selection of the names proved difficult. There was disagreement between Ramanand Tiwari, the Chairman of the State party, and Karpoor Thakur, Deputy Chief Minister. Madhu Limaye had to intervene to break the deadlock on the question of nominating candidates for Speakership and the Ministry. However, Ramanand Tiwari was not happy with the decision because he was pressing for the name of Ramakant Jha for inclusion in the Ministry. Lohia also criticised the selection of the Ministers in the SSP quota on the ground that it did not conform to the accepted policy of the party. In his opinion, the party should have given first preference to the weaker sections of the society, namely women, Harijans and Adivasis. The JKD had no such problems. It was a 'one-man-show'

65. Haridwar Rai and Jawaharial Pandey, op.cit., p. 66.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., June 3, 1967.
and even Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, the Chairman of the party, had to play the second fiddle. The selection of the nominees of the Jan Sangh, the CPI and the PSP appeared to be smooth as they were comparatively disciplined parties. The PSP, however, had some initial difficulty in the selection of its nominees, but it succeeded in overcoming it because of the successful efforts made by the national leaders of the party.

In the context of the Ministry formation, it is significant that the Leader of the Front had to leave the selection of his colleagues to the individual partners of the Coalition. This was because the selection of the Leader itself was the result of hard political bargainings. It was mainly owing to the insistence of the Jan Sangh, JKDF and PSP and the positive role played by Ram Manohar Lohia that Mahamaya Prasad Sinha was preferred to Karpoori Thakur. Initially some sort of ratio was fixed for the selection of Ministers, though it was not strictly followed in practice. After some months, the ratio was completely ignored in view of constant threats to the stability of the Government. The expansion of the Ministry then became a convenient means to keep the Front in power by giving ministerial berths to the defectors. Again, in order to appease the unwilling and hesitant partners, like the PSP, some weightage had to be given to them.

70. Haridwar Rai and Jawaharlal Pandey, op. cit., p. 67.

71. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, op. cit., p. 6; Statesman (Calcutta), March 4, 1967.
Party-wise Analysis

From Table II, it is evident that the SSP could get 8 seats in the Government - 6 Cabinet rank and 2 Ministers of State. The JKL had 3 Ministers of Cabinet rank including the Chief Minister, and 1 Minister of State. The Jan Sangh, the CPI and the PSP had 2 Ministers each of Cabinet rank and 1 Minister each of State rank. The PSP got a weightage as a result of protracted bargaining. It secured as many ministerial berths as the Jan Sangh and the CPI, while it had the strength of 18 only in the Assembly as compared to 26 of the Jan Sangh and 24 of the CPI. The PSP got further weightage when one more of its nominees was taken as a Minister of State on November 19, 1967.

It is also interesting to note that the first United Front Government of Bihar was expanded five times during its spell of 10 months and 20 days on March 6, March 16, August 11, September 9 and November 19, 1967. Consequently, allocation of portfolios was also made six times - on March 8 and 22, April 4 and 10, November 5, 1967 and on January 3, 1968.

As in the selection of Ministers, the Chief Minister had no say at all in the allocation of portfolios. He had to

72. Indian Nation, March 6, 17, August 12, September 10, and November 20, 1967.
74. Indian Nation, April 11, 1967.
agree to the demands of almost all Ministers in the Cabinet. He had to yield Finance and Education to Karpoori Thakur. Chandra Shekhar Singh was not prepared to have portfolios other than Electricity and Irrigation, the departments held by his late father Ram Charitra Singh. He wanted Education too, but Karpoori Thakur was not ready to part with this department. Indradeep Sinha wanted Revenue and the Chief Minister had to agree. He had to allocate Agriculture and Cooperative to Jan Sangh Ministers. Karpoori Thakur, along with some other SSP leaders, tried hardest that Police (General) Department should be given to Ramanand Tiwari. The Chief Minister resisted for sometime on the plea that he was directly responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the State. But, ultimately, he had to yield to the pressure. Bhola Prasad Singh was the only Minister, who was not given Justice Department because of the strong opposition of Thakur Prasad of the Jan Sangh. Thakur Prasad was present along with Indradeep Sinha and Chandra Shekhar Singh (both CPI), Karpoori Thakur and Bhola Prasad Singh of the SSP at the time of allocation of portfolios. The Ministry had to face a mini crisis caused by the distribution of portfolios. The above mentioned Ministers urged the Chief Minister that the Raja of Ramgarh should not be allotted the Department of Mines and Minerals. But the Raja threatened that he would resign from the Ministry and withdraw support unless he was given those same departments and his younger brother, Basant Narain Singh, the Department of Forests. The

crisis was averted when he and his younger brother were given the said departments.

It would be instructive to analyse the UF Ministry from the caste and urban/rural points of view. The analysis is presented in Table III.

From the Table it is evident that out of 21 Ministers, only 3 were the members of the Upper House, Legislative Council of the Bihar Legislature. They all were members of the Cabinet. However, they were Ministers not because they were members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) and that the Council should also be represented in the Ministry, but because they held important positions in their respective parties. Two members of the Cabinet were members of the Parliament. Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal (SSP) was a member of the Lok Sabha from Madhepura in Saharsa district. He had come to Patna to finalise the names of the SSP nominees but managed to include his own name in the list and preferred to stay on in the State politics as a Minister inspite of the opposition of the SSP Central leaders, in general, and Lohia in particular. Later on, he became one of the major factors in the downfall of the UF Ministry. Basant Narain Singh was also a member of the Lok Sabha but resigned his seat in the Parliament to become a Minister in the State. For continuing in the Cabinet beyond a period

77. Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 313; Mahendra P. Singh, op. cit., p. 80.
TABLE III

Showing caste/community, membership, constituency(region) and urban/rural base of the members of the UF Ministry, 1967.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Area, etc.</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CABINET MINISTERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karpoori Thakur</td>
<td>Nayee</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Tajpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, SSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Larbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamakhya Narin Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Jalaipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, JKD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Sheikhar Singh</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Barauni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, CPI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Madhepura</td>
<td>(Saharsa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MP, SSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasibur Rahman</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Amour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, PSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahamaya Prasad Sinha</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Patna West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, JKL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramanand Tiwari</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Shahpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, SSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vijay Kumar Mitra</td>
<td>Behari-Bengali</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, JS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Deo Mahto</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Patna East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, JS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapildeo Singh</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Barahia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, SSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shri Krishna Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Chakai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MLA, SSP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chhotanagpur</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basant Narain Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Hazaribagh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MP, JKD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Hazaribagh)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regions Not Known

Indradeep Sinha  
(MLC, CPI)  
Bhumihar  
-

Basawan Singh  
(MLC, PSP)  
Bhumihar  
-

Bhola Prasad Singh  
(MLC, SSP)  
Kurmi  
-

MINISTERS OF STATE

North Plains

Tej Narain Jha  
(MLA, CPI)  
Maithil Brahmin  
Rural  
Benipatti  
(Barbhanga)

Sabhapati Singh  
(MLA, SSP)  
Rajput  
Rural  
Baikunthpur  
(Saran)

Ramapati Singh  
(MLA, PSP)  
Rajput  
Rural  
Patahi  
(Champaran)

South Plains

Mahabir Paswan  
(MLA, JLD)  
Scheduled Caste  
(Rusadh)  
Punpun

Upendra Nath Varma  
(MLA, SSP)  
Koiri  
Rural  
Konch  
(Gaya)

Chotanagpur

Rudra Pratap Sarangi Oriya Brahmin  
(MLA, JS)  
Rural  
Saraikela  
(Singhbhum)

76. (a) Name and membership of the Ministers, Indian Nation,  
March 6 and 17, 1967; (b) Ironically enough, information regarding  
the castes of the Ministers and legislators is not available  
anywhere in print. I could collect the information from the  
 sources: (i) Nagina Rai, Congress(I) MLA and a former Minister  
of State; elected from Gopalganj to the Lok Sabha in 1980  
elections, (ii) Janardan Tiwari, a former Jan Sangh MLA from  
1962 to 1967 and again from 1969 to 1972 from Siwan(Saran  
district), (iii) Badri Singh, SSP MLA from 1952 to 1962 and  
again from 1969 to 1972: from Mohania and secondly from  
Chainpur in Shahabad (now Rohtas) district; (iv) Ram Dayal  
Singh, a Janata MLA from Sandesh (Bhojpur district); died  
in August, 1976; was formerly associated with the Socialist  
Party; (c) Constituencies of the Ministers, India Election  
Commission, Report on the Fourth General Election in India,  
Vol. 11 (Statistical), 1967.
of six months, he got himself elected from Bagodar Assembly constituency (Hazaribagh) in a bye-election, caused by the resignation of Shrimati Lalita Rajya Lakshmi, wife of Kamakhya Narain Singh, who opted for Lok Sabha seat from Lhanbad.

**Caste/Community-wise Analysis**

With regard to the caste composition of the United Front Ministry, it is important to note that forward castes were in a majority. Out of 15 Cabinet Ministers, their number was 9 - Bhumihars four, Rajputs three, Kayasthas and Brahmins one each. Of the remaining 6 Ministers, 4 were from Backward Castes - one Yadav, one Kurmi, one Koiri and one Nayee, one was a Muslim and another one a Bihari-Bengali. Among the 6 Ministers of State, 3 were from the Forward Castes - Rajputs two, and Brahmin one, one was a Scheduled Caste (Dusadh), one was from the Backward Caste (Kurmi) and another one belonged to the family of Oriya Brahmins. So, if we count Oriya Brahmin as a Forward Caste, the ratio between Forward and Backward Castes among the Ministers of State was 4:2. Thus, taken together out of 21-member Ministry, the number of Forward Castes was 14, including a Bengali Kayastha and an Oriya Brahmin.

Among the Forward Castes the break-up was as follows: Rajputs five, Bhumihars four, Brahmins three and Kayasthas one. Of the six Ministers belonging to the Backward Castes, there were two Kurmis, one Yadav, one Koiri and one Nayee. Mahabir
Paswan was the sole member belonging to the Scheduled Caste. Similarly, Hasibur Rahman was the lone Muslim in the Council of Ministers.

It is surprising, however, that no representation was given to the Scheduled Tribes. Equally surprising was the non-representation of women. Still more surprising was the fact that these weaker sections of the society were not given priority or preference either by the SSP, which was, all the while, clamouring for the upliftment of these sections and demanding reservations for them in government jobs or by the CPI, the self-claimed messiah of the exploited and down-trodden. The SSP also failed to give representation to the Muslims, though it tried to appease them by championing the cause of the Urdu language. Similarly, the party failed to include a member of the Scheduled Castes inspite of the fact that it had the largest number of Scheduled Caste members among all the constituents of the Front in the Assembly. On the contrary, it provided four berths each to the Forward and the Backward Castes. Table IV shows the number of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Muslims and Women MLAs in each party of the United Front.

The CPI failed to give representation to the Backward Castes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and the Muslim minority. It gave representation to the forward Castes only. Both of its Cabinet Ministers came from the same land-
TABLE IV

Showing number of SC, ST, Muslims and Women MLAs in each constituent of the United Front Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Scheduled Castes</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribes</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKD</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI(M)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

owning Bhumihar caste. However, it is to be noted that Chandra Shekhar Singh and Indradeep Sinha came to the Ministry because of their standing in the party. They were prominent leaders and old guards of the party. The CPI's lone Minister of State belonged to the family of Maithil Brahmins.

The PSP, though gave representation to the Muslims by having one Cabinet Minister, failed to give representation to the Backward Castes, Harijans and Adivasis and women. However, the party had no Scheduled Tribes and women member in the Assembly, but it had one Harijan member. Its remaining each two Ministers came from the Bhumihar and the Rajput. The JKD being a party of a landlord gave representation to the Scheduled Caste. Its Minister of State came from this community. The party had two women and one Muslim members in the Assembly but gave no preference to them. It had no member belonging to Scheduled Tribes. Out of its three Cabinet Ministers, two were Rajputs and one was a Kayastha.

The Jan Sangh did not include a member from the trading and merchant class inspite of being allegedly a party of trading and Bania class. Nor did it include any one from the Borward Castes. Interestingly, two of its three Ministers belonged to the minority communities but not the Muslims. One belonged to the Bengali community and the other was an Oriya Brahmin. The remaining one was a Backward Koiri. But the party failed to give preference to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes
and women. However, it may be noted that the Jan Sangh had no Muslim and women members in the Assembly. But it had no justification in not including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes members as the party had 10 members (5 Scheduled Castes and 5 Scheduled Tribes) belonging to these Castes out of its total strength of 26. This strength was next only to the Congress Party which had about 37 members belonging to these Castes.

Thus, almost all the parties of the UF Government—whether of the Right, Left or Centre—favoured Forward Castes in giving ministerial berths. Therefore, parties and Governments did not seem to represent different classes in the sense that the leaders in different political parties belonged to the same Forward, land-owning and influential castes. None of them gave preference to Harijans, Adivasis, Muslims and women, the weaker sections of the society. All but one (PSP) failed to give representation to the Muslim minority. Similarly, none but one (JKD) gave representation to the Scheduled Castes. The CPI inspite of having the largest number of Muslim members among the partners of the UF did not give any preference to them. The SSP gave equal representation both to the Forward and Backward Castes.

It is significant in the context of the composition of the first UF Government that there was, at one time, the proposal to elevate Mahabir Paswan to Cabinet Rank. The Cabinet, too,
had endorsed it. But the proposal had to be shelved because of the determined opposition by the Jan Sangh Minister V.K. Mitra, who threatened to create a crisis if Paswan were to be elevated to the Cabinet rank.

**Social Status**

So far as the social status of the members of the non-Congress Ministry was concerned, most of them came from Middle class families. Two Ministers, namely Kamakhya Narain Singh and Basant Narain Singh came from the former Zamindar family of Ramgarh. The Cabinet Ministers of the CPI came from the well-off land-owning class. Most of the Ministers of the SSP and the PSP belonged to the land-owning families. Some of them, like Ramapati Singh, were big landlords. Even the Ministers belonging to the Backward Castes came from land-owning strata of the society.Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal and Bhola Prasad Singh were examples of this type.

**Regional and Rural/Urban Bases of the Ministry**

Out of 21 Ministers, 8 came from the North Plains of the State. The South Plains also got 8 berths (6 Cabinet rank and 2 Ministers of State) in the Ministry. However, the Chotanagpur belt could get only 2 posts - one Cabinet and one Minister of State. Of the 8 North Plains Ministers, three from the SSP, two each were from the CPI and the PSP and one was from the JKD. Among the 8 South Plains Ministers, four were

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80. Indian Nation, November 11, 1967.
81. Ibid., November 30, 1967.
from the SSP and two each from the Jan Sangh and the JKL. Of
the two Ministers from the Chotanagpur region, one each
belonged to the JKL and the Jan Sangh.

As regards the rural/urban bases of the Ministers,
most of them had rural bases. Only 5 (all of Cabinet) Ministers
represented urban population. Of them two each were from the
JKL and the Jan Sangh and the remaining one was from the CPI.

Later on, when Ministry expansion became an expedient
means of keeping the Ur Government in the saddle, no rationale
was followed in giving representation to the different
constituents of Ur. The only purpose seemed to be to check
unfavourable defections and encourage favourable defections.
An exception to this was a Minister of Cabinet rank, Khalil
Ahmad, a former Judge of the Patna High Court and a retired
Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court, who was sworn-in to
join the Ministry on August 11, 1967. The announcement of
Khalil Ahmad's name in the papers before his joining the
Ministry was a subject of prolonged discussion in the Co-ordina-
tion Committee of the Ur on August 10, 1967 to iron out
differences on the question of his inclusion. Leaders of
some of the constituents had been quoted in the press as
saying that the Chief Minister had not consulted his colleagues

82. Ibid., August 12, 1967.
83. Ibid.
before deciding to include Justice Ahmad. It was the manner of appointment that came in for sharp criticism at the Committee meeting, but not the appointment of Khalil Ahmad itself. The SSP members did not join the fray as vigorously as did the CPI members. However, it appeared that there had been some understanding in the matter. It was clear from the statement of the Chief Minister, when he said that, "He had not only consulted Karpoori Thakur as had been agreed upon at the time of the formation of the present government, but also some other colleagues. Khalil Ahmad's appointment, however, was of no political significance. He became the second Muslim Minister in the Cabinet, the strength of which had increased to 16. He was also the third man after Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal and Basant Narain Singh to be appointed a Minister without being a member of the State Legislature.

On September 7, 1967, one Cabinet Minister and ten Ministers of State were added to the Mahamaya Ministry, thus, raising its strength to 34. The only Cabinet Minister sworn-in was Mrs. Premlata Rai (SSP). Of the ten Ministers of State, four were Congress defectors. This gave the Congress a set-back in their bid to topple the UP Government. The other six Ministers of State belonged to the CPI, Jan Sangh, Jharkhand,

84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid., September 8, 1967.
Republican Party, JKD and an Independent. The JKD nominee was also a Congress defector, who left the party on July 25, 1967. Thus, five Congress defectors were rewarded with ministerial gaddis. Table V shows the names and the respective parties of the Ministers.

### Table V

Names and parties of the Ministers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Premlata Rai</td>
<td>Cabinet Minister</td>
<td>SSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.P. Jawahar</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Congress defector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Tigga</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Congress defector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pramod Kumar Mishra</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Congress defector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohanlal Gupta</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Congress defector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyam Sundar Gupta</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>JKD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shatrughan Beura</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>CPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topna Ovaon</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishnudhari Lal</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philomon Toppo</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Azimuddin</td>
<td>State Minister</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the Jan Sangh was not happy with this expansion.

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PSP was the only constituent which was left unrepresented in this expansion. The party was, however, given representation subsequently when its nominee, Ram Naresh Singh, was taken as a Minister of State on November 16, 1967. This raised the strength of the United Front Ministry to 34.

Of these Ministers, five, namely, Mrs. Premlata Rai (Yadav), B.P. Jawahar (Kurmi), Mohanlal Gupta (Banias), Bishnudhari Lal and Shyam Sundar Gupta (Kurmis) belonged to the Backward Castes. Simon Tigga, Shatrughan Beera, Topna Ovason and Philomon Toppo came from the Scheduled Tribes. Pramod Kumar Mishra (Brahmin) and Ram Naresh Singh (Rajput) belonged to the Forward Castes. Mohammad Azimuddin belonged to the Muslim community. These expansions of the Ministry were part of the processes of bargaining between the constituents of the UF, on the one hand, and between the UF and legislators in the Congress, on the other. However, members of the Scheduled Tribes were included in the Council of Ministers for the first time after six months of the installation of the Coalition Government. Similarly, for the first time, a woman was added to the Ministry.

Thus, out of 34 UF Ministers 16 belonged to the Forward Castes, 10 to the Backward Castes, 4 to the Scheduled Tribes and 1 to the Scheduled Caste. The remaining 3 were Muslims.

69. Ibid., November 17, 1967.
Among the units of the UF, the SSP got 9 seats. The JKD, the Jan Sangh, the CPI and the PSP got four seats each. The RPI and the Jharkhand got one seat each. One was an Independent while another one was a non-party man.

Causes of the Fall of the UF Ministry

The first non-Congress UF Government, which came to power with a lot of fanfare, could not remain in power even for a year. After remaining in office for ten months and twenty days, it was voted out of power on January 25, 1966 by a no-confidence motion moved by the Congress Shoshit Lal alliance. It was carried in the Vidhan Sabha by 163 to 150 votes. Nine floor-crossings were witnessed on the day the UF was voted out of power. The members, who joined the Congress-Shoshit Lal alliance were Nathmal Dokania, Shohan Lal Jain (both Swatantra), Suraj Narain Sharma (Independent) and Keshav Prasad Singh (JKL). Defections, intra-party divisions, dissensions and clash of interests among the constituents of the UF and, above all, the cynical designs and activities of the Congress Party brought down the first-ever non-Congress Government. Bihar was thrown into a state of uncertainty and instability after the fall of the UF Government, which had a bad effect on the development of the State.

90. Ibid., January 26, 1968.
91. Ibid.
Defections

The game of defections and redefections came to be played in the State politics just four and a half months after the UI came to power. Three Adivasi legislators, namely Paul Hansda, Munshi Hansda and Bhagat Murmu, were the first to defect from the UI on July 16, 1967 and pledged their support to the Congress in toppling the Coalition Government. Shyam Suncar Prasad of the Congress was the first to defect to the United Front. Then it became the normal feature of Bihar politics. However, two cases of defections are worth mentioning in details. One was the case of Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal (B.P. Mandal), Health Minister of the Coalition Government, who, along with 25 supporters, defected from the UF and formed a defectors' party, the Shoshit Dal (the party of the exploited people). Another important case of defection was that of B.P. Jawahar, a Congress legislator. B.P. Mandal had been subjected to pressure by the Central leadership of his party to give up his ministerial post and go to the parliament. As he was not a member of the State Legislature, his term of office would have constitutionally ended on September 4, 1967, after the completion of six months. When it became clear that the SSP was not prepared to accommodate him in the State Legislature and prolong his tenure as a


Minister, B.P. Mandal and his supporters formed a new group without resigning from the Ministry. The next day B.P. Mandal was asked by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister to resign and his resignation was accepted. Mandal's Shoshit Lal formed an alliance with the Congress Party to topple the UF Government. The United Front leaders, on their part, were promising ministership to Congress legislators to defect to the UF. On September 5, 1967, B.P. Jawahar along with his 11 other Congress MLAs defected from the Congress Party and formed a 'Second Shoshit Lal' under his leadership to support the Coalition Ministry. He and some of his colleagues were rewarded with ministerial posts on September 7, 1967. On the same day, however, one JKL and two Jharkhand Party MLAs defected to the Congress - Shoshit Lal alliance. Next, two of the UF Ministers, Simon Tigga and B.P. Jawahar submitted their resignations and defected to the Congress - Shoshit Dal alliance on January 17, 1968. They resigned because they saw that the UF boat was about to sink. Besides, seven more Ministers had also decided to defect to the Congress - Shoshit Lal alliance. Even the Jharkhand Party

Legislature group of six members under the leadership of N.E. Horo defected en bloc from the UF and pledged support to the Shoshit Lal. Thus, defections, counter-defections and re-defections made the political atmosphere of the State highly unpredictable. The unpredictable elements had been hopping from one side to the other and sometimes squatting in the middle after a high jump, making the situation completely confused. It was in such confusion that the UF remained in power for about eleven months. This situation could have been checked, at least, to some extent, had the right to recall the representatives been provided in the constitution. But in the absence of any such safeguard, the so-called people's representatives had been playing their selfish game of power unashamedly, by throwing the democratic norms to the winds. The people, having lost their right by electing these people, at least for five years, were the helpless spectators of this sordid drama.

Role of the Congress Party

The Congress Party in Bihar was very largely responsible for the fall of the UF Government. Cynical disregard for principles in the search for power was not a new development in the State Congress, which had never reconciled itself to its new role of the Opposition, after twenty years of

101. Ibid.
uninterrupted rule. "It must bear responsibility for not having given the Government any peace or chance to settle down to a constructive role". Ever since they were routed at the polls, the State Congress leaders had been trying their hardest to bring down the UF Government. Although M.P. Sinha, the leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, asserted that he wanted the Government to remain in power so that people get an "opportunity to judge it and compare it with the Congress Government". But events showed that the Congress leaders were getting impatient and wanted to return to power as soon as possible with the help of defectors. In July 1967, they made a successful attempt to win over three Adivasi Independent MLAs of the ruling Coalition. On July 18, 1967, the top leaders of the Bihar Congress decided at a meeting to make an all-out attempt to topple the UF Government and thus created an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty in the State. They made a concerted attempt to marshall the forces and defeat the Government on the Appropriations Bill on July 25, 1967, but nothing came out of it. Soon afterwards, they pursuaded one of their MLAs to move a bill in the Assembly calling for recognition of Urdu as the second official language, while another Congress MLA led a demonstration.


against the bill. The purpose was to intensify the conflict between the Jan Sangh and other partners of the Coalition.

Apart from their greed for power, the Congress leaders were making desperate efforts to topple the Coalition Government in order to forestall the inquiry into the charges of corruption against the previous Congress Ministers. The new Government had announced the appointment of an Enquiry Commission headed by Justice Venkataraman Iyer, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, to probe into the charges of corruption and misuse of power by the former Chief Minister K.B. Sahay, and five of his colleagues. They were the former Education, Local Self-Government and Agriculture Minister S.N. Sinha, the former Power and Irrigation Minister M.P. Sinha (now the leader of the Opposition), the former PWD Minister Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, and the former Minister for Transport Raghvendra Narain Singh.

The arrest of B.K. Sinha, the Plant Protection Officer, and the sensational disclosures following it added fuel to fire and became an immediate cause of the Congress leaders' bid to topple the UP Government. B.K. Sinha was reported to have confessed to the involvement of some former Ministers and top officials in connection with misappropriation of crops of 107 rupees. The former Ministers concerned were, thus, confronted

with the danger of losing face and the possible ruin of their political careers.

In their bid to topple the UF Government, the Congress leaders found in B.P. Mandal a God-sent opportunity. The Congress Party immediately formed an alliance with his Shoshit Dal and intensified their efforts to topple the ruling Coalition. The Executive Committee of the Congress Legislature Party accepted an offer from B.P. Mandal to form a Coalition Ministry under his leadership. This decision was announced by a spokesman of the party at the dead of night at a hurriedly called Press Conference to show the intensity of their efforts to topple the UF Government. However, there were sharp differences in the Bihar Congress over the issue of joining hands with the Shoshit Dal for the formation of a Coalition Government. A powerful section, headed by B.N. Jha, made it clear to the Central leadership that this move was opportunistic and against the interests of the party. Dwarika Nath Tiwari, a senior Congress M.P., termed the Congress - Shoshit Dal alliance as 'highly inopportune and impracticable' and hoped that the Congress High Command would condemn it. The High Command, on

the contrary, endorsed the Bihar Congress leaders' desire to topple the UF Government with B.P. Mandal's help. They ultimately did so on January 25, 1968. Not only this, the Congress leadership in Delhi tried, as reported by Indradeep Sinha in Link, to discredit the Coalition Government by curtailing the allotment and dispatches of foodgrains. The relief budget was sought to be whittled down, plan allocations were chaastically pruned and accelerated assistance on certain non-plan schemes was severely slashed. In spite of the declaration of the Finance Minister in the Parliament to the contrary, a ceiling for relief operations was imposed after the State Government had already spent over Rs. 50 crores on famine relief.

The big business also had their role in the fall of the non-Congress Coalition, as reported by K. Gopalan in the New Age. Liberal contributions given by the Tatas and Birlas and other big industrial houses made it possible for the Congress bosses to bear the heavy cost of "purchasing the legislators", and maintaining the Shoshit Lal. Six UF Ministers produced evidence that the former Chief Minister K.B. Sahay, who spearheaded the conspiracy, had received lakhs of rupees from big business.

business houses to purchase legislators. They produced cheque numbers to prove that the Tatas alone had contributed Rs. 4.85 lakhs through four cheques and an amount of Rs. 49,9225 through another cheque to K.B. Sahay. These Ministers produced a long list of payments made through cheques by K.B. Sahay to prove that not less than 3.75 lakhs were spent in purchasing legislators. K.B. Sahay, though strongly denied the charge of bribing the legislators, admitted paying Rs. 2,000 to the Independent MLA Harihar Singh to enable him “to meet his expenses in fighting the election petition. This showed the role of money in toppling the ruling Coalition.

Nature of the Coalition

The UF Government was by its very nature transitional. It was a post-election governmental Coalition. The parties, constituting the UF, had not fought the election unitedly and had not on any occasion expressed willingness to work out a Coalition if voted to power. After the elections, they made a hurried and hotch-potch front to ward off the Congress chances to come to power. It was not a two-party governmental Coalition like the Congress (K) - BKD Coalition in U.P., Swatantra - Jan Congress Coalition in Orissa, Akali - Jan Congress Coalition in the Punjab but a many-party governmental Coalition. Similarly,

115. Ibid.

it was not a major-party dominant governmental Coalition such as the Congress (R) - BKCL Coalition in U.P. and Swatantra - Jan Congress Coalition in Orissa, but many minor parties like RPI, CPI(M) and Swatantra, and regional parties like the Jharkhand, had their say in the Government. Above all, it was not an ideologically homogenous governmental Coalition like the Swatantra - Jan Congress Coalition in Orissa but an ideologically heterogenous one, and its constituent units stood poles apart. It was composed of parties like CPI, CPI(M) and SSP on the one hand and Jan Sangh and Swatantra on the other. Not only this, the feudal elements represented by the Raja of Ramgarh had important say in the Government. In such a Coalition, the parties could not forget their past legacy of suspicion and antagonism and quarrelled over almost all minor or major issues. Almost all partners of the Coalition, at one time or another, threatened to walk out of the Coalition in order to compel other partners to accede their demands. Even the Chief Minister had to resort to this course at least in the appointment of Khalil Ahmad. Thus, the inherent contradictions in the nature of the Coalition helped in the early fall of the United Front.

Role of the Constituents of the United Front

The constituents of the U.F. were themselves to blame for

117. Forms of Coalition have been borrowed from Iqbal Narain, Twilight or Lawn: The Political Change in India(1967-71), (Agra: Shivalal Agarwal, 1972), pp. 138-139.

its downfall. The non-Congress Ministry in Bihar was installed under strong anti-Congress pressure. Therefore, the main motive of such Coalition of the former Opposition parties was not to provide an alternative government with a positive programme different from that of the Congress, but somehow or the other, to oust the Congress from power. But blind anti-Congressism did not prove to have a cohesive effect for long. When the positive question of speedily implementing a time-bound programme that could redress peoples' grievances arose, they faltered. While the situation demanded positive united approach, the SVL displayed lust for power as was evidenced by the refusal of the Chief Minister to convene the Assembly to prove his strength. In fact, no group was prepared to share power with others because each of them considered itself to be the successor of the Congress. The Coalition Government was supposedly formed on the basis of the 33-point common minimum programme, but the programme itself was hurriedly drafted and glossed over their differences which surfaced later. Even this programme had not been genuinely accepted


121. Ramashray Roy, op. cit., p. 41.

by some of the constituents of the Coalition. Therefore, one of the main reasons for its failure were the differences that arose among the constituent parties over the implementation of the agreed programme.

Jan Sangh

The Jan Sangh agreed to the 32-points of the programme without any hesitation, but expressed reservation and even submitted a note of dissent on the question of Urdu. This sowed the seed of conflict inside the Front. The first shot was, however, fired by the Bihar Congress. The Congress leadership, itself unwilling and unable to support whole-heartedly the demand for Urdu permitted a Muslim MLA of the party to introduce a Private Members' bill in the Assembly to declare Urdu as the second official language of Bihar. The introduction of the Bill forced the members of the Government to stand up for commitments on their disagreements over Urdu. The President of the Bihar Jan Sangh, at a press conference on July 17, 1967, announced that his party would vigorously oppose the Bill which he reportedly viewed as an instrument of communal elements of Bihar. On the same day, however, the SSP Deputy Chief Minister of the ruling Coalition announced in the State Assembly that


the Government was inclined to give Urdu the status of the second official language and that orders to that effect would soon be passed. However, the Government decided to oppose the Congress members' bill, but prepared a memorandum about the facilities being offered to the Urdu speaking students and the public in general in order to assuage their feelings. The Cabinet, including the two Jan Sangh Cabinet Ministers, unanimously approved the memorandum on July 13, 1967. The Deputy Chief Minister had already issued orders before the controversy broke out in July for implementing decisions reached by the Bihar Cabinet to make arrangements for the teaching of Urdu in schools, for government offices to give reply in Urdu to applications presented in Urdu, and for printing government publications in Urdu also. When the controversy intensified in July, the Jan Sangh demanded the deferment of this decision and began threatening to resign from the Government if its views were not respected. Consequently, the Cabinet at a meeting on July 27, 1967 agreed to defer any action in respect of Urdu.

In the meanwhile, the Bihar branch of the Hindi Sahitya

126. Ibid.
128. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, op. cit., p. 27; Paul R. Brass, op. cit., p. 263.
129. Paul R. Brass, op. cit., p. 263.
Parishad joined hands with the Jan Sangh in opposing Urdu and staged a demonstration in front of the Assembly on July 28, 1967. The Bihar Jan Sangh Chief announced that it was the beginning of a State-wide agitation and warned that the Coalition would come to grief if it did not amend its programme in respect of Urdu. Jan Sangh Ministers in the Government began to declare openly in public meetings their opposition to any move to give Urdu the place of a second official language. Deen Dayal Upadhya, the then General Secretary of the All India Jan Sangh, declared that if "the Muslim separatist tendency" was encouraged, his party would pull out of the UF. On the other hand, Karpoori Thakur announced on August 2, 1967 that he would desist from attending the Coordination Committee meeting unless the Jan Sangh gave up its anti-Urdu stand.

Despite the Cabinet decision to defer any further action, the anti-Urdu forces gathered strength. These forces now included the RSS and the Jan Sangh, the Bihar Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, a group of Congressmen led by the former Speaker Lakshmi Narayan Sudhanshu, the spokesman for Maithili individual MLAs and members from other parties in the Government.

133. Ibid.
particularly the PSP and BKD and students. At a meeting on July 27, in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan building in Patna, comprising some of these elements, it was decided to launch a two-week state-wide anti-second language agitation, beginning from August 12, 1967. Subsequently, anti-Urdu demonstrations and agitations resulted in a series of communal riots, which ended in the catastrophe of a week of violence, blood-shed and murder in the city and suburbs of Ranchi. This left, according to the official figure a minimum of 184 people dead and 173 injured.

The events, leading to the riots and the course of the riot itself were directly linked to the complex manoeuvrings by the Congress and disaffected elements within the non-Congress Government to bring the Government down. It was also linked to the activities of the parties in the Coalition Government to embarrass and discredit each other.

The Jan Sangh also started opposing land reforms and food policy and clashed with the SSP and the CPI on these issues. The conflicts over these issues stemmed from the CPI Revenue Minister's attempt to amend the Bihar Tenancy Act to give more

137. Ibid., p. 265.
legal protection to the 'Bataldars' (Share-croppers) and from the SSP Food and Supply Minister's proposal for a compulsory foodgrain levy obliging the farmers to sell a certain quota of their produce to the Government, usually at a price lower than in the open market, to help meet scarcities caused by famine and to control black-marketing in foodgrains. On both these issues the Jan Sangh with the help of BKL and the Swatantra Party started rallying landlords and succeeded in its attempts to some extent. It also started a State-wide agitation to scuttle the official flood policy. The Bihar State Grain Lealers Association was organized with Ram Lakhan Gupta, the then President of the Monghyr District Jan Sangh as the President and the Swatantra MLA Nathmal Dokania as the Chairman. This Association demanded a change in the food policy and agitated against the proposal of punitive measures against the defaulting traders.

Samyukta Socialist Party

The intra-party divisions in the SSP were also responsible for the downfall of the Front Government. The SSP in Bihar was more a conglomeration of individuals than a well-knit party. The selection of its nominees for the Ministry proved a very


139. Link, October 22, 1967, p. 20.
difficult task, and yet it could not satisfy many party leaders. Those SSP men, who were cherishing the dream of becoming Ministers and were left out, became antagonised and worked tirelessly for the fall of the Government. Jagdeo Prasad, an MLA, started planning against the SSP leaders and the United Front. Later he became the convenor of the Shoshit Lal and became a Cabinet Minister in the Congress - Shoshit Lal Government. Some of the leaders pitchforked into power did not know how to behave. Following the Congress pattern, the ambitious among them, including Ministers, formed their own factions inside the party at the cost of their colleagues. The conflict between personal interests of B.P. Mandal and party interests increased in which personal ambition and caste sentiments prevailed over party interests. The Government policy of unearthing hoarded foodgrains had resulted in raids on the houses of a number of MLAs belonging to the SSP and the JKD. They left their parties and joined the Shoshit Dal. On the question of land reforms also, the SSP was divided and its leaders did not attend a meeting on the issue convened by Jaya Prakash Narayan. This showed the sharp division in the party on major policy issues. In fact, the party had many MLAs who were big landlords and they would not favour a decision which

reduced their landed property.

Thus, the non-Congress Coalition, which came to power with new promises, soon started disappointing people. Its constituents started pulling in different directions. The constituents of the Coalition looked at it as an opportunity rather than a responsibility and tried to use it to strengthen their political base. This led them to take possession of key departments through which vast resources and patronage could be commanded. Some of the Ministers, particularly Kamakhya Narain Singh and his younger brother insisted on having particular portfolios because they had their personal interests involved in them. Some of the Ministers, belonging, particularly, to the SSP and the Jan Sangh, started indulging in cheap propaganda to build up their personal images among the people. Some of the Ministers were accused of indulging in corrupt practices and of shielding the black-marketeers. The Mulcholkar Commission of Inquiry was subsequently instituted to probe into the charges against them. Thus, the UF itself was not in good shape. There had been defections from the SSP, the PSP, the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra to the Shoshit Lal. A CPI MLA, S.M. Abdullah, was expelled from the party, but he had already defected to the Shoshit Lal.

Another factor which to some extent hastened the fall of

144. Girish Mishra and Braj Kumar Pandey, op. cit., p. 10.
the UF Government was the inexperience of its leaders. No doubt, they were in politics for a pretty long time, but they were not fully acquainted with the fact and skill needed to run the administration. Furthermore, in the absence of a seriousness of purpose in implementing the 33-point minimum programme, they could not decide on the priorities nor did they act with objectivity and patience.

The Defector's Government

After the fall of the first UF Government, Satish Prasad Singh, a nominee of the Shoshit Lal, was sworn-in as an 'interim' Chief Minister of Bihar in the evening of January 28, 1968. Two more Ministers, namely Shatrumardan Shahi and N.E. Horo (both Shoshit Lal) were sworn-in in the afternoon of January 30, 1968.

This Government was a purely stop-gap arrangement, because the man, who was instrumental in the fall of the Mahamaya Ministry and was also the real leader of the Shoshit Lal, which was in a real sense a get-together of all defectors, was not a member of the Bihar Legislature. As B.P. Mandal had almost completed a period of six months as a Minister in the UF Government, the Governor was not prepared to invite him to form the new government in view of the serious doubts raised about his becoming the Chief Minister without being a member of the

146. Ibid., January 31, 1968.
Legislature. After many manoeuvres and deliberations, the name of Satish Prasad Singh was submitted to the Governor by M.P. Sinha and B.P. Mandal at 5.00 P.M. on January 28, 1968. He was sworn-in the same day. It would not be out of context to mention here that after the defeat of the Mahamaya Government, the Governor invited M.P. Sinha to form a new government, but he expressed the support of his party to B.P. Mandal in forming the new government.

However, the Congress-shoshit Dal alliance evolved a formula according to which the Chief Minister Satish Prasad Singh, would nominate Mandal to the vidhan Parishad, the Upper House of the Legislature, to circumvent the constitutional bar against his becoming the Chief Minister. To clear the way for Mandal's entry into the vidhan Parishad, Parmanand, a nominated member and close relative of K. B. Sahay, resigned his seat. Accordingly, the interim Chief Minister recommended to the Governor the name of Mandal for nomination to the vidhan Parishad on January 29, 1968. The next day Mandal was nominated to the Parishad and the way was clear for the formation of the first Congress-backed Shoshit Dal Ministry, headed by B.P. Mandal. Satish Prasad Singh

151. Ibid., January 30 and 31, 1968.
resigned his office on February 1, 1968 and his resignation was accepted in the afternoon of the same day.

The Shoshit Dal Ministry was sworn-in on February 1, 1968. Besides, B.P. Mandal the four Ministers, who took oath of secrecy were: Satish Prasad Singh, Shatrughanmardhan Shahi, N.E. Horo and Jagdeo Prasad. Except N.E. Horo, all the three Ministers were from the Shoshit Dal. Horo belonged to one faction of the Jharkhand Party headed by him. He and his six supporters had earlier walked off the UF to join the Dal. Satish Prasad Singh had the privilege of being a Chief Minister for three days.

B.P. Mandal's Shoshit Dal Ministry was further expanded on February 5, 1968 with the addition of twenty-nine more Ministers. Of them thirteen were Cabinet Ministers, thirteen Ministers of State and three Deputy Ministers. With this expansion, the strength of the Mandal Ministry went up to 34. The Ministers sworn-in on February 5 included 8 EX-JKD men, 7 SSP men, 2 Ex-Jan Sangh members, 2 Ex-Swatantra, 1 Ex-PSP, 1 Ex-CPI and 4 Independents. Of the remaining 4, 2 were Ex-Congress members and 2 Jharkhand members. The new Ministers included three 'Sadhus', two of them - Mahanth Sukdeo Giri and Mahanth Ram Kishore Das were sworn-in as full fledged Ministers. Swami Vivekanand was taken as a Deputy Minister.

One interesting aspect of this expansion was that two Ministers of State and three Deputy Ministers, who were to be sworn-in on that day, did not turn up. They were Debilalji and Sanat Raut (both State Ministers) and Bagun Sumbrui, Munshi Hansda and Suraj Narain Sharma (Deputy Ministers). Of them Debilalji was sworn-in on February 7, 1968 as the 14th Minister of State raising the strength of Ministry to 35. Even on that day the other four prospective Ministers did not turn up for their swearing-in, because they refused to accept the posts to which they were appointed. Sanat Raut, in particular, was understood to have told the Shoshit Dal leaders that he was not interested in joining the Ministry as a Minister of State. On February 10, 1968 the Shoshit Dal Ministry was further expanded, raising its strength to 36, with the addition of one Cabinet Minister. He was Shambhu Nath Jha, the Assistant Editor of the Search Light.

Defector’s Ministry

The B.P. Mandal Ministry was a 'Defectors' paradise, because his was a hundred percent defectors' Ministry. Every one, who defected to the Lal, was rewarded with a ministerial berth. Among these defector Ministers, the largest number were from the former SSP members. Out of 36 Ministers, their strength was eleven including the Chief Minister. Then came the number of JKD men who were nine. They were followed by Independents (four) and

155. Indian Nation, February 8, 1968.
156. Ibid.
the Jharkhand group. There were two Congress defectors, two Jan Sangh defectors, two Swatantra and one each from the CPI and the PSP. Table VI shows the Shoshit Dal Minister's former parties, their castes, region and their rural/urban base. It is important to mention that the Shoshit Dal Ministry included Paul Hansda (Cabinet rank), and Bhagat Murmu (Deputy Minister), who along with Munshi Hansda, were the first since 1967, to start the game of "Aya Ram and Gaya Ram" in Bihar politics. Munshi Hansda was also offered Deputy Ministerial gaddi, but he refused, because he wanted a better position.

**Composition**

With regard to the composition of the Shoshit Dal Ministry, it is to be noted that all, but two Ministers, were members of the Assembly. The Chief Minister was a nominated member of the Vidhan Parishad. Sambhu Nath Jha was not a member of either House of the Legislature nor did he belong to any political party.

**Caste/Community Composition**

As for the caste composition of the Mandal Ministry, it is significant that, as against the first UF Government, this Ministry was dominated by Backward castes. There were twelve Backward caste Ministers as against nine in the Mahamaya Ministry. Among them Yadavas were in the majority having secured six berths, including the Chief Minister's. Then came the number of Koiris whose strength was four. Kurmis and Telis got one berth each. The scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes got more berths in the
**TABLE VI**

Showing caste/community, region, rural/urban bases and former parties of the Shoshit Dal Ministers, 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Name/ Parties and Membership</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CABINET MINISTERS</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.P. Mandal (SSP, MLC)</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nominated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shatrumardan Shahi (JKD, MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Lauriya (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya Narain Sharma (PSP, MLA)</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Dhaka (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmad Karim (Independent, MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Adapur (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahanth Ram Kishore Das Bhumihar (JKD, MLA)</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Minapur (Muzaffarpur)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahanth Sukdeo Giri (JKD, MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Baruraj (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagdeo Prasad (PSP, MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Kurtha (Gaya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satish Prasad Singh (SSP, MLA)</td>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Parbatta (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardar Harihar Singh (Independent, MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Dumraon (Shahabad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Chandra Yadav (SSP, MLA)</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Gaya Muffasil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarni Prasad (JKD, MLA)</td>
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<td>Urban</td>
<td>Barh (Patna)</td>
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<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Maner (Patna)</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.M. Hashim (SSP, MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Monghyr (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Honesda (Jharkhand, MLA)</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Maheshpur (S?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Chotanagpur**

N.E. Horo (Jharkhand, MLA)
- Scheduled Tribe Rural Kolibira (Ranchi)

P.C. Birua (Independent, MLA)
- Scheduled Tribe Rural Mojhgaon (Ranchi)

Shiburanjan Khan (Independent, MLA)
- Tel RC Rural Bahragaon (Ranchi)

Brindavan Swansi (JKD, MLA)
- Scheduled Caste Rural Silli (Ranchi)

**MINISTERS OF STATE**

**North Plains**

Mahabir Prasad Yadav (SSP, MLA)
- Yadav Rural Madhepura (Saharasa)

Mahabir Prasad (SSP, MLA)
- Yadav Rural Diraul (Darbhanga)

Hargun Shahi (JKD, MLA)
- Bhumiha Urban Bettiah (Champaran)

S.M. Abdullah (CPI, MLA)
- Muslim Rural Harsidih (Champaran)

Debilalji (SSP, MLA)
- Yadav Rural Mahraura (Saran)

**South Plains**

B.P. Jawahar (Congress, MLA)
- Kurmi Rural Asthawan (Patna)

Ram Chandra Prasad (Jan Sangh, MLA)
- Scheduled Caste Rural Fatwa (Patna)

Ramashish Singh (SSP, MLA)
- Koiri Rural Dinara (Shahabad)

Nathmal Dokania (Swatantra, MLA)
- Marwari Rural Raj Mahal (SP)

Mushtaq Ali Khan (JKD, MLA)
- Muslim Rural Sherghatti (Gaya)
### Chotanagpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Tribe/Category</th>
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<th>Constituency</th>
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<td>Tribe</td>
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<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Mandu (Hazaribagh)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majhia Majhi</td>
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<td>Tribe</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>(Jan Sangh, MLA)</td>
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<td>Keshav Prasad Singh</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Chatra (Hazaribagh)</td>
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### DEPUTY MINISTERS

#### North Plains

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Rural</td>
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#### South Plains

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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158. Caste and Constituency, Supra Chapter III, Footnote 78(b) and (c), p. 109.
Shoshit Dal Ministry than in the first UF Government. There were six Scheduled Tribes (ST) Ministers as against four in the Mañamaya Ministry. The strength of the Scheduled Castes (SC) was three as against one in the first non-Congress coalition. The strength of the ST could have gone to eight had Bagun Sumbrui and Munshi Hansda accepted the ministerial posts. The Muslims got four men as against three in the UF Ministry. Inspite of all this, the Forward Castes were not in a hopeless position. They had nine men in the Ministry. This was not a mean achievement in view of the tirade launched against them by some of Mandal's supporters. What was more, Bhumiars and Rajputs had sufficient representation in the Ministry. While the former had three men in the Government, the latter got five seats. As a matter of fact, the Shoshit Dal Ministry itself was a brainchild of the Forward Caste leaders, particularly Bhumihar and Kayastha leaders. Mandal and his supporters owed their elevation in the manoeuvrings of M.P. Sinha and K.B. Sahay who wanted to topple the UF Ministry with Mandal's help. The remaining one Forward Caste Minister was a Maithil Brahmin. The Marwari community had two representatives in the Dal Ministry.

Region-wise Analysis

As regards the representation to the three main regions of the state, it is to be noted that they got almost even share of ministerial seats keeping in view total number of representatives coming from these areas. The South Plains had the highest number of fifteen members in the Shoshit Dal Government. The North Plains
had eleven representatives, excluding the Chief Minister, while the Chotanagpur region had eight representatives in the Government. Out of 36 Ministers of the Mandal Government, only three represented urban areas. They were Tarni Prasad and S.M. Hashim (both Cabinet) and Hargun Shahi (Minister of State).

However, with regard to the composition of the Shoshit Dal Ministry, it is worth mentioning that its composition was neither based on caste/community nor on region-wise representation. Its only consideration was to give ministerial seats to all defectors coming from UF. It so happened that some of the defectors themselves refused to join the Shoshit Dal Government as they were not satisfied with the posts they were offered. The irony of the situation was that even the 'Shoshit' (exploited) people of Bihar were not given enough representation in the Ministry though the Dal claimed itself to be their vanguard. No representation was given to women because none of the women legislators defected to the Dal.

The misleading 'Shoshit' character of the Congress-backed Mandal Ministry is proved by the inclusion of two "Mahanths" and some well known landlords and feudal elements like Snatrumardan Shahi in the Cabinet. The appointment of two ex-Swatantra Marwaris as Ministers exposed the hypocrisy of the self-styled Lenins of Bihar. The Chief Minister, himself a big landlord of Saharasa District, exploited the backward people of the backward Castes to fulfil his own ambition.

Causes of the Fall of the Shoshit Dal Ministry

However, the hypocritical mask of the Mandal Ministry failed to keep him in power for a long period. If defections engineered by the Congress had inducted B.P. Mandal into the Chief Minister's office, defections from the Congress led him out of it just after 47 days. The 47-day-old Ministry fell on March 18, 1968, when, defying the party whip, sixteen Congress MLAs voted with the Opposition on the no-confidence motion, which was carried out by 165 to 148 votes. In a House of 319, two seats were vacant and the Speaker and a nominated member did not vote. Suraj Narain Sharma, who was appointed a Deputy Minister but was yet to take oath, remained absent. Laliteshwar Prasad Shahi (Congress) remained neutral.

The Shoshit Dal Ministry was the second Government in Bihar within a year to have been pushed out of office as a result of 'naked pursuit of power through change of party loyalties'. Thus, "born in ignominy", this minority Ministry of "political non-descripts" met an ignominous end.

Defection from the Congress

The most important factor responsible for the fall of the Shoshit Lal Government was the Congress Party in Bihar with whose

163. Indian Express (New Delhi), March 20, 1968.
support the Dal had come to power. Eversince the Congress-Shoshit Dal alliance was formed, dissatisfaction was brewing in the Congress Party. An influencial group of the CLP, headed by B.N. Jha, was opposed to this alliance from the very beginning. It was never reconciled to the Congress supporting Mandal Government. Pandit Harinath Mishra, a former cooperative Minister and an influencial leader of this group strongly opposed the 'unprincipled and opportunistic alliance' with the Shoshit Dal just for toppling the UF Ministry. He threatened to lead a revolt in the party if this strategy was not changed. Subsequently, this group decided to topple the Mandal Ministry by supporting the no-confidence motion moved by the United Front. Five Congress leaders of this group, namely, L.N. Sudhanshu, a former Speaker, Harinath Mishra, Deep Narain Singh, Bhola Paswan Shastri and Krishna Kant Singh, declared during the night of March 17, 1968, a few hours before the voting on the no-confidence motion that they and their friends would defy the party whip and vote against the Ministry. Accordingly, they voted with the Opposition and brought down the Shoshit Dal Ministry.

Besides the factional in-fighting within the Congress Party, lure of office was another factor responsible for defections from the Congress Party. It was difficult for a

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165. *Indian Nation*, March 18, 1968.
group of Congressmen to resist the temptation to defect when there was alluring reward for what was then a minor political vice. It was particularly so in Bihar, when no holds were barred in political machinations. Thus, "personal ambitions and antagonists, factional fights and jealousies, caste rivalries and conflicts" seemed to have played a much greater part in the defections from the Congress than any question of principle or policy.

Role of the Shoshit Dal

Apart from the Congress Party, the Shoshit Dal was itself responsible for the fall of the Mandal Ministry. The party had no programme or organization. It was merely an amorphous group of a few self-seeking individuals. L.N. Sudhanashu termed the Dal Ministry as "a group of power-hungry persons reared on the ill-gotten money of ill-famed and power-hungry politicians". Most of Dal's members had hundreds of bighas of land. They were claiming to be exploited because their houses were raided for hoarded food grains and their interest was going to be affected by the alleged actions of the UF Government. The party was made up of undependable elements. These elements pushed Bihar into a state of uncertainty and instability by bringing down the

166. *Times of India* (New Delhi), March 20, 1968.
Mahamaya Ministry. There was no guarantee that they would not repeat their game. Dissatisfaction and quarrels had already started in the ranks of the Lal when four of them refused to join the Ministry. These were bound to result in fresh defections from the Lal. That this time they were left behind by some of the top Congressmen of Bihar was another matter. The Chief Minister and the father of the Shoshit Lal had been an unstable political factor for the last four years. When his ambition for ministerial office was not fulfilled by the then Chief Minister K.B. Sahay after the third General Elections, he turned a critic of his own party and got himself expelled from the Congress Party and joined the SSP in 1965. As the SSP leadership blocked his designs for fulfilling his ministerial ambition, L.P. Mandal founded his Shoshit Dal and joined hands with the Congressmen. Being a political chameleon, ever ready to change his loyalty to suit his personal ambitions, Mandal could neither inspire his team nor provide an efficient administration.

A minority Ministry had no worthwhile programme of action and was without the necessary talent to run the administration. The Lal was interested only in keeping itself in power, and the Congress supported it because it wanted to keep the UF out.

The Mandal Ministry lacked inherent strength and ideological freshness, and from the very beginning it betrayed all the weakness and nervousness of a puppet regime. The size of the

Ministry itself was the greatest critique of the Mandal Ministry. A race for Ministership and portfolios had begun in the Shoshit Dal. All the 39 MLAs joined the Dal with a view to becoming Ministers. An important MLA of the Dal said, "I have defected from my party to become a Minister of Cabinet rank". Everybody wanted to be a Cabinet Minister.

In the race for portfolios, a Shoshit Dal MLA not only wanted to be a Cabinet Minister, but he liked to have all portfolios of Kamakhya Narain Singh. Another MLA wanted the portfolios of Basant Narain Singh. There was yet another MLA who liked to have the portfolios of Kapildeo Singh. There was, thus, serious demands for portfolios of Mines, Forest, PWD and Food and Supply.

The Second UF Ministry

Soon after the fall of the Shoshit Dal Ministry, leaders of the constituent units of the UF met at the residence of B.N. Jha and formally elected Bhole Paswan Shastri as their leader. On the same day, the rebel Congressmen, who voted in favour of the no-confidence motion against the B.P. Mandal Government, formed a new party, the Loktantrik Congress Dal (LCL) of Bihar, with L.N. Sudhanshu as its Chairman. It is

171. Search Light (Editorial), February 3, 1968.
172. Ibid.
important to note that some understanding had been reached between the dissident Congress leaders and the UF about an alternative to the Mandal Government with a dissident Congress leader as the Chief Minister. Further, all the parties constituting the UF were to participate in the new ministry.

Accordingly, on March 22, 1968, Bhola Paswan Shastri was sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Bihar. He became the fourth Chief Minister since the 1967 elections and the first-ever Harijan Chief Minister of the State. Along with Paswan, the other two Ministers sworn-in were Krishna Kant Singh (K.K. Singh), a former Deputy Minister of Education and Rameshwar Prasad Sinha, both members of the new born Loktantrik Congress Dal.

**Bargainings**

The formation of the second UF Government, however, was not devoid of bargaining and behind-the-scenes drama. First Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, the UF leader in the Assembly and the former UF Chief Minister, was obliged to resign from the leadership. In the evening of March 17, 1968, some of the top leaders of the UF came to him and urged him to resign to make room for Shastri. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha resisted the pressure

for sometime on one ground or the other, but ultimately he had to yield and resign the same night.

Congress Party

M.P. Sinha, the leader of the Congress Legislature Party, also tried to form a government with the help of the Shoshit Dal and the Raja of Ramgarh. But he failed to get a green signal from the Central leadership. Moreover, the CLP was itself divided on the question of forming a government with the support of defectors and the Raja of Ramgarh. Having failed to form a government on their own, the Congress and the Shoshit Lal leaders pressurised Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, who had by then developed strained relations with the UF to form a government with the support of the Congress and the Shoshit Dal, but he refused to oblige them.

The Governor's Role

The Governor, too, had his role to play. When approached by Bhola Paswan Shastri (B.P. Shastri) to allow him to form a government, the Governor asked for the list of his supporters and their signatures. A list of Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD), formerly JKD, members was submitted by Basant Narayan Singh, the General Secretary of the party in the state. But the Governor,


aware of the strained relations between Mahamaya Prasad Sinha and the UF leaders, insisted on the signature of Mahamaya Prasad Sinha also being prefaced. When Sinha gave to the Governor, in writing his decision to support Paswan, the latter had to accept the new situation. He then asked for a common agreed programme of the Front though barely a month and a half back when he was in the Shoshit Dal Ministry he had never thought of any programme. To meet this, the constituents of the UF prepared a 17-point tentative programme. Having been satisfied on all counts, the Governor, on March 21, 1960, invited B.P. Shastri to form the new government.

**Constituents of the United Front**

Among the partners of the UF, only the CPI and the Jan Sangh were able to finalise their lists of nominees for the Council of Ministers without much delay. The SSP, the PSP and the SKL had apparently decided to join the Ministry after getting clearance from their National Executives. But, in fact, factional in-fighting was preventing them from joining the Ministry.

**Samsyukta Socialist Party**

When the Paswan Ministry was formed, the SSP gave the assurance that it would soon join the Ministry without delay.

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179. Ibid.


But in-fighting within the party on the question of allocation of ministerial seats prevented it from taking a prompt decision about joining the Ministry. The central leadership was also not so prompt in resolving the controversy. In such a situation, as a face-saving device, the SSP refused to join the Ministry, unless two of its major demands, (1) the abolition of land revenue on uneconomic holdings, and (2) a complete ban on the use of English for official purposes, were accepted. There were other conditions also including sixty percent representation for the Harijans, Adivasis, women and Backward community in the Ministry. On April 28, 1968, the Coordination Committee of the UF decided to revise its 17-point common programme and to add to it another 14-points including those of abolishing of land revenue on uneconomic holdings, ban on official use of English and completion of inquiry into charges of corruption against highly placed persons. On June 9, 1968, the SSP permitted its Bihar unit to join the Paswan Ministry, provided the Chief Minister agreed immediately to suspend the collection of land revenue and give an assurance that within ten days of the prorogation of the Assembly an ordinance would be issued exempting land revenue on holdings upto 6.5 acres. Thus, the SSP, the major partner in the coalition, continued to refuse to join the Ministry on one pretext or the other.

182. Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 337.
183. Ibid., p. 335.
184. Ibid., p. 336.
**Praja Socialist Party**

The PSP was divided into two groups headed by Basawan Singh and Suraj Narain Singh respectively. The former was in favour of joining the Paswan Government, while the latter was opposed to it. Finally, it was due to the efforts of H.V. Kamath that differences were ironed out and the PSP decided to join the Ministry.

**Bharatiya Kranti Dal**

The Chairman of the All India BKL, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, was against his party's joining the Government. But the state unit was not ready to follow him. Kamakhya Narain Singh, along with his 17 supporters severed his connection with the BKL and revived his old party - Janata Party - and pledged his party's support to the Paswan Ministry.

**Expansion**

The strength of the Paswan Ministry rose to eight with the swearing-in of five more Ministers (all of Cabinet rank) on May 1, 1968. These Ministers were: Indradeep Singh and Chandra Shekhar Singh (CPI), Vijoy Kumar Mitra and Ramdeo Mahto (Jan Sangh) and Majhi Rasa Raj Tuddu (LCD). The CPI and the Jan Sangh

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retained the team which represented them in the first UF Ministry. Majhi Rasraj Tuddu became the fourth Loktantrik Congress Minister in the 8-member Cabinet.

Kamakhya Narain Singh and his younger brother Basant Narain Singh were sworn-in on May 3, 1968, raising the strength of the Cabinet to 10. The Paswan Ministry was further expanded on May 12, 1968 with the addition of Hasibur Rahman and Ramapat Singh (PSP) and Deep Narain Singh (LCD) as members of the Cabinet. This raised the strength of the second United Front Ministry to 13.

With the exception of the SSP, all major partners of the UF joined the Ministry. The SSP finally decided to join the Ministry and on June 22, 1968 finalised the list of ten members to be included in the Council of Ministers. But then it became too late. The Paswan Ministry went out of office after three days and the party remained unrepresented in the Ministry. Table VII gives the party-wise break-up of the Paswan Ministry along with the caste and region of the Ministers.

Party-wise break-up

All the thirteen members of the second UF Ministry were Ministers of Cabinet rank. There were no State and Deputy

188. Ibid., May 4, 1968.

189. Ibid., May 13, 1968.
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190. Caste and Constituency, *Supra* Chapter III, Footnote 78 (b) and (c), p. 109.
Ministers, because Paswan did not get the opportunity to include them in his Ministry. Out of thirteen Ministers, only one was a member of the Vidhan Parishad. All constituents of the UF retained their old teams. Only Ramapati Singh was elevated to the Cabinet rank in place of Basawan Singh, who ceased to be a member of the Legislature. Among the constituents, the Loktantrik congress Dal had as many as five members in the Council of Ministers. The other partners of the UF, namely the CPI, the PSP, the Jan Sangh and the Janata Party of Raja Ramgarh had two members each in the Paswan Ministry.

Caste-wise Analysis

Although the Chief Minister himself was a Scheduled Caste, his Ministry was dominated by men from the Forward Castes. There were seven Forward Caste Ministers in the Paswan Government. Among them Rajputs were four and Bhumihars three. Kayasthas and Brahmins, among the Forward Castes, remained unrepresented. The Backward Castes had three men in the Coalition Ministry. Two of them were Koiris and one was a Kurmi. Yadavas, a dominant caste among the Backward Castes, for the first time, had no member in the second UF Ministry. The Scheduled Tribes had one member in the Ministry. Hasibur Rahman was the sole member belonging to the Muslim minority. The remaining one Minister belonged to the Bengali community. Women were not represented in the Paswan Ministry.

Region-wise Analysis

Out of thirteen Ministers of the second UF Ministry, eight
belonged to the North Plains. It was the first time that a chief minister came from this region. Though B.P. Mandal also belonged to this region but when he became chief minister, he was a nominated member of the Vidhan Parishad. The South Plains and the tribal belt of Chhotanagpur had two members each in the Council of Ministers.

Resignation of the Ministry

However, the second UF Ministry could not last long. Threats of resignation of ministers, pressure of the constituent units and the unacceptable demands of the Raja of Ramgarh made the Paswan Ministry to crumble. The Chief Minister tendered his resignation on June 25, 1968 to the Governor and recommended President's Rule followed by mid-term elections in the state. The 95-day-old Ministry, third since the fourth General Elections, went out of office without passing the state Budget. Finance Minister, K.K. Singh, announced the resignation of the Government in the Assembly, when the House was discussing the Appropriations Bill.

Bhola Paswan in his resignation letter said that, "in the present situation when none of the political parties is in an absolute majority in the Vidhan Sabha, and Kamakhya Narain Singh, PWD minister, is placing before me, directly or indirectly, such demands as could not be accepted in the interests of the

people or the state, it will not be possible for me to run a democratic government". Later, explaining the reasons for his resignation at a press conference at his residence, the Chief Minister indirectly indicted the Congress for "conspiring to topple his government" with a view to scuttling the judicial probe ordered by the first UF Government into the charges of corruption against the former Chief Minister. He directly accused the Raja of Ramgarh for "pressurizing" him to do certain things like making "special arrangements" for conducting his court cases and engagement of a lawyer of his choice for the purpose, transfers and postings of officials to suit his likes and dislikes, allotment of portfolios of Mines and Minerals to his nominees or his elevation to the Deputy Chief Ministership.

Role of the Raja of Ramgarh

Of course, the Raja of Ramgarh played a key role in the fall of the Paswan Ministry. Ever since, he broke away from the BJP along with his supporters, he started creating troubles for Paswan expecting that he would yield to his pressure. Allotment of Mines and Minerals and Forest portfolios to him or to his nominees was his declared condition before joining the first UF Government. This time he claimed Deputy Chief Ministership also, because of the 'sacrifices' he made by severing

192. Ibid.

193. Ibid.
his relations with the BMD, foregoing Chief Ministership and Chairmanship of the Coordination Committee and saving Bihar from President's Rule. When the Chief Minister showed no sign of yielding, the Raja resigned from the Cabinet on June 12, 1968 on grounds of health. But the real reason for his resignation was his inability to get the Mines and Mineral Departments, the Deputy Chief Ministership and non-withdrawal of the cases pending against him. However, talks were held and efforts were made to reconcile Ramakya Narain Singh, but he continued with his threats of toppling the Paswan Ministry. On June 24, 1968, he himself told newsmen that he had written to the Governor conveying the withdrawal of his party's support to the UF. But only a couple of hours later, he surprised everybody by his announcement that after his discussions with the Chief Minister, he had decided to withdraw the letter of resignation written to the Governor. "What induced him to do so and what happened subsequently to change the position drastically has not been explained and may never be known fully". Even after this, the Raja went on bargaining with both sides - the ruling UF and the Congress Opposition. On the one hand, he

194. Ibid., May 2, 1968.
worked for someone else to be the Chief Minister and asked for the transfers of certain officers. On the other hand, he was also in constant touch with the Congress eventually to bring down the Paswan Ministry and to form a new government with the support of the Congress and the Shoshit Dal. But he was outwitted by Bhola Paswan who resigned at a time when the ministerial crises appeared to have blown over. He surprised the Raja and exposed his game.

Role of the Congress Party

The Congress Party in Bihar again cannot be absolved of the blame for the fall of the Paswan Ministry. The leadership of the Party was not prepared to reconcile to the Paswan Ministry and was in a hurry to return to power by continuing the toppling drama. M.P. Sinha, on March 27, 1968, said that the Congress would continue its efforts to explore the possibility of making a common cause with like-minded democratic parties so that the State might not have political instability. When the Raja of Ramgarh resigned on June 12, 1968, there were hectic political activities in the Congress camp for trying to evolve a strategy for toppling the UF Government with the help of the Shoshit Dal and the Janata Party. But the party failed to form the Ministry. Thus, the machinations of the Congressmen emboldened the Raja but they failed to dictate their terms.


200. Ibid.
in Bihar politics.

**Role of the Constituents**

Apart from the machinations of the Raja and the Congress Party, the constituent units of the UF, particularly the SSP and the BKD, also had their share in the fall of the Ministry.

**Samyukta Socialist Party**

The SSP had played an important part in bringing down the 'Defectors' Government' and again sacrificed its claim of the Chief Ministership on account of being the largest partner of the Front. But then the Party did not join the Ministry immediately and a long period elapsed before its decision to join the Ministry on June 22, 1968. The party gave all support to the Government, but giving support from outside and joining the Ministry were quite different things. It made the position of the Ministry more shaky because conditions, one after another, were placed before the Chief Minister as a price for joining the Government. With regard to its condition of giving sixty percent representation to Harijans, Adivasis, women and Backward Castes in the Ministry, it is to be noted that the Party itself did not follow this formula, while finalising its own list of nominees. It is evident from its list of nominees in the first UF Ministry. Kishen Patnaik, a prominent youth leader of the party, admitted that the SSP leaders in Bihar never seriously

thought of implementing reservation formula. Further, for them the Backward Castes meant, firstly, only Kurmis, Yadavas and Koiris and, secondly, educated sections of these castes. A spokesman of the UF said that, "it was the internal crisis of the SSP which wrecked the first SVD Ministry and one should not be surprised if the SSP antics this time scuttle the new SVD Ministry too. Last time the SPP, in addition to having the posts of Deputy Chief Ministership and the Speakership of the Assembly, had the largest share in the Ministry. Even then, it did not include a single Harijan in its quota in the Ministry. But when things settled down, after many months, it started pressing the Chief Minister Mahamaya Prasad Sinha to broaden his Ministry by including these elements in accordance with the SSP theory of caste revolution". Thus, the SSP had the greatest share after the Raja of Ramgarh, in bring about the fall of the Paswan Ministry. Had the party promptly joined the Ministry, the situation might have changed for better.

**Bharatiya Kranti Dal**

The BKD, though badly weakened by the desertation of the Raja and his followers, also played its role in the fall of the Paswan Ministry. Its All-India Chairman, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, could not reconcile himself to the UF Ministry, because he had to leave the leadership of the Front in favour of Bhola

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Paswan. He accused the UF of having "devoid of moral values and sense of service". The party did not join the Ministry and gave only qualified support to the Government. But after sometime, the party withdrew even this qualified support from the Ministry. The CPI(M), a smaller partner of the Front, also did not join the Ministry and withdrew its support from the Government on June 22, 1968 along with the BKD.

With the exit of the 4-member CPI(M) and 3-member BKD, the Front was placed in a precarious position. The attitude of the Front partners, thus, emboldened the Raja to bargain from the position of strength. The Front leaders failed to take stock of the situation in the state and to foil the game of the Raja of Ramgarh.

Conclusions: March 1967 - June 1968

With the fall of the second SVD Government and the dissolution of the State Assembly, the first phase of "non-Congressism" came to an end in Bihar. It was a phase characterised by a vague desire of the masses to get rid of the Congress 'somehow' and to form 'any other' government in its place. It was also a phase characterised by the formation of amorphous non-Congress governments consisting of political parties ranging

206. Ibid.
from the Jan Sangh to Socialists and Communists and disparate political elements like the Raja of Ramgarh and B.P. Mandal.

During this period of one year and four months, there were three ministerial changes in Bihar. It is interesting, however, that all the three ministerial collapses were brought by large-scale defections, the first two involving intra-party splits and the third involving the threat of defection by an entire party from the Government. The ways in which three governments fell indicate that there were three factors affecting the stability of the ministries: "The personal ambitions of the frustrated ministers, internal party divisions and cross-party or single-party legislative interests, such as those of the Middle Castes or those of a great landlord - industrialist and his personal dependents. It is also important to note that none of the three ministerial crises could be attributed to the withdrawal of support by a party on a question of principle.

During the period of 16 months, over 200 acts of defection took place in the state. Some 85 legislators changed sides, at least twice, while a few of them did so as many as four times. No major party or group was free from erosion. Some of the party leaders had changed their views and positions more than once. For example, the Raja of Ramgarh expressed divergent

208. Indian Nation, June 30, 1968.
views on the formation of a successor Minister to that of Bhola Paswan thrice within 24 hours.

In such a short period, Bihar had four Chief Ministers and all of them were defectors excepting Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, who left the Congress on the eve of the fourth General Elections. Satish Prasad Singh and Bindeshwar Prasad Mandal had defected from the SSP and the UF. Bhola Paswan had defected from the Congress. Table VIII shows party-position in the state as after the elections in 1967 and as at the time of the dissolution of the Assembly in the last week of June, 1968.

It is clear from this Table that all major parties, with the exception of the Communists, were losers in the process of defections. However, the Congress Party suffered heavily followed by the SSP among the non-Congress parties. It is worth mentioning that defectors, by and large, did not leave one party to join another, but to form a new party or group of their own with a view to holding the balance between the old parties for the purpose of bargaining for power. As a result, three new groups of defectors were born in the Assembly. They were the Shoshit Dal, the Loktantrik Congress Dal and the Janata Party. They all had a fair share of ministerial offices during this period. Table IX shows defectors' share in ministerial offices during this period.

As is evident from Table IX defectors' share in minis-

209. Ibid. (Continued p. 171)
TABLE VIII

Party position in the Bihar Assembly as after the 1967 elections and as at the time of its dissolution in June, 1968.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>After the 1967 elections</th>
<th>At the time of dissolution</th>
<th>Net gain or loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>- 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>- 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI(M)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSFI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>- 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKD</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>- 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janata Party</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoshit Dal</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>- 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 318

210. Ibid., one CPI member defected from the party and one joined it.
Defectors' share in ministerial offices
March 1967-June 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>1st UF Govt.</th>
<th>Shoshit Dal</th>
<th>2nd UF Govt.</th>
<th>2nd Shoshit Dal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Ministers</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Ministers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers of State</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Ministers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of defectors</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The share of defectors in ministerial offices during this period was as high as 57.8%. As many as 46 defectors were rewarded with ministerial berths, though the total number of ministers was only 83. Thus, it was a period in which unprincipled defectors reaped rich harvest at the cost of political stability.
CHAPTER IV

THE MIXED COALITION GOVERNMENTS

(A) THE CONGRESS-LED COALITION GOVERNMENT

Mid-Term Election

Bihar was placed under President's Rule for some eight months from June, 1968 to February, 1969 after the resignation of the Paswan Government. The mid-term poll held in February, 1969, however, failed to provide a stable majority government and end political instability and uncertainty. The Bihar electorate, called upon to choose from among parties, which had disgraced themselves in every conceivable way, refused to give a clear mandate to a party or group of like-minded parties to run the state for the rest of five years. In fact, the mid-term election unleashed fresh forces of political chaos, whose ramifications unfolded only gradually. Despite the multiplicity of parties and a refurbished image by the exclusion of the controversial leaders, not only did the Congress sustain further losses, but no other party succeeded in getting a workable majority in the Assembly.

Table I shows the electoral performances of the political parties in the mid-term election.

1. Five controversial leaders, namely K.B. Sahay, M.P. Sinha, S.N. Sinha, Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav and Ambika Saran Singh, were not given Congress tickets to contest in the mid-term poll.
### TABLE I

Political parties in the mid-term election (February, 1969)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India (CPI)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M))</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praja Socialist Party (PSP)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janata Party</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loktantrik Congress Dal (LCD)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hul Jharkhand</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soshit Dal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>317</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. *Indian Nation* (Patna), February 15, 1969. One seat in the 318-member Vidhan Sabha-Masrakh - was vacant.

* Independents included those who had been elected on the tickets of Jharkhand, Forward Bloc and Republican parties, who were allotted free symbols. Among them 15 belonged to different factions of the old Jharkhand Party, 1 each to the Forward Bloc and RPI and 6 Independents, *Link*, February 23, 1969.
While the Congress share was reduced from 128 in 1967 to 118 in 1969, its loss of seats had not meant a gain for any other party. As is evident from Table II, if the Congress lost 81 seats to different parties, it gained 71 seats from them. The Congress was able to retain a little over 30 percent of the seats, that is, 47 out of 128, won in 1967, a performance matched only by the SSP and surpassed only by the CPI (which retained 40 percent of the seats won in 1967). The Jan Sangh and the PSP, on the other hand, could retain only about a third (33\%) of the seats won in 1967. It is also to be noted that only the Jan Sangh gave a better performance in 1969 than in 1967. The Congress had gained most from the SSP, capturing 30 seats loosing 20 seats to it. In the case of the Jan Sangh, the Congress wrestled 10 seats and lost 15 seats to it. Similarly, in the cases of the CPI and the PSP, Congress wrestled 8 seats each from them and lost 10 to the CPI and 11 to the PSP. Thus, the decline in the Congress dominance in Bihar had not benefitted any single party. Not only had the opposition parties to contend the superior organizational strength of the Congress, they also squandered their strength by fighting among themselves.

A notable feature of the mid-term election was that while the two parties of defectors - Shoshit Dal and Loktantric Congress - suffered heavy losses, the third one, Janata Party of Raja Ramgarh, retained its hold over the electorate in the Chotanagpur region of the state. The LCD, which contested 98 seats expecting spectacular success, could secure only 9 seats.
### TABLE II

Losses and gains by parties in Bihar (1967 - 1969)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gains 1969</th>
<th>Congress</th>
<th>SSP</th>
<th>JS</th>
<th>CPI</th>
<th>PSP</th>
<th>CPI(M)</th>
<th>SWA</th>
<th>Ind.&amp; Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI(M)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents and others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>318</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Masrakh seat was later won by the SSP.

** It includes Janata 14, Forward Bloc 1, BKD 6 and other parties 25.
in the new Assembly. Out of 22 sitting legislators, 17 had been unseated. However, most of its leaders, including B.P. Shastri, Harinath Mishra, K.K. Singh, Deep Narain Singh and Laliteshwar Prasad shahi (L.P. Shahi) had returned victorious. The strength of the Shoshit Dal in the new House was only 6. Only three to four, out of over two dozen former Shoshit Dal Ministers, who had contested the polls, had won. The Janata Party had won 14 seats, including two won by its leader Kamakhya Narain Singh. The Bharatiya Kranti Dal Chairman, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, was returned from Maharajganj constituency in Saran district.

Ministry Making

Thus, the pattern of party strength emerging out of the mid-term election was more or less similar to that after 1967. The only difference was that the non-Congress parties, after the General Elections, were in a mood to coalesce to keep the Congress out. This time, at least some of them, were more choosy about their coalition partners.

Sanyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) Formation

No doubt, attempts were made to form another SVD, but the mutual antipathy of the Jan Sangh and the CDI stood in the way. Immediately after the announcement of the poll result, the SSP started intense activity for the establishment of a non-Congress Coalition. The tripple alliance (SSP, PSP and the LCD), which had fought election unitedly, elected B.P. Shastri as its leader

5 Ibid.
and Karppori Thakur as Deputy Leader. But the CPI declared that it would support from outside any non-Congress government, which did not include the Jan Sangh and the Janata Party of the Raja of Ramgarh. The Jan Sangh also declared its decision not to sit in a coalition with the CPI. Thus, these two parties foiled the move of a non-Congress coalition government because without their support such a government could not be thought of. At one stage, when the Jan Sangh, changing its stand, even offered to sit with the Communists, the CPI refused to reciprocate. Thus, mere non-Congressism did not succeed this time, and so despite continuing efforts of the triple alliance, the prospect of a non-Congress coalition had receded.

In contrast to 1967, the initiative now lay with the Congress, which was able to forge an alliance and form a Ministry. But the election of the CLP leader involved hard bargaining. There were three or four serious contenders for the post. The BPCC President Anant Prasad Sharma, despite his desire, could not muster enough support and quietly withdrew from the field. The dissidents and younger party elements set up Daroga Prasad Rai (D.P. Rai), a former Minister of State. The five state Congress bosses, who were kept out of the poll,

7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
raised their heads again and tried to play the role of king-makers and sponsored the name of Sardar Harihar Singh. On February 19, 1969, Sardar Harihar Singh was elected the Leader of the Bihar CLP by defeating D.P. Rai by 140 votes to 33. He was invited, on February 21, 1969, by the Governor, Nityanand Kanungo, to form a government, but Harihar Singh sought five days time to 'fulfil certain formalities'. It now appears that he sought time only to forge an alliance with the smaller and splinter groups to muster the majority necessary to form a government. He succeeded in securing the support of the Janata Party, the BKD, the Jharkhand Party, the Shoshit Dal, the Swatantra Party and 6 Independents after a very exacting and prolonged bargaining. claiming absolute majority in the 318-member Assembly, he submitted to the Governor a list of 162 supporters. The list included: Congress 118, Janata 13, Jharkhand 12, Shoshit Dal 6, Swatantra 3, BKD 4 and Independents 6.

It is interesting to note that the six-member BKD Legislature Party was split into two rival groups, one led by the former Chief Minister, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, and the other


by Khaderan Singh. The latter included four of the six BKD members and stood for supporting the Congress-led Coalition of Harihar Singh. This group passed a vote of non-confidence against the leadership of Mahamaya Prasad Singh and elected Khaderan Singh as its leader. The former, in his capacity as the BKD Chairman, expelled all the four members on grounds of indiscipline and defection.

Ministry Formation

15

Sardar Harihar Singh was sworn-in as the Chief Minister of the first-ever Congress-led Coalition government in Bihar on February 26, 1969. With the installation of Harihar’s Government, the 242-day-old President’s Rule in Bihar proclaimed on June 29, 1968 came to an end. However, a sizeable section of the dissident Congressmen, led by L.P. Rai, was critical of the hurry in which the Congress bosses had gone ahead with the with the formation of the Congress-led Coalition. It was,

15. Harihar Singh, on being denied the ticket, left the Congress in 1957, and lost the Second General Elections on a Jan-Congress ticket. In 1960, he joined the Swatantra, then led by the Raja of Ramgarh, and was elected to the Legislative Council. In 1962, Harihar Singh contested as a Swatantra candidate but lost. In 1965, along with the Raja of Ramgarh, he left the Swatantra Party and was returned to the Assembly as an Independent in 1967 General Elections. Later, he was among those who toppled the first UF Government by walking out and joining the Shoshit Dal. He was Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation in the Mandal Government. On the eve of the Mid-term poll, he rejoined the Congress and returned to the Assembly on the Congress ticket. Link, March 2, 1969; Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 347.
17. Times of India, February 27, 1969.
perhaps, because of this controversy that no other Ministers could be sworn-in along with the Chief Minister. The swearing-in of the first batch of Ministers scheduled for March 5, 1969 had to be put off following a controversy over the inclusion of the Raja of Ramgarh, against whom the Calcutta High Court had passed some strictures. However, the first batch of twelve Ministers, including the Raja and his younger brother (both Janata), one nominee each of the Jharkhand and Shoshit Dal and eight Congressmen, was sworn-in on March 7, 1969 by the Governor Nityanand Kanungo. Mochi Rai Munda (Congress) and Puran Chand Birua (Jharkhand), whose names were included in the list, could not take oath as they were out of station. The dissidents were not satisfied and their leader, D.P. Rai refused to join the Cabinet as a protest against “breach of faith by the Chief Minister”. It was understood that the group led by Rai was opposed to the inclusion of the Raja in the Cabinet. He also expected the Chief Minister to give, at least, 4 of the 12 Cabinet seats to the dissidents and similar representation in other tiers of the Ministry. In the list of ten Congress Ministers prepared in the last minute by the Chief Minister, the dissidents were given only two posts, of them only Kedar Pandey took oath.

18. Ibid., March 8, 1969.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
Actually, the Congress dissidents, who were not reconciled to Harihar Singh's Chief Ministership, found in the inclusion of the Raja of Ramgarh in the Cabinet a handy issue to embarrass Harihar Singh. The inclusion of the Raja and the refusal of L.P. Rai roused strong feelings and differences in the Congress Working Committee (CWC). C. Subramaniam supported by Kamraj and Jagjivan Ram attacked, while S.K. Patil and Y.B. Chavan defended the Parliamentary Board's decision to permit the party to enter into a coalition without prior agreement on principles and programmes. S. Nijalingappa, the then Congress President, took full responsibility for permitting Harihar Singh to include the controversial Raja in the Cabinet and offered to resign from the Presidentship on this issue. On March 8, 1969, Subramaniam resigned from the CWC and did not agree to withdraw his resignation despite the unanimous request of the CWC to this effect. On the contrary, he insisted that Harihar Singh should be asked to resign and reconstitute his Government after excluding the Raja. He was strongly opposed to 'unprincipled coalitions solely for the purpose of getting into power' as these led to 'unprincipled defections'. Seeing the controversy getting out of control, an emergency meeting of the CWC on March 12, was reported to have asked the Bihar Chief Minister

22. Ibid.
to persuade the Raja of Ramgarh to resign in favour of his son and any other nominee from his Janata Party. If the Raja refused to agree, the Chief Minister was to submit the resignation of his Ministry and reconstitute it without the Raja. After a great deal of bargaining and behind-the-scene drama, the Raja resigned from the Cabinet on March 28, 1969 on grounds of the "unbecoming controversy" that had been unleashed against him by "certain responsible persons of the High Command". His resignation was accepted by the Governor on April 2, 1969.

The Harihar Ministry was expanded on April 17, 1969 when Shrimati Shashank Manjari Levi, mother of the Raja of Ramgarh and P.C. Birua of the Jharkhand Party were sworn-in as Cabinet Ministers and Mahabir Prasad of the Shoshit Dal as Minister of state. With this addition, the strength of the Ministry rose to 15. Exactly after a month on May 18, the Ministry was further expanded with the addition of 11 Cabinet Ministers and 7 Ministers of state, raising the strength of the Ministry to 33. All Cabinet Ministers, with exception of Seth Hembrum of the Hull Jharkhand, belonged to the Congress Party. Of the Ministers

23. Ibid., p. 350.
27. Search Light (Patna), May 19, 1969.
of State, four were from the Janata Party and two from the Jharkhand Party. The remaining one was an Independent. The Chief Minister had said that the team was not yet complete and that some more appointments would be made. A notable feature of this addition was that the dissidents leader D.P. Rai had, ultimately, agreed to join the Harihar Government. Another notable feature was that Harihar Singh had succeeded during the interval since the previous expansion to rope in the 7-member Hul Jharkhand group into the ruling coalition. After the 1969 mid-term poll this group had so far been in the Opposition. It is also to be noted that with this expansion the Janata Party got six seats in the 33-member Council of Ministers. The party had also succeeded in including an Independent member in the Ministry. This representation was certainly disproportionate to the party's strength in the Assembly. It seems that this was done to assuage the feelings of the Raja, who had to resign from the Cabinet after the controversy.

**Party-wise Break-up**

Out of 33 Ministers in the Congress-led Coalition Ministry, all but three were members of the Assembly. All these three Ministers belonged to the Congress Party. As is clear from Table III, the Congress had 19 members in Council of Ministers, including the Chief Minister. It was followed by the Janata

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28. *Indian Express* (Delhi), May 20, 1969.
## TABLE III

Showing caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the Harihar Singh Ministry, 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Region</th>
<th>Caste/ Community</th>
<th>Rural/ Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CABINET MINISTERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamaldeo Narain Sinha Kayastha</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Purnea (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedar Pandey Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Naun (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zawar Hussain Muslim</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Ziradei (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punar Lal Baitha Dhobi(SC)</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Raniganj (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Hussain Azad Muslim</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Thakurganj (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahdeo Mahto Koiri</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rosera (Darbhanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Sonepur (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darogha Prasad Rai Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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South Plains

Sardar Harihar Singh Rajput (Congress, MLA) Rural Dumraon (Shahabad)

Jagdeo Prasad Koiri (Shoshit, MLA) Rural Kurtha (Gaya)

Shatrughan Sharan Singh Bhumihar (Congress, MLA) Rural Pisua (Gaya)

Seth Hembrum ST Rural Borio (SP)

Chotanagpur

Basant Narain Singh Rajput (Janata, MLA) Rural Bagodar (Hazaribagh)

Neelam L. Horo ST Rural Torpo (Ranchi)

Smt. Shashank Manjari Rajput (Janata, MLA) Rural Jairidih (Hazaribagh)

T. Muchirai Munda ST Rural Khunti (Ranchi)

Puran Chand Birua ST Rural Maghgaon (Singhbhum)

Members of Legislative Council

Mungerilal Dusadh (SC)

Jagannath Prasad Singh Rajput (Congress, MLC)

Ram Bilas Singh Bhumihar (Congress, MLC)

Ministers of State

North Plains

Mahabir Prasad Yadav (Shoshit, MLA) Rural Biraul (Darbhanga)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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(b) Caste, vide Footnote *Supra* 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.

Party which had 6 members in the Ministry. All the 19 members of the Congress were Ministers of Cabinet rank. Of the six Janata Party Ministers, two were Cabinet Ministers and the remaining four Ministers of State. The Jharkhand Party had got four seats - two Cabinet and two Ministers of State. The Hul Jharkhand had only one member in the Ministry. The Shoshit Dal was given two berths in the ruling Coalition Government. The remaining one Minister of State was a Janata Party supported Independent member.

Caste-wise Analysis

As far as the caste of the Ministers was concerned, the Harihar Singh Ministry was dominated by the Upper Caste men. Out of 33 Ministers, fourteen came from these castes. Among these fourteen - seven, including the Chief Minister, were Rajputs, four Bhumihars, two Brahmins, including a Meithil Brahmin, and one Kayastha. The Rajputs bagged half of the total share of the Upper castes. The Backward Castes eight berths in the Congress-led ruling Coalition. Of these, four were Koiras, three Yadavas and one was a Bania. There were five (four Cabinet and one Minister of State) scheduled Tribes Ministers. Three members of the Harihar Ministry were scheduled Castes. They all were Cabinet Ministers. The Muslims had three berths (two Cabinet and one Minister of State) in the Government.

Out of the 19 Congress Ministers, nine were Upper Castes men, four belonged to the Backward Castes, three to the Scheduled
Castes, two to the Muslim minority and one to the Scheduled Tribes. Thus, the Congress, though gave weightage to the upper castes, included in its quota of Ministers almost all important and powerful caste segments in the state. However, the party lagged behind in giving a place to women in the Government. Of the six Ministers coming from the Janata, five were forward castes (four Rajputs and one Bhumihar) and one a Koiri Backward Caste. It is interesting to know that two of the Janata Ministers were family members of the Raja of Ramgarh, one his mother and the other his younger brother (both Cabinet Ministers). Out of the four Jharkhand Ministers, three were scheduled Tribes and one a Koiri Backward. The lone member of the Hils Jharkhand also belonged to the Scheduled Tribes. Both Shoshit Dal Ministers belonged to the Backward Castes; one a Yadav and another one a Koiri. The lone woman Minister came from the Janata Party. Shrimati Shashank Manjari replaced her son, Kamakhya Narain Singh, after his forced resignation from the Cabinet as described earlier. So, it was a mere chance that a woman was included in the Harihar Singh Ministry.

Regional Representation

So far as the regional representation in the Congress-led coalition was concerned, the North Plains had the highest number of Ministers. There were 16 Ministers (13 of Cabinet rank and 3 Ministers of State) belonging to this region. Next came the Chotanagpur region, which had 10 Ministers - 5 Cabinet
and 5 Ministers of State - in the Ministry. There were four Ministers, including the Chief Ministers, belonging to the South Plains. Of the 16 Ministers hailing from the North Plains, 13, all of Cabinet rank, belonged to the Congress Party, one each to the Shoshit Dal and the Janata Party and one was an Independent. Out of ten Ministers coming from the Chotanagpur region, five belonged to the Janata Party and four to the Jharkhand Party. The remaining one Cabinet Minister came from the Congress Party. Of the four Ministers belonging to the South Plains, two belonged to the Congress and one each to the Shoshit Dal and the Hul Jharkhand. Thus, it was the Congress Party which selected Ministers from all the three regions of the state.

Rural/Urban Bases of the Ministers

Most of the Ministers of the Haribar Singh Ministry came from the rural areas of the state. Only five Ministers represented the urban people in the Government. Of the 19 Congress Ministers, 13 came from the rural areas and only three came from the urban areas. Of the six Janata Ministers only one Minister of State represented the urban people. Both nominees of the Shoshit Dal represented rural areas. All Ministers of the Jharkhand and the Hul Jharkhand, excepting one, came from rural areas.

It is interesting to note that not all Ministers of the Congress-led Coalition Government could be allotted portfolios. Only 12 out of 33 Ministers were able to get portfolios on
April 2, 1969. The Ministers who took oath on April 17 and May 18, 1969 remained without any work till the fall of the Ministry.

Fall of the Harihar Singh Ministry

Shaky since the day of its formation, the 115-day-old Harihar Singh Ministry suffered a defeat in the Assembly on a snap vote on the budget demands of the Animal Husbandry department on June 20, 1969. Harihar Singh submitted the resignation of his Ministry that very evening. The demand was rejected by 164 votes to 143. Karpoori Thakur, the SSP leader, gave the following break-up of the MLAs who voted with the Opposition: SSP 53, Jan Sangh 33, CPI 25, PSP 17, LCD 9, Hul Jharkhand 7, Shoshit Dal 6, BKD 5, CPI(M) 3 and Jharkhand 4.

While the Assembly was debating the demand, Jagdeo Prasad, the River Valley Project and Planning Minister and Mahabir Prasad, a Minister of state, belonging to the Shoshit Dal, along with other four members crossed the floor and voted against the Government. Similarly, Seth Hembrura of the Hul Jharkhand led his group from the Treasury benches to the Opposition benches. The only consolation for Harihar Singh was that the Jharkhand

32. Ibid., June 22, 1969.
Minister, N.E. Horo and Jharkhand leader Bagun Sumbrui stood by it. Six Congress members were absent at the time of voting.

The main reason behind the collapse of the first-ever Congress-led coalition Government was bitter wrangling among the coalition partners and rival factions within the Congress over the distribution of ministerial offices and allocation of portfolios. Every party boss and every faction leader was anxious to bag for his men as many ministerial seats as possible.

Choice of Harihar Singh

Harihar Singh himself was not a happy choice for the Chief Ministership, but having elected him as leader, Congressmen in Bihar could have offered him unstinted cooperation. But Congressmen were not united, and dissidents seemed to be as eager as the opposition parties to bring about the fall of the Harihar Singh Government. In fierce rivalry, it was not clear who was cutting off whose nose to spite whom. Initially, Harihar Singh was elected leader of the CLP with the support of the leaders of the five groups in the state Congress. Most of these leaders were under eclipse, but the thought that by combining they would manage the puppet show. The Chief Minister openly

34. Times of India, June 21, 1969.
and repeatedly declared his subservience to K.B. Sahay, M.P.
Sinha and S.N. Sinha. But this proved to be a short honey-moon
and they soon fell apart over the distribution of ministerial
seats and portfolios and started wooing the dissidents to
oust the Ministry.

Harihar Singh, too, had not played his part well. He did
not prove to be a good gambler. He depended too much on the
big bosses of the Congress and the Janata Party, particularly
the Raja of Ramgarh. This lowered his and his Government's
image in public. He could not even complete his team of Ministers.
All the time Harihar Singh was in office, he was busy shifting
the claims and counter-claims of Congress legislators for being
included in the cabinet. His Ministry was installed with the
swearing-in of a lone Minister, i.e., himself. The expansion
in instalments reflects the difficulties Harihar Singh was
facing in selecting his colleagues. He had not only to satisfy
the rival claims of the various constituents of the ill-assorted
coalition, but to contend against the conflicting pulls within
his own party. In addition to the 33 Ministers in his Ministry,
over a dozen more Ministers of State and a few Deputy Ministers
were to be added, mostly from his own party. But this was put

off because of sharp differences among the State Congress bosses over certain names. Harihar Singh created history by not allotting portfolios to 21 out of 33 Ministers. A poor and helpless Chief Minister, he was merely postponing the day of his fall because he was unable to reconcile the conflicting claims of his angry and ambitious colleagues. As most of the Ministers happened to be the nominees of the State Congress bosses, the chief had to keep them satisfied. Besides, he was committed to the dissident leaders to allot them some important portfolios. Ministers belonging to the Jharkhand Party were pressing their claim for the portfolios of Tribal welfare, Mines, Forest and Revenue, in which, they said, Adivasis were vitally interested. Shoshit Dal Ministers Jagdeo Prasad staked his claim for Power and Irrigation portfolios, and the claims of non-Congress Ministers could not be ignored. But the irony of the situation was that the Ministers sworn-in earlier were not prepared to part with any of their portfolios. Many Ministers including the Finance Minister, Zawar Hussain, and Education Minister, N. E. Horo, had threatened to quit the Cabinet if their portfolios were changed. The Chief Minister, who had to get approval of the State Congress bosses on almost all such issues, felt helpless because of sharp differences among them. The

41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
Chief Minister's style of functioning also annoyed some of the partners of the Coalition. His action in withdrawing an appeal, pending in the supreme Court for managing all properties involved in the long-drawn litigations between the Raja of Ramgarh and the State Government, without taking the Cabinet into confidence or consulting the department concerned, made the Jharkhand Party and the Shoshit Dal extremely unhappy. In the Cabinet meeting, several Ministers, including Jagdeo Prasad, N.E. Horo and Mungerilal expressed resentment on the issue.

Role of the Splinter and Regional Groups

The inception of the Ministry was somewhat abortive. The Coalition with the Janata Party was an ignominy. The Coalition with the Shoshit Dal, Jharkhand and Hul Jharkhand, likewise, proved disastrous. The Ministry became virtually an abomination. There was the curious anomaly of some of the Jharkhand and Hul Jharkhand members becoming Ministers and some of them sitting with the opposition. The Chief Minister, no doubt, succeeded in getting the support of the 7-member Hul Jharkhand, but its leaders were not happy over the 'inadequate' representation given to their group in the

Ministry. There was also a feeling of resentment among these various groups at the seemingly large representation secured by the 13-member Janata Party, which had six of its members in the Ministry. There was again, deep resentment among the ruling coalition partners over the postponement of the swearing-in of Ministers of state and the failure on the part of the Chief Minister to allocate portfolios to the jobless Ministers.

Role of the Congress Party

However, the greater difficulty that the Coalition faced came from the wranglings within the Congress Party, its major partner. The Congress Party was as divided as it was before the Mid-term poll. The controversy over the inclusion of the Raja apart, the formation of the Ministry and the allocation of portfolios should have been completed long ago, but for the prolonged fight for ministerial plums among the warring factions in the Congress Party. Thus, the big bosses, who installed Harihar Singh as Chief Minister, were responsible for digging his grave. They never allowed Harihar Singh to work independently.

45. Indian Express (New Delhi), May 20, 1969.
46. Ibid.
47. Patriot, June 3, 1969.
The Congress Central leaders were also responsible for Harihar Singh's fall. They should have given clear guidelines to Bihar Congress leaders with regard to Ministry-making. But they were themselves divided and created a controversy over the inclusion of the Raja of Ramgarh. They also failed miserably to prevent the five big bosses of the state Congress from controlling state Congress affairs from behind the scene.

The dissidents had their share in bringing down their 'own government'. Once defeated in the leadership contest, they could have taken their defeat in a democratic spirit and given whole-hearted support to the Chief Minister, at least, for sometime, to see his performance. Instead, they started pressing their claims over ministerial seats and portfolios. All this brought about the downfall of the Harihar Singh Ministry.

(B) THE THIRD UNITED FRONT GOVERNMENT

The fall of the Harihar Singh Ministry brought the United Front to power for the third time. Bhola Paswan Shastri, the leader of the opposition in the Assembly, on June 21, 1969, was formally invited by the Governor, Nityanand Kanungo, to form a new government. Next day, Paswan took oath as the

48. Asian Recorder (a weekly Digest of Asian Events, New Delhi), August 6 - 12, 1969, p. 9064.
Chief Minister for the second time along with two other Cabinet Ministers. They were Sushil Kumar Bage (Jharkhand) and Shankar Layal Singh (BKD), a member of the Legislative Council. The former had, along with Haricharan Soy, voted against the Congress-led coalition government. Earlier, the SSP, PSP, CPI, Jan Sangh, Loktantrik Congress Dal, Sohshit Dal and some other smaller and splinter groups within the Assembly accepted Paswan as their leader in the legislature.

On June 24, 1969 eight more Cabinet Ministers and six Ministers of state were added to the three-day-old UF Ministry bringing the total strength of the new Ministry to 17. Those sworn-in included four nominees of the Loktantrik Congress, four of the Shoshit Dal, one each of the BKD, Jharkhand and the Forward Bloc and three Independents. Of the Cabinet Ministers, Deep Narain Singh was a Cabinet Minister in the second UF Ministry headed by the same Chief Minister. Krishna Kant Singh was also a Cabinet Minister in the UF Ministry before the mid-term poll. Abdul Ghafoor and L.P. Shahi were Deputy Ministers during the Congress regime some years ago. Sheo Shankar Singh, son of late S.K. Sinha, was a Minister of state during the Congress rule. Mahabir Prasad was a Minister of state not only

during the Congress-backed Shoshit Dal Ministry, but also a member of the Harihar Ministry.

The strength of the Paswan Ministry was further raised to 19 on June 30, 1969 with the swearing-in of two Cabinet Ministers. These two, elected on Congress tickets, had defected to the SVD only five days earlier along with another Congress MLA Madan Besra. The latter was not given any ministerial berths. These two Ministers remained without portfolios till the resignation of the Paswan Ministry. The portfolios of his other colleagues in the Ministry was announced by the Chief Minister in the Assembly on June 27, 1969.

**Party-wise Break-up**

Out of the 19 Ministers — thirteen Ministers and six Ministers of State, the LCD bagged five seats, including the Chief Ministrieship. Apart from Paswan, all other nominees of the LCD were Ministers of Cabinet rank. As is clear from the following Table IV, next to the LCD came the number of the Shoshit Dal, which had secured four ministerial posts, though the group had only six legislators in the Assembly. The BKD had two Ministers (both Cabinet) in the Council of Ministers. The Jharkhand also bagged two seats in the Paswan Ministry.

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52. *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), July 1, 1969.

Showing caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the SVD Ministry, 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Region</th>
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<td><strong>MINISTERS OF STATE</strong></td>
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54. (a) The names and party of the Ministers, Times of India, June 23, 25, 1969; Hindustan Times, July 1, 1969.
(b) Caste, vice supra, Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p.109.
(c) Constituency, vice supra, Footnote 29(c), Chapter IV, p. 186.
There were three Independents in the Ministry, one of them was a Cabinet Minister. The Forward Bloc's lone member in the Assembly was a Minister of State, in the third SVD Government. The remaining two Ministers were Congress defectors. Thus, all mini-partners of the UF Government were given representation in the Ministry highly disproportionate to their strength in the Legislature. One of its reasons might be the decision of the major partners of the Front to remain out of the Government.

Caste-wise Analysis

Of the 19 Ministers of the Paswan Ministry, six Ministers belonged each to the Forward Castes and the Backward Castes. Among the six Upper Castes Ministers, four were Bhumihars (all Cabinet Ministers) and the remaining two were Rajputs also of Cabinet rank. Thus, all Upper Caste members of the Paswan Ministry were the members of the Cabinet. Of the six Backward Castes Ministers, four were Yadavas, one each belonged to the Kurmi and Koiri castes. There were three Muslims in the third United Front Ministry. Two were Scheduled Castes Ministers, one was Paswan himself and the other was a Minister of State. The remaining two Ministers came from the Scheduled Tribes.

Of the parties constituting the UF, the Loktantrik Congress included two Bhumihars, one Rajput, one Muslim and one Scheduled Caste. The BKD included one Rajput and one Bhumihar. Among the four nominees of the Shoshit Dal, three were
Yadavas and the remaining one a scheduled Caste. Both nominees of the Jharkhand Party were Scheduled Tribes. The lone nominee of the Forward Bloc was a Koiri. However, no woman was included in the Ministry.

Region-wise Analysis

Eight members of the Paswan Ministry, including Paswan himself, came from the North Plains. The South Plains had got five berths in the Paswan Ministry. Four Ministers belonged to the Chotanagpur belt of the State. The LCD had selected all its nominees from the North Plains. Of the four Shoshit Dal Ministers, two were from the North Plains and one each from the South Plains and the Chotanagpur belt. The BKD had selected its nominees from the South Plains. The nominees of the Jharkhand Party and the Forward Bloc belonged to the Chotanagpur region. While all Independent Ministers came from the South Plains, both Congress defectors belonged to the North Plains.

Rural/Urban Analysis

Most of the members of the SVD Government represented rural areas of the State. Only three Ministers came from the urban areas. Of the Ministers representing urban population, two belonged to the Shoshit Dal and one to the Jharkhand Part. With the exception of two, all Ministers were MLAs. Of the two MLCs one belonged each to the LCD and the BKD.
Resignation of the SVP Government

However, the Paswan Ministry proved to be the shortest-ever government in Bihar. Nine days after its installation, the third SVP Ministry resigned on July 1, 1969 following the withdrawal of support by the 34-member Jan Sangh group in the Vidhan Sabha. The Chief Minister announced in the Vidhan Sabha the decision of his Ministry to resign. The Governor, Nityanand Kanungo, accepted the resignation and requested Paswan to continue in office until an alternative arrangement was made.

The immediate provocation for the Jan Sangh's action was the inclusion in the Cabinet of two defectors from the Congress and the Front's scheme for redressing the grievances of the Tribal people to get the support of the Hul Jharkhand Party. The Jan Sangh put forward the view that no defector should, as a matter of principle, be appointed Minister.

Paswan read out a letter he had received from the secretary to the Governor saying that the Jan Sangh group in the Assembly had withdrawn its support to the Government. As such, he could not, in the circumstances, continue as Chief

55. Times of India, July 2, 1969.
56. Ibid.
Minister. After question hour, Ravish Chandra Verma, leader of the Jan Sangh in the Assembly, handed over a similar letter to the Chief Minister. Ravish Chandra Verma, in his letter of withdrawal, charged the Chief Minister with 'lust for power'. He took strong objection to the inclusion of two Congress defectors in the Cabinet. He alleged that Paswan had offered similar inducements to the members of the Hul Jharkhand led by Justin Richard, MLC. He also criticised the inclusion of five of the nine Assembly members of the LCD in the Cabinet.

Role of the SSP, CPI and the PSP

Although the immediate reason for Paswan resignation was the withdrawal of support by the Jan Sangh, the Paswan Ministry had never been in a comfortable position necessary to provide a stable government. Its stability was questionable from the day the four major partners of the SVD viz. the SSP, the CPI, the PSP and the Jan Sangh had refused to join the Ministry. Moreover, there were differences of opinion, from the very beginning, between the Jan Sangh, on the one hand, and the SSP, CPI, PSP and the LCD on the other, on Ministry making. Thus, a greater share of responsibility for the fall of the

Paswan Ministry falls on these major constituents of the SVD Government. Had they actively participated in the Ministry, the latter might have survived, at least, for sometime. But they did not join it on the plea that they would function as a watch-dog to ensure the implementation of a time-bound programme in the interests of the people. This explanation seemed to be untenable because a government comprising of Shoshit Lal, Hul Jharkhand and Jharkhand party could not provide even a superficial stability to the Government.

**Role of the Jan Sangh**

However, the Jan Sangh was mainly to blame for the quick fall of the Paswan Ministry. The party had accepted Paswan as the leader of the SVD almost immediately after the mid-term poll and reiterated its choice soon after the fall of the Harihar Singh Ministry. But within a week or so, Paswan became an incarnation of evil in the eyes of the Jan Sangh and its leader, Ravish Chandra Verma, charged him, among other things, with immoral conduct. However, even if Paswan did not come up to their expectations, nothing would have been lost if the party had communicated its withdrawal of support to Paswan instead of writing directly to the Governor. Thus, the party had set up a new precedent by writing to the Governor behind

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the back of the person, whom it had accepted as the leader.
In all fairness, the Jan Sangh leaders should have told
Paswan first that he had lost their confidence. Had Paswan
still clung to office, the Jan Sangh would have been justified
in writing to the Governor.

**Role of Bhola Paswan**

However, the lapses in the conduct of the Jan Sangh did
not absolve Bhola Paswan of his own unprincipled conduct. He
should never have accepted the Chief Ministership if it had
to be sustained by defectors from other parties. All the four
defectors were appointed Ministers. Similarly, both defectors
from the Jharkhand were made Ministers. Out of the defectors
from the Congress, two were made Ministers and the third was
to have been sworn-in soon. Evidently, Paswan was in search
of more and more defectors from the Jharkhand, the Congress
and the Janata Party. Even the arrangement among the consti-
tuents of the UF that 50 per cent of the defectors should be
made Ministers, was unscrupulous. But Paswan went a step further
and increased the percentage on his own. The reason that he
advanced for adopting this course was far from convincing. He
asserted that those legislators who had voluntarily decided

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to support the SVD Government to make it more stable "did deserve adequate representation on the Ministry". It was a confession of political expediency which dictated his decision.

**smaller Parties and splinter Groups**

The six-member Shoshit Dal and the seven-member Hul Jharkhand, both constituents of the ruling Coalition, as was usual with them, created serious trouble over the question of their nominees in the Ministry. The conduct of the members of these parties had been so reprehensible that Bhola Paswan should have displayed considerable discretion in selecting his Ministers from amongst them. Justin Richard, leader of the Hul Jharkhand, had announced on July 1, 1969 that he was ready to support the Congress if he got certain assurances from the Congress High Command. But on June 20, 1969, all seven MLAs of his party had voted against the Congress-led Coalition. Now he was again willing to support the Congress. No Coalition government could hope to run smoothly with the support of a party like the Hul Jharkhand. Although, in all fairness, it should be said that bigger parties, like the Jan Sangh, acted in the same way.

64. *Asian Recorder*, August 6-12, 1969, p. 9064.

The Shoshit Dal also was split into two on June 24, 1969. One group was led by Tari Prasad, General Secretary of the Dal, Jagdeo Prasad, who was removed on June 22, from the leadership of the Dal's legislature wing. The other group was led by Ram Nagra Singh and Satish Prasad Singh. At the same time, the leader of the Jharkhand group in the Assembly, Bagun Sumbrui, declared that his party would not support the Paswan Ministry. The legislature wing of the party also expelled Sushil Kumar Bage and Hari Charan Soy from the party for six years on June 24, 1969, for supporting the non-Congress Coalition without the party's permission.

In the circumstances, the Paswan Ministry was bound to collapse. The objection raised by the Jan Sangh leaders and their subsequent decision to withdraw its support to the Paswan Ministry might have been unwise. Had they not adopted such course, this government might have continued for a few days more. But the adjustment by which a small group, commanding not even 20 votes, in all, in the Bihar Legislature, was expected to carry on the government on the uncertain support of the three major parties was by its very nature so shaky and undependable that such arrangement, however, bonafide could not have lasted for more than a few weeks.

67. Ibid.
The second spell of President's Rule, declared in Bihar on July 4, 1969 after the fall of the third UF Government, came to an end on February 16, 1970 when a six-party Congress(R)-led Coalition, headed by Daroga Prasad Rai (D.P. Rai), was installed in the state. Kedar Pandey (Congress-R) and Bagun Gumbrui (Jharkhand) were sworn-in as Cabinet Ministers on the same date. The Congress (R), the PSP, the CPI, the BMD, the Shoshit Dal and the Jharkhand Party were the partners of the six-party Coalition.

The period between July 4, 1969 and February 16, 1970 saw some important events taking place in Bihar politics. The findings of the two Commissions of enquiry that looked into the charges of corruption against the former Bihar Ministers came to light. The Mudholkar Commission of enquiry, appointed by the Shoshit Dal Ministry, submitted its reports to the Governor on November 19, 1969, and held thirteen out of fourteen Ministers, against whom investigations were made, guilty of abusing their official position. The Aiyar Commission, set up by the first UF Government to probe into the charges of corruption against the former Chief Minister K.B. Sahay and five of his Cabinet colleagues, submitted

68. Search Light, February 17, 1970.
its reports to the Governor on February 7, 1970. The Commission indicted all the six Ministers and found them guilty of favouritism and abuse of power.

Another significant development was that the Congress had split not only at the Centre but also in Bihar. With the exception of Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, the other five Congress leaders stayed with the Congress (O), while the new dissidents in the Bihar Congress aligned themselves with the Prime Minister in the Congress (R). On December 6, 1969, 60 Congress MLAs, in a letter to the Governor, declared that "we no longer recognise Harlhar Singh as our leader" and elected D.P. Rai as the leader in his place on January 11, 1970. By the time, the Congress (R) had emerged as the largest single party in the Assembly and its leader D.P. Rai claimed, and the Governor agreed, that he had the support of 173 members, including a large number of Independents, in a House of 216. The Opposition parties, including the Congress (O), did try to form another SVD Government, but with the resignations of Ramanand Tiwari, leader of the SVD, on February 7, 1970 and of Karpoori Thakur as the Chairman of the SSP on February 10, 1970, all hopes regarding another United Front Government were shattered.

72. Ibid., p. 362.
The third event of far reaching political importance was that following the Congress split and the report of the Aiyar Commission, new alignment did take place among the erstwhile partners of the SVD. The CPI and the PSP left their old partners and formed an alliance with the Congress (R), in accordance with their national policy.

The three-man Coalition Ministry, backed by the six-party alliance, swelled to 21 with the swearing-in of 11 Cabinet Ministers, 6 Ministers of State and one Parliamentary Secretary on February 27, 1970. With the exception of one BKD nominee, who happened to be the Chairman of the BKD, all other entrants belonged to the Congress (R). Among the Cabinet Ministers, nine were former Ministers. The two new comers were Chandra Shekhar Singh and Rameshwar Paswan. None of the Ministers of State had held ministerial posts so far. The man taken as a Parliamentary secretary was also a fresher.

However, two nominees failed to turn up for the swearing-in because, according to the Chief Minister, they had gone out of station. They were Paika Murmu (Minister of State) and Mahanth Vivekanand Girli (Parliamentary Secretary). The former was a Congress (R) nominee while the latter was an Independent.

Of the six-party ruling alliance, PSP, CPI and Shoshit Dal decided not to join the Government 'for the time being'.

Besides the Congress (R), the other two parties that joined the Government were the Jharkhand Party and the BMD, each having one Cabinet post.

The fourth round of Cabinet expansion was completed on April 23, 1970 with the swearing-in of Seth Hembrum, leader of the Hul Jharkhand. The Hul Jharkhand was the seventh partner in the ruling alliance. D.P. Rai expanded his Ministry further by including L.P. Shahi, leader of the LCD in the Assembly as a Cabinet Minister on June 8, 1970. This raised the total strength of his Ministry to 25. It is interesting to note that the nine-member LCD group in the Assembly had been sharply divided on the question of extending support to the Rai Ministry. The group was formally dissolved on May 26, 1970 after a life of 18 months, and its members were left free to join any party or function as independent in the House. Jugal Prasad Yadav MLA, however, claimed that five of the nine MLAs were in favour of maintaining separate identity of the party and had elected L.P. Shahi as their new leader in place of Bhola Paswan.

D.P. Rai, in the sixth round of expansion on September 7, 1970, included six new Ministers - two of Cabinet ranks

75. Hindustan Times, April 24, 1970.
76. Ibid., June 9, 1970.
and four Ministers of State in his Council of Ministers, raising its strength to 31. Of the two new Cabinet Ministers, one was a Shoshit Dal nominee and the other was a Jharkhand Party member. The Shoshit Dal nominee, Jagdeo Prasad, was a former SSP man, who defected along with B.P. Mandal to topple the First UF Government and later defected while still a Minister in the Harihar Singh Ministry. Barring a LCD nominee, all other Ministers of State were Congress (R) members. Of them Bhishma Prasad Yadav was former M.P. and a brother-in-law of the Chief Minister.

Party-wise Break-up

Thus, there were 31 members in the D.P. Rai Ministry. Of them 18 were Cabinet Ministers, 11 Ministers of State and 2 parliamentary secretaries. Table V shows the details of the Congress (R)-led Rai Ministry. With the exception of the CPI and the PSP, all other six partners of the coalition were represented in the Ministry. The Congress (R) had bagged twenty-three ministerial posts, including the post of a Parliamentary Secretary. Of them twelve were Cabinet Ministers, including the Chief Minister and ten Ministers of State. The Jharkhand Party got two ministerial berths, both in the Cabinet. The EKD, the Shoshit Dal and the Hul Jharkhand had one Minister.

78. search Light, September 8, 1970; Link, September 13, 1970, p. 15.


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<th>Constituency</th>
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<td><strong>North Plains</strong></td>
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<td>Dusadh (SC)</td>
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<td>Koiri</td>
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<td>Dusadh (SC)</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Sikandara (Monghyr)</td>
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Chotanagpur

begun gumbrui (Jharkhand, MLA) scheduled Tribe Urban Chaibasa (Singhbhum)

T. Mochi Rai Munda (Congress-R), MLA scheduled Tribe Rural Khunti (Ranchi)

Ratnakar Nayak (Jharkhand, MLA) scheduled Tribe Rural Manoharpur (Singhbhum)

Shankar Dayal Singh (BKD, MLC) Rajput - -

MINISTERS OF STATE

North Plains

Narsingh Baitha (Congress-R), MLA Dhobi (SC) Rural Bagaha (Champanar)

Nathuni Ram Chamar (Congress-R), MLA Chamar (SC) Rural Katea (Saran)

Premchand (Congress-R), MLA Bania Rural Adapur (Champanar)

Mitishwar Prasad Singh (Congress-R), MLA Rajput Rural Gaighatti (Muzaffarpur)

Bhishma Prasad Yadav (Congress-R), MLA Yadav Rural Marhaura (Saran)

Shital Prasad Gupta (Congress-R), MLA Bania Rural Araria (Purnea)

South Plains

Paila Murmu (Congress-R), MLA Scheduled Tribe Urban Dumka (SP)

Dharamvir Singh (Congress-R), MLA Kurmi Rural Bakhtiarpur (Patna)

Yugal Kishore Singh Yadav (LCD, MLA) Yadav Rural Gobindpur (Gaya)
Chotanagpur

Sadanand Prasad Rural Jasma (Hazaribagh) (Congress-R), MLA

Ghanashyam Mahto Rural Patamda (Singhbhum) Noiri (Congress-R), MLA

Hadan Prasad siagfa Rural Gopalpur (Bhagalpur) (Congress-R), MLA

Mahanth Vivekanand Girl Rural Barahara (Shahabad) Rajput (Independent, MLA)

Parliamentary Secretary

South Plains

Madan Prasad Singh Rural Gopalpur (Bhagalpur) Singh (Congress-R), MLA

Mahanth Vivekanand Girl Rural Barahara (Shahabad) Rajput (Independent, MLA)

79. (a) Minister's name and their party, search Light, February 17, Indian Express, February 28, Hindustan Times, April 24 and June 9; and search Light, September 9, 1970.

(b) Caste of the Ministers, vide Supra Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.

(c) Constituency of the Ministers, vide Supra Footnote 29(c), Chapter IV, p. 186
(Cabinet) each in the Rai Ministry. The LCD had two men in the Ministry; one of them was a Cabinet Minister and other a Minister of State. It is to be noted that barring a LCD member, all Ministers of State belonged to the Congress(R). Further, excepting a BKD nominee, all members of the Congress (R)-led Coalition Government were MLAs. The BKD nominee was a member of the vidhan parishad.

Caste-wise Analysis

The D.P. Rai Ministry was dominated by the Backward Caste-men. There were twelve Ministers belonging to the Backward Castes. Of them, four were Yadavas, three Banias, two Koiris, two Kurmis and one Mallah. As is clear from the Table V among the eight Upper Caste Ministers, four were Rajputs, two Bhumihars and two Brahmins, including a Maithil Brahmin. There were four scheduled Caste Ministers in the Rai Ministry. Of them, two were Cabinet Ministers and another two were Ministers of state. The Scheduled Tribes had five Ministers, four Cabinet and one Minister of State, in the Congress (R)-led Coalition Government. There were two Muslims (both Cabinet Ministers) in the Ministry.

Out of 23 Congress (R) Ministers, five belonged to the Upper Castes. Of them, two were Brahmins, two Rajputs and one Bhumihar. The Congress (R) had given ten berths to the Backward Castes. Among them, three were Yadavas, three Banias, two
Kurmis, one Koiri and one Mallah. All the four scheduled Caste Ministers belonged to the Congress (R). Two Ministers from the Scheduled Tribes also represented the Congress (R). Both Muslim Ministers in the Rai Ministry came from the Congress (R). Thus, with the exception of women the Congress (R) had included in the Ministry men from almost all important castes. Both representatives of the Jharkhand Party belonged to the Scheduled Tribes. The lone nominee of the Hul Jharkhand also came from the Scheduled Tribes. The sole nominee of the BKD was a Rajput. Of the two LCD nominees, one was a Bhumihar and another one was a Yadav. The single Shoshit Dal Minister was a Backward Koiri. The only Independent member in the Rai Ministry was a Rajput. Thus, none of the partners of the Congress (R)-led Coalition gave representation to women.

**Regional Analysis**

Of the 30 MLA Ministers in the Rai Ministry, fifteen came from the North Plains. The South Plains had got ten seats, while the tribal belt of Chotanagpur could secure only five ministerial posts. Of the Congress (R) Ministers, fourteen, eight Cabinet Ministers and six Ministers of State, represented the North plains. There were six Congress (R) Ministers who belonged to the South Plains. Two Congress (R) Ministers came from the Chotanagpur region of the state. Both nominees of the Jharkhand Party and the lone man of the Hul Jharkhand belonged to the Chotanagpur region. Of the two LCD members, one
belonged each to the North and the south Plains. The lone Shoshit Dal nominee and the sole Independent man in the Ministry came from the south Plains. Thus, only the Congress (R) could include representatives from all the three regions of the state.

**Rural/Urban Analysis**

All, but three, members of the Congress(R)-led Ministry represented rural areas of the state. Of the three Ministers, who got elected from the urban constituencies, two were Cabinet Ministers and one a Minister of State; two belonged to the Congress (R) and one to the Jharkhand Party. Of the two Congress (R) Ministers, one was a Cabinet Minister and another a Minister of State, while the former came from the North Plains, the latter from the South Plains. The Jharkhand Party cabinet minister represented the Chotanagpur region.

**Fall of the Congress(R)-led Coalition**

The D.P. Rai Government, too, went the way of other Coalition Governments in Bihar since 1967. The 10-month-old Congress (R)-led Coalition Ministry fell in Bihar Assembly on December 18, 1970 on a no-confidence motion by a majority of 18 votes - 164 votes to 146. The no-confidence motion was jointly sponsored by the SSP, Jan Sangh, rebel PSP, Janata Party, Congress(O), Swatantra Party and the B.P. Mandal faction.

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of the shoshit Dal. As many as 310 members of both the opposition SVD and the ruling coalition participated in the voting. Bhola Paswan Shastri abstained and two members, Prabhu Narain Singh (BND) and A.K. Roy (CPM) were absent. Among the parties that lined up against the motion were Congress (R), CPI, PSP and some splinter groups and Independents. The voting witnessed defections of four members from the Congress (R), embloc disseration of the five-member rebel PSP, six-member BND and Shoshit Dal’s four member faction led by B.P. Mandal. All of them were in the eight-party coalition. Among the other constituents, two of the seven members of the Hul Jharkhand and four of the eleven members of the Jharkhand Party voted against the government, according to K.K. Singh Congress (R).

Role of the Factional Group Leaders

The Rai Ministry was the third to fall since the mid-term poll in February, 1969. His was the second ministry, the first being the Mahasaya Government, to have ruled the state for about a year. From the very inception, there were serious

82. Indian Express, December 19, 1970.
dissensions among the constituents. The altercation was mainly over the allotment of portfolios to the representatives of the Coalition partners in the Council of Ministers. The eight-party coalition Government cracked and collapsed not because of any pressure or ingenious manipulation of the opposition, particularly the old Congress, but owing to its own unwieldy weight for which Rai, his party, the Congress(R) and the Congress (R) High Command had to thank themselves. The misfortune of Rai began the day he accepted the suzerainty of the L.N. Mishra - Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav axis. If M.P. Sinha - S.N. Sinha - K.B. Sahay trio of caste and faction had bossed over and controlled the Congress before the split and behaved as king makers, the same role was now sought to be played by L.N. Mishra, the then Minister of Foreign Trade in the Union Cabinet and R.L. Singh Yadav, a former General Secretary of the Congress (R). The leaders had played a crucial role in installing the Rai Government and painting rosy pictures to the defectors. While Mishra and Yadav tried to emerge as super bosses, D.P. Rai gradually tried to shake off his subservience to them and build up his own independent base and following. This annoyed Mishra and Yadav and the group of their close adherents in the Congress (R) legislature soon became neo-dissidents and revolted against Rai. It is difficult

to pinpoint the exact event which precipitated the drawing of the battle lines. Perhaps it was the choice of new ministers, in which Rai showed himself to be his own master, or perhaps it was the raid by the CBI on R.L. Singh Yadav's house, or perhaps it was the Chief Minister's turning down a whole list of new postings in the PWD (Public Works Department) run by one of Yadav's men. A rebellion against Rai leadership within his party started, following his ordering of a CBI raid on Yadav's house in pursuance, presumably, of his indictment by the Aiyar Commission. R.L. Singh Yadav joined hands with the dissidents because he felt that the raid on his house was a deliberate attempt to discredit him and ruin his political career. Another reason for Yadav's decision to join the forces against the Chief Minister was, perhaps, the swing of Yadav masses in favour of Rai. R.L. Singh Yadav, the main leader of Yadavas (Ahirs), at the pursuance of Lalit Narain Mishra (L.N. Mishra), supported only reluctantly the candidature of Rai for the leadership of the Legislature Party. L.N. Mishra, it was believed, was playing a dual role. On the one hand, he was encouraging the dissidents and, on the other, he was trying to convince the High Command that he was pacifying them.


Mishra-Yadav combine was joined by other Congress(R) men like Vidyakar Kavi and Ramesh Jha, whose claims were ignored during the expansion of the Ministry. On October 10, 1970, some of the neo-dissident Congress (R) MLAs, headed by Vidyakar Kavi, actually started a campaign to remove D.P. Rai. They met the Prime Minister and the Union Finance and Defence Ministers on October 14, 1970 to press for their demand on the plea that the image of the party had been badly tarnished because its members indulged in corruption, took bribes and disgraced themselves through drinking orgies. These new dissidents proved the Achilles' heel for D.P. Rai.

Role of the Congress (R) Party and D.P. Rai

The Congress in Bihar had always been riven with factionalism based on casteism and caste alliances. However, what was causing surprise was the intensity of factional fights in the Congress (R). At the root of this factionalism was the continued malady of casteism, corruption and opportunism in Bihar. Neither the change in the ruling cliques, nor the split in the Congress could change the style of power politics in the State. D.P. Rai did not play his cards well. While forming his Ministry, he had not given careful thought

91. Ibid., p. 368.
to providing representation to all sections of the Congress. He had included his relations and favourites inspite of objections and warnings from large sections of the Congress (R). He left both the CPI and the PSP unhappy by giving 'disproportionate' representation to the Congress (R). The appointment of Jagdeo Prasad of the shoshit Dal, who proved himself a professional defector, was not proper for Rai. Prasad was reported to have made a statement in Purnea that he would try to exterminate the upper-caste people and give almost all the important offices to the backward caste men. This statement, though later contradicted by him, was exploited by interested persons to whip up a psychological fear among the upper-caste people. It is to be noted that Prasad's inclusion in the Cabinet was also objected to by rival faction of the Dal headed by B.P. Mandal. The inclusion of Bhishma Prasad Yadav, Rai's own brother-in-law and the leaving out of Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha, a senior and only lady member on the Congress (R) benches was also resented by many legislators. His style of functioning and his preferences to backward caste officers also irritated not only his party men, but also the other partners of the coalition. To bolster up his personal strength, D.P. Rai, instead

92. Link, September 13, 1970, p. 15.
94. Link, September 13, 1970, p. 15.
95. Ibid., November 8, 1970, p. 16.
of strengthening the Congress (R) organisation, went out of
his way to bring about defections from the syndicate (Congress-
0) by promising lucrative posts to the defectors. But when
he could not keep his words, they rose in revolt.

His ignoring of the Co-ordination Committee of the
parties supporting the Ministry, while appointing his own
Caste man, Ram Sewak Mandal, a relatively junior officer to
the post of the Chief Secretary, the appointment of Kumar
Bimal as Chief of the Rashtra Bhasha Parishad and of B.P.Gyani
as the Director of Public Instructions (DPI), further aggrava-
ted the situation. The boycott of the Co-ordination Committee
meeting by the CPI and the PSP, the two important partners
of the ruling alliance, on the appointment of Ram Sewak Mandal
made Rai's position very shaky. It is also to be noted that
the post of the Chief Secretary had been lying vacant for the
last six months and Mandal had held the post as Additional
Chief Secretary. There was resentment against Rai in the
ruling Congress itself because of the manner in which he had
allegedly been bypassing some of his Cabinet colleagues.

Role of the Congress (R) High Command

New Delhi could not be absolved of its share of
responsibility for the fall of the Rai Ministry. If D.P. Rai

96. Times of India, June 24, 1970.
was finding it difficult to keep his partymen united, he should have been guided by the Party President and other central leaders. If the partymen wanted a new leader one should have been found. Minor differences soon led to major conflicts resulting in the fall of the Government. Had Rai been compelled to step down, the exposure of the Congress (R) as a party with no political purpose could have been avoided. Further, had the Congress (R) leadership been able to maintain unity in the party, the Ministry might have survived the crisis created by its minor partners. The attempt to oust Rai from the Chief Ministership failed because he was unwilling to quit and the High Command was not prepared to force him. Having failed to get rid of the Chief Minister, the dissidents decided to get rid of the Ministry, as a whole. After a period of uncertainty, they mustered sufficient strength to gain their objective. Differences were reported between the Prime Minister and the Congress (R) President on the question of change in Bihar CLP leadership and Rai himself turned against those who installed him in power. He sought the support of his former opponents in New Delhi and adopted an attitude of 'after me the deluge'.

role of the mini-front

However, the failure of the Congress (R) High Command and the split in the state Congress (R) were not the only reasons for the fall of the Ministry. A mini-front, within the ruling coalition, consisting of splinter groups like the rebel PSP, BND, Bhooshit Dal and the Jharkhand Party helped in the downfall of the Rais Ministry. These smaller groups were themselves riven with factionalism and most of their grievances were personal, but with resentment flourishing all around, the Chief Minister hardly had the courage to expose them. These proverbial mercurial splinter and regional groups, apparently, got their break-away momentum from the internal revolt within the Congress (R) and on December 4, 1970 formed a mini-front to repudiate the leadership of D.P. Rais and to topple his government. These parties had been a constant headache for the Chief Minister by occasionally threatening to withdraw their support. Bagam Sambrui, for example, had been issuing recurring threats to the Chief Minister on one issue or other. The Chief Minister had given a second cabinet post to the Jharkhand Party, but evidently Bagam was not happy. He was angry that Transport portfolio had been taken away from him and given to Satnagar Rayak, who also belonged to his party.

100. Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 370.
Sumbrul showed his real colour, when, on December 15, 1970, he announced his resignation from the Government on the floor of the Assembly, and his party withdrew support to the Ministry on December 17, 1970.

However, Sumbrul was not the only one to keep on threatening the Chief Minister that, if certain things were not done or done, the support will be withdrawn. The 11-man Janata Party, which helped the Rai Ministry by abstaining on the Bihar Appropriations Bills for 1970-71, on June 13, 1970, had threatened to go against Rai government, which the party did at the time of the voting on the no-confidence motion.

The PSP had also given similar threats for more than half a dozen times. On June 24, 1970 the PSP Legislative Party was split, when six of its members under the leadership of Suraj Narain Singh rebelled and formed a separate group and announced that they would vote against the government if it deviated from the PSP policies. Later, on November 25, 1970, the group, which called itself the Indian Socialist Party, decided to function in the house as an independent constituent of the five-party mini-front in the ruling coalition.

102. Northern India Patrika (Allahabad), December 17, 1970.
ultimately, the group broke away from the ruling coalition, when its five Assembly members in a joint letter to the Governor conveyed their decision to withdraw support to the Ministry.

The majority group (consisting of four members in the Assembly) of the shoshit Dal had hurled at least half a dozen threats that if Jagdeo Prasad was made a Minister, it would withdraw its support. Prasad was made a Minister and the Dal kept silent. Probably, it was angling for a Cabinet seat or to strike while the iron was hot. The group did strike when it decided to withdraw support to the D.P. Rai government and decided to support the SVD of the opposition parties if Karpoori Thakur were elected its leader.

The BK.L also hurled this threat once or twice, but only mildly, since the Chief Minister had been saying that he would include some BKD members in the Ministry. The Ministry happened to belong to the Upper House. Irony was that almost every BKD member in the Assembly was an aspirant for Ministership. One MLA left the ministry in disgust when he found that an MLC belonging to the

made a Minister. Finally, the party withdrew its support to
the Ministry and its nominee, Shankar Dyal Singh, resigned
from the Government on December 17, 1970.

The position of the Hul Jharkhand was equally confusing.
Its acknowledged leader Justin Richard had declared that his
party would not support the Ministry. But the party was split
and the leader of the splinter group Seth Hembrum was sworn­
in as a Cabinet Minister and was given Excise Department. But
he became angry at the persistent refusal of the Chief Minister
to transfer the Excise Commissioner against whom serious
charges had been levelled in the legislature. He was sure
that, instead of transferring the Excise Commissioner, the
Chief Minister tried to humiliate him by transferring the
power to issue licenses from him to the District Magistrate.

Some Independent MLAs also gathered occasionally and
hurled threats of withdrawing support to the Ministry if at
least some of them were not made Ministers. Obviously, the
Chief Minister, in spite of his assurances to them, had not
been able to make up his mind which Independent would bring
how many MLAs with him if he was made Minister. Thus, the
withdrawal of support by the mini-front parties commanding
between some 30 votes made a material difference.

110. ibid.
111. Statesman, December 18, 1970.
Role of the Communist Party of India

The CPI was the last, but not the least, in hurling periodic threats of withdrawing support, if certain things were done or not done. The 25-member CPI carried out the threat on June 23, 1970 when it voted with the opposition on the Bihar Privileged Persons Homestead Bill. The Government narrowly escaped a snap defeat on this bill with a margin of only 8 votes. The party also boycotted the meeting of the Co-ordination Committee in protest against the appointment of Ram Sewak Mandal as the Chief secretary. In fact, the backing of the CPI led to a controversy in the ranks of Rai's party and this spread to some of his other allies. The four Congress (R) members crossed the floor on the day of no-confidence motion to protest against the 'Communist domination' over the Government. This what they called might not be accepted as their only ground for defecting from the party, but it certainly showed the controversy within the party over joining hands with the Communist.

Thus, each party supporting Rai Ministry wanted to have its price for supporting the government and started dictating their terms to the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister occasionally yielded to their threats. He had to do so because otherwise his Government would not survive. At others, he had to

113. Times of India, June 24, 1970.
ignore these threats, because he could not oblige the threat
givers without jeopardising his position as Chief Minister.
In such a confusing situation, the house of cards was bound
to fall. Actually any one in his place could have come up
against the same kind of problems, which for all practical
purposes, amounted to no more than achieving a balance between
caste and sub-caste rivalries not only in shaping out of
ministerial offices but even in regard to the administrative
appointments and transfers.

(D) THE SAMYUETA SOCIALIST-LED SVD GOVERNMENT

Karpoori Thakur (SSP), the new SVD Chairman, was invited
by the Governor, on December 22, 1970, to form a new government,
after the fall of the L.P. Rai government. He had earlier
submitted a list of 169 members of the Assembly, who supported
him, to the Governor. An 11-member SVD Ministry headed by
114
Thakur was sworn-in the same day.

The new SVD consisted of the SSP, the rebel PSP, the
Jan Sangh, the Congress (O), the Janata, the BKD, the Swatantra,
factions of the Jharkhand Party, Mandal's faction of the
Shoshit Dal, Justin Richard's faction of the Hul Jharkhand
and an Independent group. This was the eighth Ministry to assume
office since the Fourth General Elections and the fourth after
the Mid-term poll. The Governor, Nityanand Kanungo's decision

to invite Thakur to form a Ministry was preceded by hectic political activity in the Raj Bhawan. In a last-ditch battle to instal another Congress (R)-led Government in the State, Bhola Paswan met the Governor on December 21, 1970 and put forward his claim to form a Ministry with the support of 167 members. Paswan's bid, however, proved abortive.

Those sworn-in, besides Karpoori Thakur, were one each from the SSP, Jan Sangh, Congress (O), Janata, BKD, Mandal's faction of Shoshit Dal, Jharkhand and the Swatantra. One was a former LCD member and the other was an Independent. All of them, excepting the Swatantra nominee, were given Cabinet ranks. Three of the Ministers were new comers. Two of them were nominees of the Jan Sangh and Swatantra and the third was the Independent Minister. The Jharkhand and BKD nominees had resigned from the previous Congress (R)-led Coalition Ministry a few days earlier hastening its downfall and paving the way for the instalment of the new Ministry. It was an unique feature of the Ministry-making that from among the five claimants from the Independent group for a ministerial position, Jairam Giri was finally selected by means of a 116 'lucky draw'. The Chief Minister distributed portfolios among his colleagues on December 25, 1970.

The 11-man SVD Ministry was expanded on January 10, 1971 with the inclusion of five Cabinet Ministers and eleven Ministers of State. Those sworn-in were seven from the Jan Sangh (three Cabinet and four Ministers of State), three from the Janata Party (all Ministers of State), two from the BNM (both Ministers of State), one each from the Shoshit of Dal and the Jharkhand (both/Cabinet rank) and two Independents (Ministers of State). With this addition the strength of the Thakur Ministry rose to 27.

The number of Ministers went up to 31 with the swearing-in, on February 9, 1971, of four more Cabinet Ministers and one Minister of State. The new Ministers were two from the Congress (G) and one each from the Swatantra and the Hul Jharkhand. The new Minister of State was a Congress (O) nominee. The Swatantra nominee, Tej Narain Yadav, who was earlier a Minister of State, was promoted to the Cabinet rank.

On February 10, 1971 the Ministry was further expanded with the inclusion of four Cabinet Ministers and four Ministers of State. All the eight new Ministers belonged to the SSP, the single largest party in the SVD. With this expansion the strength of the SSP-led SVD Ministry went up to 39. For

118. Ibid., February 5-11, 1971, p. 9996.
119. Ibid., March 5-11, 1971, p. 10041.
120. Ibid.
the third time on February 11, 1971, two more SSP Ministers of State were sworn-in raising the strength of the Ministry to 41. The strength of the Thakur Ministry rose up to 47 with the addition of two Ministers of Cabinet rank and four Ministers of State on April 5, 1971. Both Cabinet Ministers and one of the Ministers of State were the nominees of the Indian Socialist Party (ISP), which had so far been supporting the Ministry from outside. Of the remaining three Ministers of State, two belonged to the Jharkhand Party, while one was an Independent.

Again on April 10, 1971, the Ministry's strength rose to 52 when five Ministers of State belonging to the Congress (O) were sworn-in. Once more on April 24, 1971, two more Cabinet Ministers, both of the SSP, were added to the Thakur Ministry. One of them, Ram Briksha Ram, earlier a Minister of State, was now given the Cabinet rank. With this, the strength of the four-month old Thakur Ministry rose to 53. Bihar had now 27 Cabinet Ministers and 26 Ministers of State.

**Party-wise Break-up**

Of the constituents of the SVD, the SSP had bagged 13 ministerial posts, including the Chief Minister (eight Cabinet

121. Ibid.
122. Ibid., May 7-13, 1971, p. 10139.
123. Ibid.
and five Ministers of State), Congress (0) 9, Jan Sangh 8, Janata 4, Jharkhand 4, BKD 3, ISP 3, Shoshit Dal 2, HUL Jharkhand 1 and the Swatantra 1. The remaining 5 were Independents. Table VI shows party-wise break-up of the SVD Ministry besides caste, constituency and region of the Ministers.

However, the smaller and splinter groups got highly disproportionate seats in the Thakur Ministry. The ISP (former rebel PSP), for example, had only five seats in the Assembly, but it had three members (two Cabinet and one Minister of State) in the Ministry. Such was the case with the BKD, Shoshit Dal and the Jharkhand Party. Similarly, Independent MLAs had fairly good numbers in the Council of Ministers. Of the five Independent Ministers, two were in the Cabinet and three were Ministers of State.

Caste-wise Analysis

From Table VI, it becomes clear that in the Karpoori Thakur Ministry, the Upper and Backward Castes had almost equal number of Ministers. There were twenty Ministers (12 Cabinet and 8 Ministers of State) belonging to the Upper Castes, while the number of Ministers coming from the Backward Castes was nineteen (9 Cabinet Ministers and 10 Ministers of State). The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes had an equal share of five each in the Ministry. Of the five scheduled Caste Ministers, two were Cabinet Ministers and three Ministers of State, while three Scheduled Tribes men
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name / Region</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Caste/community</th>
<th>Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<td>CABINET MINISTERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Plains</td>
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<td>Nayee</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Purnea (Purnea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahabir Prasad (Shoshit, MLA)</td>
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<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Biraul (Darbhanga)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krishna Kant Singh (Former LCD, MLA)</td>
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<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Goreakothi (Saran)</td>
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<td>Motilal Singh Kallan (Shoshit, MLA)</td>
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<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Hazipur (Muzaffarpur)</td>
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<td>Sahdeo Mahto (Congress (O), MLA)</td>
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<td>Koiri</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rasera (Darbhanga)</td>
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<td>Dumralal Baitha (Congress (O), MLA)</td>
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<td>Dhobi SC</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Raniganj (Purnea)</td>
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<td>Tej Narain Yadav (Swatentra, MLA)</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Anuplal Yadav (SSP, MLA)</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Ram Briksha Ram (SSP, MLA)</td>
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<td>Chamar, SC</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Majorganj (Muzaffarpur)</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Plains</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramanand Tiwari (SSP, MLA)</td>
<td>South plains</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Shahpur (Shahabad)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VI

Showing party, caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the SSP-led SVL Ministry, 1970.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ravi Chandra Verma</td>
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<td>Urban</td>
<td>Bhagalpur</td>
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<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Chakai</td>
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<td>Koiri</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>PaliGANJ</td>
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<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Jamui</td>
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<td>Basant Narain Singh</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
<td>Bagodar</td>
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<td>Ragun Sumbrui</td>
<td>S.T.</td>
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<td>Chaibasa</td>
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<td>S.T.</td>
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<td>Kolibira</td>
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<td>Bhaghmara</td>
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<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justin Richard</td>
<td>S.T.</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhola Prasad Singh</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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### MINISTERS OF STATE

#### North plains

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<td>(Independent, MLA)</td>
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#### South plains

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<td><strong>Ram Raj Prasad Singh</strong></td>
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<td>Chandi (Parna)</td>
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<td><strong>Ram Bilas Singh</strong></td>
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<td>Daudnagar (Gaya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SSP, MLA)</td>
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</table>
Ram Ballabh sharan Singh Kumi (Independent, MLA) Rural Ranch (Gaya)

Mahabir Chaudhary (Congress (0), MLA) scheduled caste Rural Nakkhandpur (Gaya)

ChETANAGPUR

Satya Narain Lodani (Jan Sangh, MLA) Holiwari Rural Tundri (Lhanbed)

Lalit Omom (Jan Sangh, MLA) scheduled tribe Rural Esai (Ranchi)

Gopinath Singh (Jan Sangh, MLA) Rajput Rural Garhwa (Palamu)

Kalilashpati Singh (Janata, MLA) Rajput Rural L-uri (Hazaribagh)

Raghu Nandan Prasad (Janata, MLA) Koiri Urban Hazaribagh (Hazaribagh)

BURGA CHARAN PASS (BKL, MLA) scheduled caste Rural Chandaniari (Shanbed)

San Sehari Mahto (Jharkhand, MLA) Koiri Rural Sarai Kela (Singhbhum)

Jadunath Raski (Jharkhand, MLA) scheduled tribe Rural Ghatshila (Singhbhum)

Bhishma Narain Singh (Congress(0), MLA) Rajput Rural Husainabad (Palamu)


(b) Caste of the Ministers, Vide supra Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.

(c) Constituency of the Ministers, Vide supra Footnote 29(c), Chapter IV, p. 188.
were in the Cabinet and two were Ministers of State. There
were four Ministers in the SSP-led SVD Ministry. Of the
twenty Forward Caste Ministers, nine were Rajputs, six
Bhumihars, two Kayasthas and two Brahmins, including a
Maithil Brahmin. The remaining one Cabinet Minister was a
Bengali Kayastha. Among the nineteen Ministers coming from
the Backward Castes, the Yadavas and the Koiris had six
Ministers each in the Government. The Kurmis had three men
in the Thakur Ministry. Of the remaining four Ministers, one
was a Mallah (Minister of State), one a Marwari (Minister of
State), one a Nayee (Chief Minister) and the remaining one
was a Bengali Backward Caste.

Among the thirteen SSP Ministers, four belonged to
the Upper Castes, seven to the Backward Castes, one each to
the Muslim community and the Scheduled Caste. Among the four
Upper Caste Ministers, two were from the Brahmins and one
each from the Bhumihars and the Rajputs. Of the seven Backward
Caste Ministers, two belonged each to the Yadavas and Koiris
and one each to the Kurmis, Nayees and Mallahs. Of the four
Upper Caste Jan Sangh Ministers, one was a Bhumihar, one a
Rajput, one a Kayastha and another one a Bengali Kayastha.
Among the two Backward Caste Ministers, one was a Koiri and
the other was a Marwari. Of the remaining two Jan Sangh
nominees in the SVD Ministry, one came each from the Scheduled
Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Of the nine Congress (O)
Ministers, four belonged to the Upper Castes, two to the
Backward Castes, two to the scheduled Castes and one was a Muslim. Among the four Upper Caste Ministers, two were Brahmins, one a Kayastha and one was a Rajput. Of the two Backward Caste Ministers, one was a Koiri and another one was a Kurmi. Of the four Janata Party Ministers, two were Rajputs, one a Bhumihar and the remaining one was a Koiri. Among the four Jharkhand members in the Ministry, three belonged to the scheduled Tribes and one to the Backward Caste Kurmis. The lone Hui Jharkhand Minister also belonged to the scheduled Tribes. Of the three BKP members in the Government, one belonged each to the Rajput (Upper Caste), Muslims and scheduled Castes. Both Shoshit Dal nominees were from the same Backward Caste Yadavas. The sole Swatantra representative was also a Yadav. Of the three ISP Ministers, two were Upper Caste Rajputs and the remaining one was a Yadav Backward Caste. Among the five Independent Ministers, one was a Rajput, one a Bhumihar, one a Kurmi, one a Bengali Backward and another one was a Muslim. Thus, of the five Independent Ministers, two belonged each to the Upper Caste and Backward Caste and one was a Muslim. Once again, women were not selected by any of the coalition partners, and they remained unrepresented in the Ministry.

Region-wise Analysis

So far as regional representation in the SSP-led SVD Ministry was concerned, the North Plains had the highest number of Ministers. Of the twenty-three Ministers belonging
to this region, eleven were Cabinet Ministers and twelve Ministers of State. The South Plains and the Chotangpur tribal belt had thirteen ministerial posts each in the Government. But while the former secured eight Cabinet posts and five seats of Minister of State, the latter got four Cabinet posts and nine posts of Minister of State.

Of the All-India parties constituting the Coalition, the SSP and the Congress (O) had given representation to all the three regions of the State. The Jan Sangh did not select any nominee from the North Plains. However, these three parties selected their Ministers from the Chotanagpur region. The Jharkhand groups had all their representatives only from the tribal belt of Chotanagpur. The Jan Sangh had five Ministers from the South Plains and two from the Chotanagpur plateau. The Janata Party had selected its lone Cabinet Minister and two of the three Ministers of State from the Chotanagpur belt. Its remaining one nominee came from the North Plains. The BJD had one Minister each from the North Plains and the Chotanagpur region, while both nominees of the Shoshit Dal belonged to the North Plains. Among the five Independent Ministers, three came from the North Plains and two from the Chotanagpur belt.

**Rural/Urban Analysis**

Most of the MLA members of the Thakur Ministry represented the rural masses of the State. Out of the 49
Ministers, 41 (17 Cabinet Ministers and 24 Ministers of State) represented the rural areas. Only eight Ministers came from the urban areas. Of them, six were Cabinet Ministers and two Ministers of State. Among them, three (all Cabinet) were Jan
sangh men, two of the Congress(o), one Minister of state of the Janata Party, one Cabinet Minister each of the Jharkhand and the Shoshit Dal.

It is to be noted that four Ministers were MLCs. Of them, one came each from the SSP, Jan Sangh, BKD and the Hul Jharkhand. While women were not at all preferred, Harijans were inadequately represented in the largest-ever and ever-expanding Ministry in the state.

Resignation of the SSP-led SVD Ministry

Following the fate of other multi-party Coalition Govern-
ment, particularly in Bihar, the last SVD Government led by the SSP Chairman, Karpoori Thakur, had to bow out of office without a fight in the Assembly on June 1, 1971. Just two hours before the Assembly was to meet to consider, among other things, a no-confidence motion against his Ministry, the Chief Minister dramatically rushed to the Raj Bhawan and tendered the resignation of his Ministry to the Governor, D.K. Barooah. The Karpoori Thakur Ministry stayed in office for 161 days only.

This was the eighth Ministry after the Fourth General Elections and the fourth since the mid-term poll.

Desertion from the ranks of the SVD parties and factionalism, groupism and dissidence in his own party were mainly responsible for the fall of the Thakur Ministry. Even on the day he resigned, three MLAs belonging to the Jan Sangh, namely Sitaram Prasad, Chunchun Prasad Yadav and Ram Briksha Chaudhary defected to the Congress (R).

Role of the small Groups

The SVD Government crumbled under the weight of its own contradictions. It was composed of such political groups whose credentials had always been in doubt. They had been the maker and destroyer of many such governments in Bihar. These smaller and regional groups were themselves ridden with factions and every MLA belonging to these groups was aspiring to be a Minister. Though Karpoori Thakur went on expanding the Ministry, he could not satisfy all of them. Actually, in the prevailing political situation, the SVD Government could not be expected to last long. Thus, from the very start Thakur's ramshakable team was doomed to failure. The contradictions between the self-seeking parties of the combine and the serious internal dissensions within the SSP itself could

127. Ibid.
not be papered over. By the time Karpoori Thakur resigned, his Ministry had already been reduced to a hopeless minority with withdrawal of support by minor parties like the Jharkhand, Hul Jharkhand, Shoshit Dal, BKD and the ISP and by the stream of defections from the Congress (O), Jan Sangh and the SSP itself. It was typical of the period that while only a few weeks earlier these groups had given their whole-hearted support to the Ministry, they were soon engaged with all their might in pulling down the same government.

The 1971 Mid-term Parliamentary Poll and Defections

Defections were a continuous process in Bihar politics ever since the 1967 General Elections. Even the 1969 Mid-term poll failed to check this process. On the contrary, two developments accelerated this process. First, the split in the Congress Party on all India level in 1969 and emergence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, as a dominant personality, and second, the 1971 elections to the Lok Sabha. Despite the SSP-led SVD Government being in office at the time of the Fifth Lok Sabha polls, the results in Bihar were not different from the rest of the country. The Congress (R) contested 47 of the 53 seats and won 39. The Swatantra, CPI(M), PSP, BKD and Janata parties faced total rout, none of the other parties opposing the Congress (R) could secure more than 3 seats. Such sweeping

Congress (R) success unnerved the SVD parties and had a demoralising effect on their MLAs. A spate of defections towards the Congress (R) followed. The Congress (O), particularly, seemed to be in for landslide defections. At least three SSP legislators had crossed over to the Congress(R) along with eleven from the Congress (O) and three from the Jan Sangh. In fact, as many as six of the ten partners of the ruling SVD, namely the SSP, Congress (O), Janata, BKD, ISP and the Bagun Group of the All-India Jharkhand were in serious trouble after the Lok Sabha poll. Even the Ministers started fleeing away from the SVD Government. Two Ministers, Satyanarain Biswas and Ram Chandra Shahi resigned from the Ministry on May 30, 1971. Even before this, on May 17, 1971, the ISP had called upon its three Ministers to resign forthwith and work for overthrowing the Ministry.

Role of the Samyukta Socialist Party

The SSP had its share in the fall of almost all the non-Congress governments in Bihar. However, this time it was expected that the party would learn to behave because, apart from the largest share of ministerial posts in the SVD Government, its All-India Chairman happened to be the Chief Minister.

But again this pious hope was belied. Actually, the party had never been a cohesive and homogenous one. Every SSP member in the legislature seemed to be his own master and functioned under his own discipline. This proved disastrous for the life and smooth running of the ruling Coalition. Besides, some of its members were ever-ready to cross the side unless given ministerial seats or some other profitable jobs. Just after one and a half month of the formation of the SVD Ministry, 14 MLAs belonging to Thakur's own party SSP had given notice that he must appoint more Ministers by a specific date or forfeit their support. On February 15, 1971, these legislators under the leadership of an SSP MLA, Ram Chandra Bhanu formed a dissident group ostensibly in protest against the 'inadequate representation' given to the Harijans, minorities and women in the SVD Government. Although after this protest, one SSP man belonging to the Muslim minority and another one from Harijan community were appointed Cabinet Ministers, this threat of withdrawal of support by the SSP men continued unabated. Even some Ministers joined the fray. Tulsi Das Mehta tendered his resignation to the Chief Minister on April 27, 1971, on the pretext of 'fundamental differences' with the functioning of the Coalition Government in the state.

133. Ibid., February 13, 1971.
134. Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 373.
Another SSP Cabinet Minister, Imamul Haq Khan, on May 17, 1971, resigned from the SVD Government led by his party Chairman.

In the prevailing situation, it was difficult for the SVD Ministry to stay for long. Karpoori Thakur himself confessed this, when in his letter of resignation to the Governor he stated, "in the face of defections and horse-trading, after a great deal of deliberations and consultations, we have come to the conclusion that the best interest of the state demands that we should not continue in office, in order to put an end to the demoralization of public life and undermining the integrity of the people."

However, Thakur's attack on the then Prime Minister for deputing her Private Secretary, Yaspal Kapoor, at Patna to bring about defections by hook or by crook was not fully tenable. The presence of Yashpal Kapoor raised doubts, especially, in view of the all out bid of the Congress (R)-led progressive vidhayak dal under the leadership of Bhola Paswan to topple the Ministry. But even without this effort of the Congress (R) and its allies, the SVD Government was in such a hapless shape that it was bound to collapse. It did not much matter whether it happened after a defeat in the Assembly or earlier.

136. Ibid., June 11-17, 1971, p. 10205.
137. Ibid., July 2-8, 1971, p. 10237.
138. Ibid.
Immediately after the Thakur Ministry resigned, Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, leader of the Congress (R) legislature party, Sunil Mukherjee, leader of the CPI legislature wing and Hasibur Rahman, leader of the 12-member PSP legislature party, called on the Governor and urged him to invite Bhola Paswan Shastri to form a new government. The Governor, D.K. Barooah, then rejected the demand of the outgoing Chief Minister for dissolution of the Assembly and holding mid-term poll at the earliest opportunity, and invited Paswan to form a Ministry.

A three-member Progressive Vidhayak Dal (PVD) Coalition Government headed by Bhola Paswan Shastri was sworn-in at Patna on June 2, 1971. The two Ministers sworn-in with Paswan were Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav and Hari Charan Soy of Horo faction of the Jharkhand party. Paswan, former Chairman of the dissolved Loktantrik Congress, was then an Independent. For the third time in the last three years, Paswan became the Chief Minister of the state. But now he was leading a Congress(R)-led PVD Coalition, while on earlier occasions he was the Chief Minister of the non-Congress Coalition Ministries.

The PVD consisted of the 105-member Congress(R), the 25-member CPI and the 12-member PSP, besides the splinter and


regional parties like the BKL, Jharkhand Party, Hul Jharkhand and the Shoshit Lal. The PVD claimed support of 176 members in the Assembly with an effective strength of 312.

Eight Cabinet Ministers, all of the Congress (R), were added to the PVL Ministry on June 9, 1971 raising the number of Ministers to 11. Of them, Laliteshwar Prasad Shahi, former Loktantrik Congress member had joined Congress (R). For the second time in four years Bihar was obliged to have a Deputy Chief Minister. The leader of Congress (R) Legislature Party was made Deputy Chief Minister. The 11-member Paswan Ministry was expanded on September 6, 1971, when six Cabinet Ministers, nine Ministers of state and two Deputy Ministers were sworn-in. Among new entrants were four defectors from the SSP, one of whom was given a Cabinet rank and one was made a Minister of state. Two were appointed Deputy Ministers. Eight of those who took oath belonged to the Congress (R), while three of them were Cabinet Ministers, five became Ministers of state. The SSP-defector, Imamul Hai Khan was a Cabinet Minister in the Karpoori Thakur Ministry, but he resigned only three weeks after his swearing-in. Later he joined the Congress (R) and was rewarded with a Cabinet post in the new

PVL Ministry. Among the Ministers of State, Ram Chandra Shahi was a State rank Minister in the SSP-led SVD Ministry representing the Congress (O). But he resigned from the Ministry and then from the party to join the Congress (R). Satya Narain Biswas was also a Minister of State in the Thakur Ministry, but he, too, resigned along with Ram Chandra Shahi to become a Minister again in the new Council of Ministers.

Four more Ministers were scheduled to be sworn-in, but they could not be contacted in time. They were three from the Congress (R) and one from the Shoshit Dal. The Shoshit Dal and two of the Congress (R), nominees were to be sworn-in as Ministers of State, while the remaining one Congress (R) member was to be appointed as a Deputy Minister. Of these, Radha Nandan Jha and Siddeshwar Prasad Singh (both of Congress-R) were sworn-in on September 7, 1971 as a Minister of State and Deputy Minister respectively. The remaining one nominee of the Congress (R) along with the Shoshit Dal member was sworn-in as Minister of State on September 8, 1971 raising the strength of the PVL Ministry to 32.

The Bihar Ministry was further expanded on October 24, 1971 by the inclusion of the two Cabinet Ministers and one

144. Ibid.
Minister of State. Those sworn-in were two from the PSP and one from the BKD. One of the PSP nominees was taken as a Minister of State. With this addition, which was the sixth, the strength of the Paswan-led PVD Ministry went up to 35. Of them, 19 were Cabinet Ministers, 13 Ministers of State and 3 Deputy Ministers. Table VII shows the details of the PVD Ministry.

Party-wise Break-up

Out of the 35 members of the PVD Ministry, the Congress (R) had secured twenty ministerial berths. Of them, twelve were Cabinet Ministers, seven Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. Among the other partners of the ruling coalition, the PSP got two seats (one Cabinet and one Minister of State), the BKD two (both of Cabinet rank), the Jharkhand and Hul Jharkhand got one seat each (both Cabinet) and the Shoshit Del got two posts (both Ministers of State). Four ministerial posts were offered to the SSP-defectors. There were three Independents, including the Chief Minister. In all, six defectors were included in the PVD Ministry. Apart from the four SSP-defectors, the other two were Ram Chandra Prasad Shahi and Satya Narain Biswas (both Ministers of State). The CPI was the only partner of the PVD which did not join the government and decided to support it from outside. This

### TABLE VII

Showing party, caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the PVD Ministry, 1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Region</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### CABINET MINISTERS

**North Plains**

- **Bhola Paswan Shastrī** (Independent, MLA)  
  Bhadradhara, SC  
  Rural  
  Korha (Purnea)

- **Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Rural  
  Sonapur (Saran)

- **Kedar Pandey** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Brahmin  
  Rural  
  Nautan (Champaran)

- **Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha** (Cong. (R), MLA)  
  Rajput  
  Urban  
  Gopalganj (Saran)

- **Nagendra Jha** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Maithil  
  Rural  
  Manighatni (Darbhanga)

- **Lalitshwar Prasad Shawri** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Bhumihar  
  Rural  
  Vaishali (Muzaffarpur)

- **Rafique Alam** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Muslim  
  Urban  
  Kishanganj (Purnea)

- **Zawar Hussain** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Muslim  
  Rural  
  Ziradei (Saran)

- **Baleshwor Ram** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Dusadh, SC  
  Rural  
  Hayaghat (Darbhanga)

- **Thakur Girja Nand Singh Rajput** (BKID, MLA)  
  Rural  
  Sheohar (Muzaffarpur)

**South Plains**

- **Chandra Shekhar Singh** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Rajput  
  Rural  
  Jhajha (Monghyr)

- **Ram Nandan Singh Yadav Yadav** (Congress(R), MLA)  
  Urban  
  Patna South (Patna)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste/Religion</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lal Singh Tyagi</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Rural Bakangar Sarai (Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seth Hembrum</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Rural Borio (S.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaduan Singh</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural Bikram (Patna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipin Bihar Sinha</td>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>Urban Sasaram (Shahabad)</td>
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**Chhotanagpur**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste/Religion</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hari Charan Scy</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Urban Chakradharpur (Singhbhum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Mochi Rai Munda</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Rural Khunti (Ranchi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imamul Hai Khan</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Rural Baghmara (Dhanbad)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**MINISTERS OF STATE**

**North Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste/Religion</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nitishwar Prasad Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural Gaighati (Muzaffarpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narsingh Baltha</td>
<td>Dhobi, SC</td>
<td>Rural Bagaha (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramesh Jha</td>
<td>Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td>Urban Saharasa (Saharasa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Chandra Prasad Shahi Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural Barwaj (Muzaffarpur)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya Narain Yadav</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Rural Narpatganj (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya Narain Biswas</td>
<td>Bengali Backward</td>
<td>Urban Katihar (Purnea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radha Mandal Jha</td>
<td>Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramanand Yadav</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
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### South Plains

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Constituency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nand Kishore Prasad Singh</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Rural Asthawan (Patna)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Shoshit, MLA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemant Kumar Jha</td>
<td>Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural Godda (S.P.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SSP-defector, MLA)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarani Prasad Singh</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural Tarapur (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Independent, MLA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Seran Prasad Singh</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Rural Islamapur (Gaya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(PSP, MLA)</td>
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### Chotanagpur

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<tr>
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<th>Caste</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brindawan Swansi</td>
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<td>Rural Silli (Ranchi)</td>
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<td>(Shoshit, MLA)</td>
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</table>

### Deputy Ministers

**North Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kumbh Narain Sardar</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
<td>Rural Chhatapur (Saharsa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SSP-defector, MLA)</td>
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**South Plains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Constituency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sidheeshwar Prasad Singh</td>
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<td>Rural Sarahiya (Monghyr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhumihar (Congress(R), MLA)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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### Chotanagpur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taneenwar Azad</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
<td>Rural Gawan (Hazaribagh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SSP-defector, MLA)</td>
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</tbody>
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(b) Caste of the Ministers, vide supra Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.

(c) Constituency of the Ministers, Footnote 29(c), Chapter IV, p. 186.
was the first time in Bihar that an independent legislator was heading a Ministry. All members of the Third Paswan Ministry were MLAs.

**Caste-wise Analysis**

It is to be noted at the very outset that for the second time after the mid-term poll, a woman was appointed Minister, the first being the Harihar Singh Ministry. But on that occasion the woman Minister belonged to the Janata Party, while this time she came from the Congress (R). Fifteen Ministers of the Paswan Ministry belonged to the Forward Castes. Of them, eight were Cabinet Ministers, six Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. Of these Forward Caste Ministers, five came from the Rajputs and the Brahmins, including the Maithil Brahmins, four from the Bhumihars and the remaining one belonged to the Kayasthas. Among the eight Backward Caste Ministers, four (two Cabinet Ministers and two Ministers of State) were Yadavas, three Kurmis (one Cabinet and two Ministers of State) and one Minister of State was a Bengali Backward Caste. The Muslims and the Scheduled Tribes had got three posts each (all Cabinet rank) in the PVD Ministry. The Scheduled Castes had six men (two each in the ranks of Cabinet, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers).

Among the twenty Congress (R) Ministers, nine belonged
to the Upper Castes, six to the Backward Castes, two to the Scheduled Castes and one to the Scheduled Tribes. The Jharkhand and the Hul Jharkhand nominees came from the Scheduled Tribes. Both nominees of the BKD belonged to the Forward Castes, while both Shoshit Dal Ministers came from the Backward Castes. Among the two PSP nominees, one was a Rajput Upper Caste and the other was a Kurmi Backward Caste. Of the four SSP-defectors, one was a Maithil Upper Caste, one was a Muslim and the remaining two were Scheduled Castes. Among the three Independents, one belonged each to the Upper Castes and the Scheduled Castes, while the another one was a Bengali Backward. Thus almost all important castes and communities had their men in the Ministry headed by a Scheduled Caste man. But the Upper Castes had the upper hand.

Region-wise Analysis

In comparison to the North and the South Plains, the Chotanagpur Plateau had fewer seats in the PVD Ministry. It had three Cabinet posts, one Minister of State and one Deputy Minister. The North plains had secured 19 ministerial posts, of them, ten were Cabinet Ministers, eight Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. There were six Cabinet Ministers, four Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister belonging to the South Plains.

Of the Congress(R) Ministers, fifteen came from the North Plains, four from the South plains and one from the
Chotanagpur belt. Thus, the party gave inadequate representation to the Chotanagpur. The Jharkhand nominee belonged to the Chotanagpur, while the Hul Jharkhand Minister belonged to tribal belt of the South Plains. Of the two BKD nominees, one belonged each to the North and the South Plains, while both PSP nominees came from the South Plains. Among the two Shoshit Dal nominees, one was from the Chotanagpur, while another one was from the South Plains. Of the four SSP-defectors, two were from the Chotanagpur region and one each from the North and the South Plains. The Chief Minister and one Independent Minister represented the North Plains, while another one belonged to the South Plains. Thus, the Congress(R) being a big organization was the only party which selected nominees from all three regions of the State.

Rural/Urban Bases

Only seven members of the PVL Ministry represented the urban people of Bihar. Of these, five were Cabinet Ministers and two Ministers of State. Among them three Cabinet Ministers and one Minister of State, were the Congress(R) nominees. Of the remaining three, one belonged each to the PSP and the Jharkhand and another one was an Independent. Of the five Cabinet Ministers, two came each from the North Plains and the South Plains, while the remaining one belonged to the Chotanagpur belt. Both Ministers of State came from the North plains.
Fall of the PVD Ministry

The fate of the Bhola Paswan-led PVD Ministry was not different from the previous Coalition Ministries since 1967. After remaining in power for 198 days, Paswan submitted the resignation of his Third Ministry to the Governor, L.K. Barooah, on December 27, 1971. This was the ninth Ministry to fall in quick succession since the Fourth General Elections.

defections

In the prevailing political atmosphere a Government could hardly expect a longer life. In this period, defections and floor-crossings were the rules of the game and no principle or ideology was involved in the making and breaking of Ministries. The Congress(R) Legislature Party pledged to carry out the election promises of the Congress headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had increased its strength in the Assembly in a questionable manner with defections from the SSP, Congress (O) and the Jan Sangh. These defections had, till the other day, supported the Thakur Ministry. It was unthinkable that these elements had overnight changed their beliefs and commitments. The record of these defectors showed that they had no commitments, except to themselves, nor any interest to serve besides their own. The Congress(R)-dominated Government had rewarded defectors by taking eight of them in the Ministry, six of whom were inducted the very day the State Cabinet had approved a Central bill banning the appointment

of defectors as Ministers. Four of the defectors belonged to the SSP, while three, namely Lal Singh Tyagi, Ram Chandra Shahi and Sisheshwar Prasad Singh to the Congress(o). Khaderan Singh came from the BKD.

The support to the Paswan Ministry was also based on those unscrupulous elements and disparate smaller parties which, till the other day, propped up the Thakur Ministry in the hope of sharing in the power and pelf that it could offer. There was hardly any guarantee that these political blackmailers would desist from resorting to the same tactics, which had been the undoings of other Chief Ministers in the past.

Role of the Congress(R) Ministers

The PVD Government headed by Bhola Paswan, which assumed office with the claim of a comfortable majority, soon started facing a crisis owing to the dissensions among the constituents of the Coalition as well as within the Congress(R) Legislature Party. From the outset, the Chief Minister was subjected to mounting pressures from the supporters of Talit Narain Mishra to scrap the Dutta Commission, set up by the previous SVD Ministry. The Commission was set up to enquire into the charges of defalcation of the Bharat Sevak Samaj (BSS) funds

149. Hindu, October 6, 1971.
by L.N. Mishra and a former Congress(R) Minister, Lahtan Chaudhary. The Congress(R) Ministers belonging to the Mishra's group vied with one another in demanding the abolition of the Commission and demonstrating thereby their loyalty to the Foreign Trade Minister, L.N. Mishra. The most vociferous of the lot was Laliteshwar Prasad Shahl, Information Minister, who threatened the Chief Minister, on the eve of his departure for New Delhi in the second week of July, that if he did not forthwith affix his signature to the cabinet memorandum asking for scrapping the Lutta Commission, he would leave New Delhi not as a 'Chief Minister but as a commoner'. Simultaneously, some other Ministers threatened to resign if the Enquiry Commission was not scrapped. In such a situation, the Chief Minister, on his return from New Delhi on July 17, 1971 decided to scrap the Commission, ignoring the threat of the CPI to withdraw support to the PVL Ministry if the Commission was terminated.

The Communist Party of India

Soon thereafter, the CPI withdrew its support to the PVL Coalition posing a serious threat to its stability, though it did not demand the resignation of the Government.
nor joined any other alliance. The CPI did so in protest against the scrapping of the Dutta Commission, as also the Congress(R)-led government's failure to introduce bills in the state Assembly seeking to impose a ceiling on urban properties and reduction of the land ceiling. Apart from the CPI, a few other constituents and a section of the Congress (R) Legislature party had also opposed the decision to scrap the Lutta Commission. Earlier the CPI had also threatened to withdraw support from the coalition on the question of ceiling on land up to 10 acres and a ceiling on urban property upto 5 lakhs. However, the Ministry promulgated an ordinance to this effect and sent it to the President to assent.

Praja Socialist Party

The Paswan Ministry faced another threat when the PSP, another major partner of the Coalition, was asked by its High Command to pull out of the Coalition following its decision to merge with the SSP. Six, out of 12 members of the PSP, however, rebelled against the decision of their central leadership and chose to stay on in the Coalition.

152. Ibid; Swarajya, August 21, 1971, p. 10; Link, October 3, 1971, p. 49.
With the withdrawal of support by the CPI and a section of the PSP, the Ministry had lost its majority in the House. The Congress(R) leaders, however, began wooing the splinter and regional groups like the Janata Party and the Independents in a bid to bolster the strength of the ruling coalition. A powerful section of the state Congress (R) had all along been averse to an alliance with the CPI and one of its spokesmen, Ramesh Jha, had warned immediately after the formation of the PVD Government against 'succumbing to CPI pressure. This section would have liked very much to keep the CPI away, although the latter itself might have been willing to reconsider the question of extending its support to the Government.

Role of the Congress(R) party

The Congress(R) Legislature Party itself was crippled by a serious split in its ranks. Strains had been developing between the two factional leaders, L.N. Mishra and R.L. Singh Yadav, who together headed the majority group in the state Congress(R). Mishra's supporters, it was reported, were aggrieved with Yadav, because, according to them, the latter did not work earnestly enough for the scrapping of the Putta Commission. Yadav, it appeared, wanted Mishra to use his influence to get him a clean chit from the CBI on the follow

156. Ibid.
up action against him in the light of the Aiyar Commission Report. According to informed sources, Mishra became suspicious of Yadav, when the latter, ignoring him, sought to build up a direct line of access to the Prime Minister through the Congress(R) General Secretary, Chandrakirti Yadav. Whatever be the reasons, the break between Mishra and Yadav was inevitable in the very nature of things. Both of them had assumed the role of king-makers and they had to part company when their interest clashed. The subsequent tussle between the two group leaders came to be reflected inevitably in the expansion of the Ministry and the distribution of portfolios. At one stage in August, 1971, when the rival leaders failed to compose their differences over the selection of the Ministers from the party and produce an agreed list, the Prime Minister, in exasperation, postponed the expansion of the PVD Ministry. Finally the Prime Minister gave in and 21 Ministers drawn from Congress(R) and other smaller parties were sworn-in on September 6, 7 and 8, 1971. Of these all the ten Congress(R) Ministers sworn-in belonged to the Mishra group. The nominees of Yadav, including Rameshwar Paswan, Shatrughan Sharan Singh, who were members of the first Congress(R)-led government and Mahabir Prasad Yadav were not taken in.

Apart from Mishra-Yadav faction, there was also a dissident group in the Congress(R) Legislature Party, headed

157. Ibid.
158. Ibid.
by D.P. Rai, a former Chief Minister. His group was annoyed with both the Mishra and the Yadav groups. Following its strained relations with the Yadav group, the Mishra group had been trying to woo Rai group, which claimed the support of 40 out of 127 Congress(R) MLAs. The dissident group, headed by Rai, was also bitter because the lion's share in the government had gone to Mishra's men. It was also unhappy with the replacement of the PCC President with an adhoc committee. One of its spokesmen, Budhdeo Singh, a former PCC General Secretary, had gone to the extent of demanding the dismissal of the Congress(R)-led government followed by Assembly elections in the state.

From the above analysis, it is clear enough that the Congress(R) Legislature Party was so badly riven with factionalism and groupism that it was hardly in a position to run a government. Both L.N. Mishra and R.L. Singh Yadav were mainly instrumental in causing the resignation of the PVD ruling Coalition. They were also responsible for the fall of the L.P. Rai Ministry.

Piecemeal expansion of the government, inordinate delay in the distribution of portfolios and inclusion of defectors were the tactics adopted by Paswan Ministry with a view to

159. Ibid.
satisfy their supporters and holding on to power as long as possible. But these tactics did not provide any relief to the PVD Ministry. The ruling coalition was in such a disarray that it was hesitant in calling the session of the Legislature even to ratify the 24th Amendment Bill and wanted to run the government as long as possible without calling the Legislature.

The last deadline for calling the Assembly, missed by accident or by design, had been set for December 30, 1971. But before that, confronted with the showdown and with a multiplicity of pressures working on him to step down, the Chief Minister threw up the sponge on December 27, 1971. The reason behind his hesitation in calling the Assembly was that there was no knowing how the various groups of members would vote in the wake of the friction that had developed.

It is also important to note that the party, which made Paswan the Chief Minister of the State, also forced him to step down. During the last a few days of November and early December, the D.P. Rai group in the Congress(R) demanded a reconstitution of the Ministry or failing they would withdraw supports to the Government. By December 15, 1971, Jagnarayan Pathak, the General Secretary of the BPCC, publicly demanded the resignation of the Chief Minister at a meeting of the Congress(R) Legislature Party. On December 17, the Congress(R)

161. Ibid., January 26, 1972, p. 2.
Legislature Party was reported to have given an ultimatum to the Chief Minister to quit by December 25, failing which the party would elect a new leader of the ruling PVD in his place by December 30, 1971. The Chief Minister, who had been summoned to New Delhi by the Prime Minister returned to Patna on December 27, and after a hurried special session of the Cabinet submitted the resignation of his Ministry. It seems clear that the Chief Minister, who had no party of his own and no following in the Coalition behind him, complied with 'the order of the Prime Minister' reinforced by the threat of withdrawal of support by the Congress (R). Bhola Paswan had no alternative but to give up his Chief Ministership.

Conclusions: 1969 - 1971

Thus, from February 26, 1969 to December 27, 1971, there had been five Ministries in Bihar, apart from a spell of 227 days of President's Rule. The Congress (R)-led Coalition Government headed by D.P. Rai, had the longest life among these Ministries, while the third US Government, headed by Bhola Paswan was the shortest-ever Ministry in the State. The average life of 5 months 9 days of these Ministries was sufficient indication of the deep malady of instability that this poor State had been suffering from. The causes that led


to the fall of as many as five Ministries in three years (this period becomes 2 years, 2 months and 7 days if we deduct the period of 7 months 17 days of President's Rule) were also the same - the manoeuvres and sabotage by the different group leaders in the legislature. The method to achieve this undemocratic and anti-people ends had also been the same in case of every one of those Ministries - defections and floor-crossings induced by promises of ministerial berths and other profitable jobs. The Congress had not shown a high degree of responsibility in Bihar. The non-Congress parties, of Right and Left, generally had shown no greater respect for democratic norms.

As in the first phase since 1967, during the second phase of Coalition Governments also, every member of the Assembly belonging to the ruling Coalition wanted to become Minister of some sort. The barrier of quality had long been broken. Any member of the Assembly, no matter what reputation he enjoyed about his ability and integrity, was considered suitable for being appointed a Minister. In this mass 'manufacture' of Ministers, public interests and the needs of the administration were entirely ignored. The only consideration that was kept in view was the need to save the Ministry from being defeated in the Assembly. The party loyalty was also wearing out. There was no guarantee that, at least, some members of the party would remain loyal if they
were not offered loaves and fishes of office. Quite a number of Ministries collapsed because the Chief Ministers concerned were not in a position to low level beyond a certain limit. If any Chief Minister tried to exercise his supervisory powers, the stability of his Ministry was immediately threatened. So, a clever Chief Minister wanted to take all possible precaution.

Because of the composition of the State Assembly, in which no party commanded an overall majority, Independents, defectors and mini-parties found an excellent opportunity to fish in troubled water. The subsequent division of the Congress created a new scope for defectors. A jump from one Congress to the other was even a lesser load on one’s conscience. Some legislators and also some Ministers were closely watching the pendulum of political developments. As soon as they found that the Ministry, they were supporting, was on way out, they quickly jumped the fence and got on the bandwagon of a probable winner. In this way, they were able to maintain their interests. Although party leaders were never tired of tall talks about the need to put down defections, in actual practice, defectors were always welcomed and generally offered every tempting terms. Some would have nothing less than Ministership, others were, of course, satisfied with lesser patronage.

Bihar had, thus, passed into its third spell of President’s Rule in five years in a bid to find a stable government, which
no party or combination of parties had been able to provide since 1967. Thus, for five years, Bihar remained paralysed by instability, political opportunism, unprincipled alliances, defections and corruption, bringing development works to a virtual standstill. What was more deplorable in such a situation was the claim of every Chief Minister to greater political rectitude than others.
CHAPTER V

THE ONE PARTY GOVERNMENTS

(A) The 1972 General Elections: Coming of the Congress

The General Elections to the Assembly held in March, 1972 reversed the trend set by the 1967 General Elections and confirmed by the 1969 Mid-term Poll. The multi-party and mini-party system gave way to the one party system. After experiencing a period of five years of short-lived governments, the Bihar electorate gave a clear mandate in favour of the Congress Party. Having won 167 out of 261 contested seats in the 318-member Assembly, the Congress got a chance again to give Bihar the much needed political stability, which had eluded it for the past five years. The charismatic leadership of the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and the unmatched resources and organization were the two major assets of the Congress Party. In 1969 mid-elections, the indvided Congress had won 118 seats and polled 30.12 per cent votes as against 34.12 per cent this time.

Table I shows party-wise break-up of contesting candidates and their results in the General Elections to the Bihar Assembly.

An important feature of this election was that the parties of opportunists and regional parties got a heavy blow from the electorate. Of the 20 parties in the election arena, nine were completely wiped out. Independents, however, were very much

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Number of contesting candidates</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
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<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (organization)</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India (CPI)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of India (Marxist)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party (SP)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party of India (RPI)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Bloc</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Backward Class Dal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar Prantiya Hul Jharkhand</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Hull Jharkhand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindustani Shoshit Dal</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India Jharkhand</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Unity Centre (SUC)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand (Horo Faction)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Socialist Party (SL)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chotanagpur Bhumi Rakshak</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>16*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1,982 318

2. General Elections, 1972, Bihar Legislative Assembly, Statistical Analysis (Patan Cabinet Secretariat and Coordination Department, Bihar)

* Independents include 4 members of the Break-way PSP, Hindustan Times, March 15, 1972.
there with 12 seats to their credit. The Shoshit Dal could manage to secure two seats, four less than in the dissolved House.

In the tribal belt of Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas (SP), the Congress made spectacular gains at the cost of the four Jharkhand splinter groups. The Congress bagged 47 out of 76 seats in this region. At the time of the last mid-term poll, there were two political groups of the tribals - All India Jharkhand and Hul Jharkhand. Now there were four such groups and their total strength had been reduced to 8 in the new House. The Swatantra Party could secure only one seat and its Chairman Yashwant Kumar Chaudhary was worsted in his own den, Dalsingsarai. The rump PSP had done a shade better. It had managed to win four seats as against three in the previous House. The Janata Party had disappeared from the political scene of Bihar after its merger with the Jan Sangh on the eve of the poll.

Apart from the smaller and the regional parties, it was for the Socialists a virtual rout although it contested 257 seats. Ever since 1967 it had been the second largest party in the Assembly. But now it had just 34 members in the new House. Quite a few of its stalwarts were defeated, including Ramanand Tiwari, a former Police Minister and the leader of the opposition in the Assembly, Shri Krishna Singh, a former Food Minister

3. N.K. Thakur, op. cit.
275

and Upendra Nath Verma, Chief of the State Party Unit. The election had proved equally disastrous for the Jan Sangh with 271 candidates in the field. It had secured as many as 34 seats in 1969. But for the merger of the Janata Party, the Jan Sangh would have fared even worse. It was largely because of Janata's influence which gave the Jan Sangh five seats in Hazaribagh where it had won none in 1969.

Compared to the socialist and the Jan Sangh, the Congress had given a better account of itself. As against 18 members in the dissolved House, it had now 30 and it could boast of having unseated the Congress from at least 13 out of 273 constituencies it had chosen for contesting the election. Its main strength, however, remained confined only to Patna, Gaya and Shahabad districts of South Bihar, which had together given the party 16 seats. The party had, of course, suffered major reverses in the defeat of its stalwarts like Krishna Kant Singh, Jageshwar Mandal, both Vice-President of the State Unit, Mrs. Tarkeshwari Sinha and Baidya Nath Mehta, Chairman of the Assembly Accounts Committee.

Certainly, the electoral alliance proved a God-sent for the CPI, which improved its position from 25 in the dissolved House to 35 in the new House. It is to be noted that the Congress Party had an electoral alliance with the CPI and the break-way

4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
group of the PSP. The electorate of Bihar had been soft on the former Chief Ministers, irrespective of their party affiliation. All the seven of them, who sought electoral favour in the Assembly poll, were returned. They were Mahamaya Prasad Sinha (Congress), B.P. Mandal (Socialist), Bhola Paswan Shastri (Congress), Harihar Prasad Singh (Congress-O), L.P. Rai (Congress), Karpouri Thakur (Sec.), Deep Narain Singh (Congress). After the elections, the Bihar Assembly wore a new look. There were 202 new faces, including 8 women, of the 273 sitting members, who entered the fray, 116 retained their seats. There were 12 woman members - Congress 10 and CPI 2 - in the 318-member new Assembly. There were only 4 women in the last Assembly.

The Kedar Pandey Ministry

From the election results, it was clear that the Congress Party had gained much from the losses of the opposition parties, while its loss in 1969 mid-term poll had not meant a gain for any other party. One of the most important features of this election was the end of tortuous coalition period. After five years, Bihar could claim to have a full fledged Congress Government. Kedar Pandey, the former Minister for Industry and River Valley Project, was nominated leader of the CLP on March 16, 1972 by the Prime Minister after her Party's new legislators unanimously authorised her to select a new leader.

6. Ibid.

Composition

An eight-member Kedar Pandey team was sworn-in at Patna on March 19, 1972 by the Governor D.K. Barooah. Seven other colleagues of Pandey were Ministers of Cabinet rank. Of them D.P. Rai was a former Chief Minister and five others were Ministers at one time or the other. Two Ministers, Narsingh Baitha and Ram Raj Prasad Singh got themselves promoted from the rank of Minister of State. One of them, Theodore Bodra was the Deputy Chairman of the Vidhan Parishad.

On March 20, 1972, the Pandey Ministry was expanded with the swearing-in of 19 Ministers - 4 of Cabinet rank, 11 Ministers of state and 4 Deputy Ministers. Of the Cabinet Ministers, Jagannath Mishra (J.N. Mishra) was the younger brother of L.N. Mishra, a dominant figure in Bihar politics. He was an Independent member of the Bihar Vidhan Parishad and joined the Congress on December 17, 1971. In 1972 Assembly elections, he got himself elected to the Assembly from Jhanjharpur constituency in Darbhanga district. Other men had been Ministers in the previous Congress (R)-led Coalitions. Of the eleven Ministers of State, seven, namely Chunchun Prasad Yadav, Prithvi Chand Kisku, Rameshray Prasad Singh, Bihari Lakra, Mrs. B. Douza,

9. Ibid.
Dinesh Kumar Singh and Vishnu Shankar were new entrants. Chunchun Prasad Yadav was a Jan Sangh member in the previous Assembly but he joined Congress (R) on June 1, 1971, the day Karpoori Thakur Ministry resigned. Dinesh Kumar Singh and Vishnu Shankar were members of the Vidhan Parishad. With the exception of Madan Prasad Singh, three other Deputy Ministers were new entrants. Singh was a Parliamentary secretary in the B.P. Rai Government.

One Cabinet Minister, five Ministers of State and two Deputy Ministers were added to the Pandey Ministry on March 21, 1972. Of the Ministers of State, Budhdeo Singh and Misri Sada were new comers. Taneshwar Azad was promoted from a Deputy Minister to be a Minister of State. Bhishma Narain Singh was a Congress (O) nominee in the Thakur Ministry. Ram Briksha Chaudhary and Sitaram Prasad were also new entrants. Both were Jan Sangh members in the previous House and defected to Congress (R), along with Chunchun Prasad Yadav.

With this swearing-in, the strength of the Ministry rose to 35, including 13 Cabinet Ministers, 16 Ministers of State and 6 Deputy Ministers. In all, there were 17 new faces, including three Cabinet Ministers, nine Ministers of State and five Deputy Ministers.

On August 30, 1972, Kedar Pandey reshuffled the portfolios

of several Ministers after Manorama Pandey and Bandhu Mahto, Deputy Ministers for Information and Police and Tourism respectively had been sworn-in as Ministers of State. The 35-member Ministry now had 13 Cabinet Ministers, 10 Ministers of State and 4 Deputy Ministers. Among those affected by the reshuffle were the Agriculture and Minor Irrigation Minister L.P. Shahi and Housing and Local-self Government (LSG) Minister Rafique Alam. Shahi was given Community Development, Gram Panchayat and Rural Engineering Organization. Agriculture went to the Finance Minister D.P. Rai and Minor Irrigation to the Revenue Minister Chandra Shekhar Singh. Rafique Alam now retained only Transport and Wakf; Housing and Local-self Government were shifted to Ram Raj Prasad Singh, who retained Public Health Engineering Department (PHED).

There were also an interchange of portfolios between the Irrigation Minister Abdul Qayum Ansari (A.Q. Ansari) and the Cooperative Minister J.N. Mishra. Mishra was also given two other important portfolios of Irrigation and Power. Ansari retained the portfolios of Welfare and Jails.

Among the three Ministers of State affected, one was Hemant Kumar Jha, who lost Housing and LSG and got Community Development and Rural Engineering Organization. He was attached to L.P. Shahi. Dinesh Kumar Singh, Minister of State for

Community Development and Gram Panchayat was now shifted to the Education Department. Misri Sada, who was Minister of State for Education, was now allocated Labour and Employment. He was attached to the Minister for Labour, Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha.

**Caste-wise Analysis**

Out of 35 Ministers of the Kedar Pandey Ministry, eighteen were Backwards, Harijans and Adivasis, fourteen members of the Upper Castes, two Muslims and one Christian. Table II shows caste, constituency, region and rural/urban base of the Ministers. Out of fourteen Upper Caste Ministers, five were Cabinet Ministers and nine Ministers of State. Of them, six were Brahmins, including three Maithili Brahmins, four Rajputs, three Bhumihars and one Kayastha.

There were ten Backward Caste Ministers in the Pandey Ministry. Of them, three were Cabinet Ministers, four Ministers of State and three Deputy Ministers. Among these Backward Caste Ministers, three were Yadavas, three Banias, one Kurmi, one Koiri and one Mallah. The remaining one Minister also belonged to a Backward Caste. Of the four Scheduled Caste Ministers, one was a Cabinet Minister, two Ministers of State and one a Deputy Minister. Among the four Scheduled Tribe Ministers, two were Ministers of Cabinet rank and two Ministers of State. Both Muslim Ministers were of the Cabinet rank. The lone Christian candidate was a Minister of State.
TABLE II

showing caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the Kedar Pandey Ministry, 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Area</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedar Pandey (MLA)</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nautan (Champaran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daroga Prasad Rai (MLA)</td>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parasa (Saran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laliteshwar Prasad Shahi (MLA)</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaishali (Muzaffarpur)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gopalganj (Saran)</td>
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<td>Jagannath Mishra (MLA)</td>
<td>Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jhariajharpur (Darbhanga)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lahtan Chaudhary (MLA)</td>
<td>Bania</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Maheshi (Saharasa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rafique Alam (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Urban</td>
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<td>Kishanganj (Purnea)</td>
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<td>South Plains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Abdul Qayum Ansari (MLA)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Urban</td>
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<td>Dehri (Shahabad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Raj Prasad Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Chandi (Patna)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chandra Shekhar Singh (MLA)</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Chakai (Monghyr)</td>
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<td>Chotanagpur</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Theodore Bodra (MLA)</td>
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<td>Khunti (Ranchi)</td>
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MINISTERS OF STATE

North Plains

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<tr>
<th>MLA</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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**South Plains**

Hemant Kumar Jha (MLA) Maithil Brahmin  
Chunchun Prasad Yadav (MLA) Yadav  
Prithvi Chand Kisku (MLA) Scheduled Tribe  
Rameshray Prasad Singh (MLA) Bhumihar  
Budhdeo Singh (MLA) Yadav  
Misri Sada (MLA) Scheduled Caste  
Mrs. Manorama Pandey (MLA) Brahmin

**Chotanagpur**

Bihari Lakra (MLA) Scheduled Tribe  
Shibmanjan Khan (MLA) Teli  
Bhishma Narain Singh (MLA) Rajput  
Taneshwar Azad (MLA) Scheduled Caste  
Dinesh Kumar Singh (MLC) Rajput  
Vishnu Shankar (MLC) Kayastha

**DEPUTY MINISTERS**

**North Plains**

Ram Briksha Chaudhary (MLA) Bania  
Sitaram Prasad (MLA) Bania

**South Plains**

Madan Prasad Singh (MLA) Mallah  
Ram Denu Ram (MLA) Scheduled Caste

**Chotanagpur**

Ram Denu Ram (MLA) Scheduled Caste

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(b) Caste of the Ministers, vide supra Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.  
(c) Constituency of the Ministers, General Elections, 1972, Bihar Legislative Assembly, Statistical Analysis (Patna: Cabinet Secretariat and Coordination Department, Bihar).
Region-wise Analysis

Out of the 33 MLA Ministers, fifteen came from the North Plains, including the Chief Minister. Of them eight were Cabinet Ministers, five Ministers of State and two Deputy Ministers. The South Plains had got eleven seats in the Pandey Government. Among them, three were Cabinet Ministers, seven Ministers and one Deputy Minister. There were seven Ministers coming from the Chotanagpur region. Of them two were Cabinet Ministers, four Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. Thus, the North Plains got dominance in the first Congress Ministry after the 1972 election, claiming more than half Cabinet posts.

Rural/Urban Analysis

All but five Ministers of the Congress Ministry represented rural areas in the Government. Of the five Ministers representing urban people, three were Cabinet Ministers and the remaining two were Ministers of State. Of the three Cabinet men, two belonged to the North Plains and one to the south Plains. Of the two Ministers of State, one came each from the North and the South Plains.

It is to be noted that two women got place in the Pandey Ministry. One was a Cabinet Minister and another one was a Minister of State. The former was a Rajput, the latter came from the Christian minority community. While the former represented the urban people, the latter was elected by the rural tribal
masses. However, both of them belonged to the same North Plains. Two colleagues of Pandey were MLCs. Both these members of the Vidhan Parishad were Ministers of state.

**Beginning of Factional Feuds**

Kedar Pandey started well. He completed the constitution of his Ministry within three days and almost simultaneously distributed the portfolios, which was indeed not a mean achievement, because another Chief Minister Harihar Singh went out of office without even distributing portfolios. But factionalism and groupism in the ruling Congress Party did not come to an end. This was clearly manifested when Kedar Pandey contemplated a major reshuffle of his cabinet. The main purpose of Pandey behind his Cabinet reshuffle was to reduce the grip of L.N. Mishra over Lihar politics. In consultation with Uma Shankar Dikshit, the then Home Minister, and Yashpal Kapoor, principal private Secretary of the Prime Minister, Chief Minister decided to reconstitute his cabinet by dropping seven Ministers (one of Cabinet rank and six Ministers of State), who were loyal to Mishra and disloyal to him. The Ministers to be dropped were Cabinet Minister Ram Raj Prasad Singh and Ministers of State Radha Nandan Jha, Vishnu Shankar, Budhdeo Singh, Nagina Rai, Chunchun Prasad Yadav and Shiburanjan Khan. However, four of the seven Ministers refused to resign on the ground that Pandey

---
himself did not enjoy the confidence of the CLP. Faced with their refusal to resign he himself resigned on May 27, 1973 and secured the invitation of the Governor to form a new government.

A 23-member Congress Ministry headed by Kedar Pandey was sworn-in on May 28, 1973 in the midst of deepening crisis in the faction-ridden ruling party. The reconstituted Ministry was to have 37 members - Cabinet Ministers 16, Ministers of State 16 and Deputy Ministers 5. But fourteen of those whose names were announced by the Chief Minister, did not turn up to take oath. Among them were D.P. Rai, J.N. Mishra, Rafique Alam, Lahtan Chaudhary, Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha. The seven absentee Ministers of State were Misri Sada, Bihari Lakra, P.C. Kisku, Hemant Kumar Jha, Dinesh Kumar Singh, Umesh Prasad Verma and Nagina Rai. Verma was a new entrant. Nagina Rai was ultimately retained in the ministerial team in pursuance of the last minute instruction from the Congress High Command. The absentee Deputy Ministers were Sitaram Prasad and Durga Charan Jamuda. Jamuda was a new entrant.

Eleven Cabinet Ministers, including the Chief Minister took oath. Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, former Deputy Chief Minister, Imamul Hai Khan, Ram Sharan Singh and Bindeshwari Dubey were new entrants. L.P. Shahi, Chandra Shekhar Singh, Narsingh Baitha,

18. *Ibid*.
Theodore Bodra, T. Mochi Rai Munda were members of the old Pandey Ministry. Taneshwar Azad was promoted to the Cabinet rank. He was a Minister of State earlier.

Mrs. Kishori Devi, Faguni Ram, Idris Ansari (all new comers), Ramesh Jha, Bhisma Narain Singh, Mrs. Bimla Douza, Mrs. Manorama Pandey, Ramashray Prasad Singh and Budhdeo Singh took oath as Ministers of State. Mrs. Kishori Devi was a member of the Vidhan Parishad. The three Deputy Ministers were Ram Briksha Chaudhary, Ram Devi Ram and Madan Prasad Singh.

However, all the 14 appointed Ministers, who had stayed away from the swearing-in ceremony took oath of office only a day after on May 29, 1973, raising the strength of the Ministry to 37. But a signature campaign was launched by Mishra's supporters to secure Pandey's ouster. Sensing the mood of the partymen in Patna, the Congress President asked Pandey to restore Ram Raj Prasad Singh and Radha Nandan Jha to their position and take Ramdeo Rai, a new man, in place of Chunchun Prasad Yadav. Consequently, on May 30, 1973, these Ministers were sworn-in, raising the strength of the Ministry to 40. However, before swearing-in, Singh and Jha had to tender an apology in writing to the Governor and the Chief Minister for their statements, which

20. Ibid., p. 11500.
were interpreted as challenging the constitutional authority of the Governor and the democratic right of the Chief Minister.

It is interesting to note that the exercise which began thunderously ended almost in a whimper. Kedar Pandey had to eat humble pie by taking back four of the seven dropped Ministers and his entire purpose of the reshuffle was defeated. He was left in no doubt about where he stood. Another consequence of this drama was the intra-party rivalries at the Centre, which was rehearsalled in the State politics. The clearance given by Likshit and Kapoor to drop Mishra's supporters from the Ministry was one way of 'wrecking vengeance' on Mishra for his alleged involvement on the side of the Socialist Forum in the Parliamentary Party elections. When Mishra came to know of Pandey's intention, he lost little time in retrieving his position. Ultimately, it was Pandey who had to swallow the bitter pill and reaccommodate four of the seven Ministers, who not only forced him to resign and reconstitute the Ministry, but also openly threatened to throw him out.

Ouster of Pandey

However, the campaign for Pandey's ouster continued and ultimately a date, July 24, 1973 was fixed for a trial of strength between the warring groups in the CLP. The situation became

23. Ibid.
clear when 24 out of 40 Ministers openly started working against the Chief Minister, and even close colleagues like the Finance Minister D.P. Rai, PWD Minister Narsingh Baitha, Ministers of State Ramesh Jha, Rama Nandan Jha and Bhishma Narain Singh, jumped out of the sinking ship. On June 22, 1973, in a bid to precipitate the ministerial crisis, these 24 members of the Council of Ministers submitted their resignation. The decision to quit the Pandey Ministry was taken earlier at a meeting at the residence of Chandra Shekhar Singh, Revenue Minister. Briefing newsmen, Singh said, "We have taken this step so that we may be able to work freely for the ouster of Pandey". Of those who resigned, nine were Cabinet Ministers, twelve Ministers of State and three Deputy Ministers. They were D.P. Rai, Chandra Shekhar Singh, J.N. Mishra, Ram Raj Prasad Singh, Rafique Alam, Narsingh Baitha, Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha, Laha Tan Chaudhary and L.P. Shahi (all Cabinet Ministers), Hemant Kumar Jha, Rama Nandan Jha, Ramesh Jha, Nagina Rai, Bhishma Narain Singh, Ramashray Prasad Singh, Bandhu Mahto, Manorama Pandey, Bihari Lakra, Misri Sada, P.C. Kisku and Ramdeo Rai (all Ministers of State), Ram Deni Ram, Ram Briksha Chaudhary and Maadan Prasad Singh (all Deputy Ministers).

In such a situation, when majority of his Cabinet colleagues


and partymen went against him, Kedar Pandey on June 24, 1973 bowed out of office after 15 months of rule, when he was denied fresh mandate at a specially convened meeting of the CLP. Pandey, who had been asked by the Congress High Command to seek a vote of confidence after a sustained campaign against his leadership, lost by 153 votes to 79. Four votes were declared invalid. Half a dozen legislators abstained from voting, prominent among them were Harinath Mishra, Speaker of the Assembly, Abdul Ghafoor, Chairman of the Vidhan Parishad and Mahamaya Prasad, a former Chief Minister.

The exit of Kedar Pandey as the Chief Minister of Bihar following his failure to secure a vote of confidence in the CLP was admittedly an important chapter in the none-too-happy political drama of Bihar. Acclaimed about 15 months ago as a wise choice of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Chief Ministership of Kedar Pandey had been killed without much ceremony not by hostile hosts but by the faction led by L.N. Mishra, now Railway Minister in the Union Cabinet. The results showed that Pandey had lost his hold on the party or had been made to lose it by the manoeuvrings of L.N. Mishra, whose protege Pandey was when he was asked to lead the party. By camping in Patna for several days, Mishra could be said to have influenced the decision of the CLP on

28. Ibid.
29. Thought (Delhi), December 7, 1973, p. 5.
on June 24, 1973. It was difficult to appreciate him when he said that Pandey's fall was the people's victory. On the contrary, there was substance in Pandey's statement that he was forced out because he was no match to the 'money and might' deployed against him.

From the moment Pandey was elected the leader of the party, the dissidents within the party began to undermine his position both within and outside the Cabinet on the spacious plea that he was 'foisted' on them by the party's central leadership. That most of them owed loyalty to L.N. Mishra only showed how they cared for party unity or the accepted canons of democratic behaviour.

On the other hand, Pandey himself, a nominee of the Prime Minister, failed miserably to keep the disputed factions in the party together or, for that matter, to attend to any of the pressing problems of the Backward state. He proved to be a party politician and totally inadequate as a Chief Minister. Most of his colleagues regarded him as a pawn of the Central leadership, entirely lacking local political backing. In fact he doggedly held on to office, when it was clear that he had lost the majority in the State Congress Legislature Party.

Pandey also failed to keep harmonious relations with the PCC. On many issues the PCC Chief, Vidyakar Kavi, and the Chief Minister

did not see eye to eye with each other. Kavi had made no secret of his opposition to the reimposition of land rent on uneconomic holdings, uniform rate of wheat levy on the rich and the poor farmers alike and the Government's reluctance to honour the agreement reached between the BPCC and the striking non-gazetted State employees. The result was that Kavi and some other PCC office bearers sided with the dissidents. Four General secretaries, three of whom were legislators, along with CLP General Secretary and Chief whip, openly demanded Pandey's ouster.

Thus, it was clear that factional in-fighting within the ruling Congress was the main reason of Kedar Pandey's ouster from Chief Ministership. Another important reason was his bid to come out of the grip of L.N. Mishra and to challenge his hold over the Bihar Congress. Three aspects of this drama were noteworthy. The first was that L.N. Mishra continued to have a dominant say in Bihar politics. By persuading Mrs. Gandhi apparently without much difficulty first to reverse the directives of Dikshit and then to ask Pandey to seek CLP confidence, Mishra had demonstrated that he retained the confidence of the Prime Minister. So long as this position was maintained his influence in Bihar Congress politics remained undiminished.

Secondly, Pandey's position was unenviable. Eversince, he


took office he had been under heavy pressure from the three prominent groups in the state Congress, namely L.N. Mishra's R.L. Singh Yadav's and Jagjivan Ram's group. Pandey was chosen by Mrs. Gandhi to head the Ministry, largely because it was thought that his non-controversial background would produce homogeneity. But this proved to be wishful thinking, though the reason lay more in group politics in Bihar than in Pandey. What happened at Patna on June 24, after months of dog-fighting was one more reminder that the Congress was a confused jumble of office seekers for whom nothing was sacred except their precious hides.

The third aspect was the most disturbing since it related to the Congress leadership's style of party management. To saddle Pandey with Ministers of particular group was bad enough. What was worse the covert and overt encouragement given to him to intrigue for their ouster. The high drama accompanying the reshuffle, ultimately proved futile again largely because of remote control operations which robbed Pandey of all manoeuvrability. A Chief Minister, who was forced to give the impression of being a puppet, could not have much credibility. If Pandey had proved ineffective so far, at least part of the blame rested with the Centre. As it was, most of the Chief Ministers, 'nominated' by Mrs. Gandhi, did not have a strong political base.

34. Statesman (New Delhi), June 1, 1973.
at home, nor had they been able to function without the 'blessings' of the central leadership. What the Ministers did by refusing to resign was a deviation from Parliamentary norm, but they argued that since the Chief Minister had been selected by the High Command, he was not entitled to ask them to resign. Only the High Command could ask them to resign.

(B) THE ABDUL QHAFOOR GOVERNMENT

Choice of a New Leader

The long negotiations that Sidharth Shankar Roy, the High Command emissary, held with L.N. Mishra and the outgoing Chief Minister failed to find a successor of Kedar Pandey. As the rival factions were in a state of confrontation presenting persons of their choice, the selection of a new Chief Minister was left to the Prime Minister by an unanimous resolution of the Congress Legislature Party. The Prime Minister, once again, obliged the Bihar Congress Legislature Party by selecting Abdul Ghafoor, the Chairman of the Legislative Council, as the new leader of the CLP. The choice of the Prime Minister was communicated to L.N. Mishra and Kedar Pandey during a meeting held at the Congress President Shankar

Dayal Sharma's residence. However, it appeared that L.N. Mishra, who used to control Bihar politics from New Delhi, had the final say in choosing Ghafoor as the new Leader and Kedar Pandey, who was against Ghafoor and wanted Harinath Mishra, the Speaker of the Assembly, to succeed him, had to yield.

Ministry Making

Headed by Abdul Ghafoor, a new 15-man Ministry was sworn-in at Patna on July 2, 1973. Earlier he had resigned from the Chairmanship of the Upper House of the Bihar Legislature and the Governor accepted the resignation of the Caretaker Pandey Government. Besides Ghafoor, others, who took oaths of office and secrecy, were Ministers of the Cabinet rank.

The Ghafoor Ministry was the eleventh since 1967 and second after the 1972 General Elections. Ghafoor was the first Muslim and the second member of the Vidhan Parishad, the first being B.P. Mandal, to become the Chief Minister of Bihar. Of the fifteen Ministers, eight were members of the ousted Pandey Ministry; of them Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav became a Cabinet Minister in the reconstituted Pandey Ministry. The remaining seven were new comers. Notable among them was Vidyakar Kavi,

36. Ibid.
EPCG President. Except for him and three others, including Sidhu Hembrum, Karam Chand Bhagat and Jai Narain Mehta, all the new entrants were former Ministers.

It is important that in the composition of the new Ministry, preponderance was given to the majority group owing allegiance to L.N. Mishra. The group got 13 berths in the Cabinet, as against two allotted to the composite group controlled by Kedar Pandey, Jagjiwan Ram and Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav. In the new but incomplete cabinet that Ghafoor had chosen, he had given weightage to the Backward Castes. In a 15-member Cabinet, nine, including two Harijans and two Adivasis, were from the Backward Castes. The allocation of portfolios among these Cabinet Ministers was announced on July 13, 1973.

The strength of the Ghafoor Ministry rose to 37 with the addition of six Cabinet Ministers and sixteen Ministers of State on September 25, 1973. It took the Chief Minister two months and three weeks besides three long trips to New Delhi to get clearance from the Central leaders for the expansion of his Ministry giving credence to the criticism that he was even more under remote control from Delhi than

Kedar Pandey, one of the Cabinet ministers, Baleshwar Ram had been a minister in Harihar Singh Ministry, D.P. Rai Ministry and Bhola Paswan-led PVD Ministry. An important feature of this expansion was that Kedar Pandey was persuaded to join the Ghafoor Ministry. The remaining four were ministers in the Pandey Ministry, of them Bindeshwari Dubey became a minister in the Pandey second ministry. Of the ministers of state, eight were new entrants and seven of them were freshers. They were Tapeshwar Deo, Chaudhary Salaluduin, Suraj Nath Chaubey, Purnendu Narain Sinha, Sadanand Singh, Mrs. Rajeshwari Saroj Das and Khalid Anwar Ansari. Among the freshers, Ansari was the son of A.Q. Ansari, a cabinet minister in the Pandey Ministry. He got himself elected to the Assembly in a by-election caused by the death of his father. Of the remaining eight, seven were ministers in the outgoing Pandey Government. Niteshwar Prasad Singh was a state minister in the D.P. Rai Ministry, while Budhdeo Singh was a minister of state in the first Pandey Ministry.

The Chief Minister allocated portfolios to 37 ministers, including sixteen ministers of state, after making a major reshuffle of some portfolios on September 27, 1973. The Health Department and PHED/held by the Chief Minister were allocated to Rafique Alam and Kedar Pandey respectively. The Food and Supply Department

held by Mungeri Lal was allotted to L.P. Shahi. Lal was allotted Mines and Geology, held by Finance and Planning Minister D.P. Rai. J.N. Mishra continued to be incharge of the Power and Irrigation Departments, including River Valley project (RVP). But the Minor Irrigation Department was excluded from the Irrigation Department and allotted to Theodore Bodra. Baleshwar Ram was given the Information and Tourism Department held so far by Chandra Shekhar Singh and Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha respectively. Shatrughan Sharan Singh was divested of Transport portfolio and given the Sugarcane Department held by Chandra Shekhar Singh. The Transport portfolio was allocated to Bindeshwari Nubey. There was no change in the portfolios of Ram Raj Prasad Singh, Vidyakar Kavi, Narsingh Baitha and Jai Narain Mehta.

The Ghafoor Ministry was further expanded on November 17, 1973 with the addition of one Cabinet Minister, four Ministers of State and four Deputy Ministers. With this the strength of the second Congress Ministry since 1972 went up to 46. This time all the nine Ministers had been drawn from the majority group owing allegiance to L.N. Mishra. The Cabinet Minister, Shankar Dayal Singh, was formerly in the BKD and had contributed to the making and breaking of many Coalition governments in the period between February 1969 -

December 1971. With the exception of Misri Sada, Bhishma Narain Singh and Madan Prasad Singh, who were Ministers in the Pandey Government, all others were new entrants. Barring Shanker Dal Singh, all were allocated portfolios on December 4, 1971.

Thus, the Ghafoor Ministry was composed of 46 Ministers, including 22 Cabinet Ministers, 20 Ministers of State and 4 Deputy Ministers. This was the largest three-tier Congress Ministry since Independence and the second largest Ministry since 1967; the first being the SSP-led SVD Government of Karpoori Thakur. In all, there were as many as 22 new faces in the Ghafoor Ministry, including the Chief Minister himself. Of them, 9 were Cabinet Ministers, 10 Ministers of State and 3 Deputy Ministers. Five colleagues of Ghafoor were members of the Vidhan Parishad. It was for the first time that so many members of the Upper House were taken as Ministers. Of them, two were Cabinet Ministers and three Ministers of State. Table III shows the details of the Abdul Ghafoor Ministry.

Caste-wise Analysis

As is clear from Table III, there were 21 Forward Caste Ministers (nine Cabinet rank and twelve Ministers of State) in the Ghafoor Ministry. Of them, eight were Brahmins, including three Maithil Brahmins, seven Rajputs, five Bhumihars and one Kayastha. Among the nine Backward Caste Ministers
TABLE III

Showing party, caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the Ghafoor Ministry, 1973.

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**MINISTERS OF STATE**

**North Plains**

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**South Plains**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budhdeo Singh</th>
<th>MLA</th>
<th>Yadav</th>
<th>Urban</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Manorama Pandey</td>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Karakat (Shahabad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramashray Prasad</td>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Kurtha (Gaya)</td>
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<td>Singh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>MLA/Caste/Tribe</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
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<td>Hemant Kumar Jha</td>
<td>MLA Maithil Brahmin</td>
<td>Godda (SP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prithvi Chand Kisku</td>
<td>MLA Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Poraihat (SP)</td>
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<td>MLA Brahmin Rural</td>
<td>Shahpur (Shahabad)</td>
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<td>Khalid Anwar Ansari</td>
<td>MLA Muslim Urban</td>
<td>Dehti (Shahabad)</td>
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<td>MLA Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>Alauli (Monghyr)</td>
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<td>Linesh Kumar Singh</td>
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<td>Purnendu Narain</td>
<td>MLC Kayastha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Ministers</td>
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<td>North Plains</td>
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<td>MLA Dusadh, SC</td>
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<td>MLA Muslim Rural</td>
<td>Sikta (Champaran)</td>
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<td>South Plains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Macan Prasad Singh</td>
<td>MLA Mallah Rural</td>
<td>Gopalpur (Bhagalpur)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awadheshwar Ram</td>
<td>MLA Chamar, SC Rural</td>
<td>Imamganj (Gaya)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


(b) Caste of the Ministers, vide *Supra* Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 109.

(c) Constituency of the Ministers, vide *Supra* Footnote 13(c), Chapter V, p. 282.
(five Cabinet, three Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister), three were Yadavas, two Banias, two Kurmis, one Koiri and one Mallah. There were five Muslims, including the Chief Minister. Of them, two were Cabinet Ministers, two Ministers of State and one Deputy Minister. The Ghafoor Ministry had six scheduled Caste Ministers, of them, three were Cabinet Ministers, one Minister of State and two Deputy Ministers. There were five Ministers belonging to the scheduled Tribes. Among them, three were Cabinet Ministers and the remaining two were Ministers of State.

There were four women in Ghafoor Ministry, one was a Cabinet Minister and three Ministers of State. While the Cabinet Minister was a Rajput, of the Ministers of State, one was a Brahmin, one a Bania and the remaining one was an Adivasi. Two women Ministers represented the urban areas of the North Plains, while one was an MLC and the remaining one came from a rural area of the South Plains.

Regional Representation

So far regional representation in the Ministry was concerned, the North Plains had again got the highest number. Among the twenty Ministers belonging to this region, twelve were Cabinet Ministers, six Ministers of State and the remaining two were Deputy Ministers. Of the fourteen Ministers coming from the South Plains, three were Cabinet Ministers, nine Ministers of State and two Deputy Ministers. The tribal
belt of Chotanagpur had secured seven ministerial posts. Of them, five were in the Cabinet and the remaining two were Ministers of State.

**Rural-Urban Analysis**

Only six members of the Ghafoor Ministry represented the urban areas of the state. Of them, three were in the Cabinet and two were Ministers of State. While three belonged to the North Plains, one each came from South Plains and the Chotanagpur.

**Reconstitution of the Ministry**

By March 1974, the politics of Bihar took a new but explosive turn. The 'Student Movement' later known as 'JP Movement' was started with a massive demonstration by the students before the Assembly on March 13, 1974 against "The high prices, rampant corruption and mounting unemployment among the educated youths". Apparently, shaken by the events of March 18, the Chief Minister attempted, at the instance of the Central leadership, to reconstitute his Ministry. The High Command sent AICC General Secretary, Mrs. M. Chandra Shekhar to Patna, on April 9 to prepare the ground for a reshuffle. On April 10, within twenty-four hours of her arrival,

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all the 45 Ministers in Ghaffoor’s 10-month-old government handed him their resignations ‘voluntarily’ and ‘unconditionally’ in the presence of Mrs. M. Chandra Shekhar. This paved the way for a Cabinet reshuffle as desired by the Congress High Command.

The Chief Minister, on April 18, dropped 35 of his 46 Ministers and announced a new 14-member (all of Cabinet rank) Ministry. Three new faces were named. They were Umesh Prasad Verma, Simon Tigga and Suresh Kumar. The Cabinet Ministers retained were Kedar Pandey, D.P. Rai, Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha, Chandra Shekhar Singh, J.N. Mishra, Lahtan Chaudhary, Sidhu Hembrum, Narsingh Baitha, Ram Raj Prasad Singh and Ramashray Prasad Singh. The last named, a Minister of State in the outgoing Ministry, was promoted to the rank of Cabinet Minister. The Governor, R.D. Bhandara, accepted the resignation of the 35 dropped Ministers; twelve of them being of Cabinet rank, nineteen Ministers of State and four Deputy Ministers. Among the notable Ministers dropped were the dissident leader, Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, Rafique Alam, Baleshwar Ram, Vidyakar Kavi and Bindeshwary Dubey. Of the four new Ministers, two, namely Ramashray Prasad Singh and Simon Tigga were sworn-in on April 22 and Umesh Prasad Verma was sworn-in on April 23, 1974.

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45. Data India (Press Institute of India, New Delhi), April 8-14, 1974, p. 31.
46. Ibid., May 6-12, 1974, p. 98.
47. Hindustan Times, April 23 and 24, 1974.
Suresh Kumar, son of Jagjivan Ram, Defence Minister, declined to join the reconstituted Ministry on April 24, reducing its strength to 13.

Of the 13 members of the reconstituted Ministry, there were two members each of Rajput and Brahmin and one each of Bhumihar and Kayastha castes. There were two men of the Adivasis, one of them Simon Tigga was a Minister of State in the first UF government and again in the Shoshit Dal Ministry. The Backward Castes had three men, one Yadav, one Kurmi and one Bania, in the Council of Ministers. There was one man each of the Muslims and the Scheduled Castes. Thus, in the reconstituted Ministry, there were six members of the Upper Castes, three of the Backward Castes, two of the Scheduled Castes and one each of the Scheduled Castes and the Muslims.

However, it was the party factional infighting which was mainly responsible for the pruning. The mounting student agitation provided an alibi for this action. The Chief Minister Abdul Ghafoor, like his immediate predecessor, Kedar Pandey, was becoming tired of his role as L.N. Mishra's Chief Minister by proxy. He was in search of some occasion to drop J.N. Mishra and some other important followers of L.N. Mishra. The student movement provided him an occasion and the encouragement was believed to have come from Uma Shankar Dikshit and Jagjivan Ram, who visited Patna soon after March 18, 1974. The Chief

Minister had been under constant pressure from the dissidents to reconstitute his Ministry, as it was packed with Mishra's supporters. After March 16, this pressure was further increased. It became clear, when a dozen anti-Ghafoor MLAs led by R.L. Singh Yadav, Nagendra Jha, and Ram Gharan Prasad Singh met Mrs. M. Chandra Shekhar at Patna on April 9, 1974 to tell her that the Government had virtually ceased to exist after the March 16 movement. One of the purposes of this purging drama, as it was advertised, was to eliminate the Ministers with questionable reputations. If it were so, then some powerful men (belonging to Mishra faction), against whom some grave charges had been levelled on the floor of the Assembly, would not have been retained.

Whatever might have been the motives behind this ministerial reshuffle, the Chief Minister simply failed. He could not refurbish the image of his Ministry because men of doubtful integrity again got into the Cabinet. Nor could he succeed in getting rid of L.N. Mishra's remote control. The reconstituted Ministry merely re-affirmed Mishra's hold on Bihar politics. Perhaps, the High Command was not in a position to ignore Mishra, at least, in Bihar politics. Mishra had succeeded in retaining most of the Ministers belonging to his

49. Data India, April 8-14, 1974, p. 31.
group in the reconstituted Ministry. Excepting two or three, all members of the pruned team of thirteen belonged to his faction. Thus, the objective of reducing the weightage in favour of Mishra group and, at the same time, getting rid of deadwood had not been achieved.

**Intensified Factional Infighting**

The drama of the reconstitution of the Ministry only intensified the factional strife in the party and Ghafoor's position in the party became untenable. The dominant group led by L.N. Mishra was suspicious of the loyalty of the Chief Minister because he had thought of jettisoning J.N. Mishra. The dissidents were unhappy because none of them found a berth in the reconstituted Ghafoor Ministry. On the contrary, their sole nominee, Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, was dropped. Some dissidents, including R.L. Singh Yadav and Shankar Dayal Singh, met the AICC General Secretary, on April 20, in New Delhi and demanded that besides Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, at least three more from their group should be included in the Cabinet. They also urged that some of those whom Ghafoor had retained and against whom there were charges of corruption should be dropped if the Ministry was to have a better image. The High Command also appeared to be convinced that as the reconstituted Cabinet

was heavily weighted in favour of Mishra's supporters, it could be suitably expanded to meet the demands of a section of the party. The Chief Minister was summoned to New Delhi and there was a rumour that some more dissidents would be taken into the Cabinet as the Prime Minister was taking direct interest in finding a solution to the problem. Unfortunately, for Bihar, nothing came out of these speculations and the infighting within the Congress went on unabated. The Congress Central leadership itself was divided on this issue. Jagjiwan Ram, in particular was annoyed that he had not been consulted in the matter. It was because of this he did not permit his son to join the reconstituted Ghafoor Ministry. The Defence Minister, however, did not come openly against Ghafoor, but the dissidents camping in New Delhi made it clear that a sectional Ministry could not hope to get the united backing of the party. In fact, sixty-three dissidents, at a meeting on April 21, at the residence of Taneshwar Azad, arrived at a consensus that unless the leadership of the Bihar CLP was changed and Ministry headed by a new leader, who was not a nominee of the "ruling coterie of the Union Railway Minister, feeling of the L.N. Mishra", was installed, the people of the State would not be "assuaged" nor would the current agitation subside.

53. Ibid., April 24, 1974.
54. Ibid., April 22, 1974.
A deputation of Congress MLAs, headed by Shatrughan Sharan Singh, a former Minister, called on the Congress President and several Central leaders and demanded Ghafoor's ouster.

Abdul Ghafoor's Ouster

The reorganization of the Ministry failed to create any favourable impact on the course of the JP Movement. There was hardly anything to distinguish those, who had been retained from those or inducted into office, who had been dropped. Instead of unifying the Congress in Bihar, it divided the party. The number of former dissidents was considerably swelled after they were joined by the 'dropped Ministers' in their effort to oust Ghafoor. Over a third of the 184-member in the Assembly were in active dissidence consequent upon their finding no representation in the refurbished Ministry. Yet another weird twist was given to the factional drama when some of Ghafoor's ministerial colleagues turned against him. A new and droll category of "Ministerial dissidents" was added to those of honest-to-God dissidents and "dropped Ministers". These mutually antagonistic factional impulses converged into a challenge to Ghafoor, which only the Prime Minister was able to squelch for him. Abdul Ghafoor, on his part, made many attempts to reconstitute his Ministry again by dropping some of Mishra's supporters. He was understood to have told the

56. Ibid. (Editorial), April 26, 1974.
High Command that the exit of some of Ministers (Mishra's supporters) particularly J.N. Mishra, would have a favourable impact on the political situation in the state and ensure smooth functioning of his Ministry. But the High Command was not prepared to heed his advice. Rather, it had decided to accept Ghafoor's offer of stepping down from the Chief Ministership, which he had made, it appeared, in sheer exasperation and disgust. The Congress Parliamentary Board, on March 11, 1975, decided to accept the offer of Abdul Ghafoor to step down, but a formal announcement had not been made; firstly, because the Board had not yet been able to decide on his successor. Second, the State Assembly had been in session and it would have been unwise to change the Chief Minister in the middle of the session. However, very soon the Bihar CLP was allowed to choose a new leader.

Thus, another sordid drama came to an end in Bihar politics with the exit of Abdul Ghafoor. Apart from the factional fighting, which had been the legacy of the Congress Party, the reconstitution of the Ministry hastened the process of his exit. Above all, L.N. Mishra had prepared enough ground, before his death on January 2, 1975, for his ouster. Ghafoor himself did never claim that he enjoyed the confidence of the

57. Times of India, July 8, 1974.
party. He had stayed in office all this time entirely on the strength of the support of the Central Congress leadership. When he was installed as the Chief Minister, he was given out as a Mishra-man selected by the Prime Minister and was widely believed to be inclined to take the line of least resistance, which in effect, meant obeying the 'diktat' of L.N. Mishra. This impression, he proceeded to confirm by packing his Ministry with Mishra's supporters to the exclusion of other groups. But the same Mishra turned against him when he saw him asserting his independent status. This was not the first time that a puppet had turned against his manipulator and a 'compromise candidate' had proved not so pliable after all. The dissidents had never reconciled to the leadership of Ghafour, for the obvious reason that they were not given adequate share in the ministerial cake. Large scale pruning of the Council of Ministers, in which 35 Ministers of all ranks were dropped, created more enemies than Ghafour could manage. Ministerialists of yesterday turned dissidents of today. The other Ministers in the Cabinet, some of whom happened to be the former Chief Ministers, saw a chance for pushing themselves into the Chief Minister's gaddi in Ghafour's place. J.N. Mishra also looked for a similar chance for himself. Abdul Ghafour, on his part, had encouraged no sychophancy. Partymen and legislators expected no financial support from him and hardly made a beeline to his residence. He had also discouraged what was called 'pairvi' by legislators for
transfers and postings of officers. He, of course, had the reputation of being more honest than his rivals, a point which JP, too, made more than once even after he had taken up the leadership of the student movement and made the fight against corruption one of its plank. But this reputation had long ceased to be his asset. He was not solely to blame for this. The central leaders as well as factional leaders in Patna prevented him from purging his cabinet of men of doubtful integrity or even expanding it in order to bring in the legislators loyal to him. As a result, few among his cabinet colleagues had any loyalty to him. They continued to speak derisively for him, flouted his orders, behaved in the manner of independent warlords. In such a murky situation, he had no alternative but to step down.

(C) THE JAGANNATH MISHRA GOVERNMENT

Mishra as the New CLP Leader

Removal of Abdul Ghafoor as the only common cause brought the diverse factions within the Congress together to campaign for a change in leadership. But as soon as the Congress central leadership conceded their demand, this new-found convenient cooperation ended and these groups raced against each other

60. Times of India (Editorial), February 8, 1975.
in staking their claims to leadership. The two main contenders, however, were Kedar Pandey, the first Congress Chief Minister after 1972, and Jagannath Mishra, an ambitious member of the Ghafoor Cabinet. Although, the names of Harinath Mishra, the Speaker of the Assembly and Sitaram Kesari, the BPCC President, were put up by some groups of legislators, they were not very serious contenders. However, it was the familiar magic formula of "the Prime Minister's wishes", which seemed to have stalled all opposition to J.N. Mishra's unanimous election. Though the Congress High Command had expressed a desire to let the Legislature party elect its leader, apparently, it could not resist the temptation of interfering at the last moment. In fact, its emissaries were active in promoting a consensus and the Prime Minister's name was freely used to create the bandwagon effect, which compelled Pandey to opt out of the race. On April 4, 1975, Kedar Pandey publicly stated that since it was the desire of the Prime Minister that J.N. Mishra should be elected leader, he was withdrawing from the contest in Mishra's favour. Mishra had a clear majority in his favour in the CLP, and the High Command's role in Bihar had, thus, given Pandey a chance to save his face. By withdrawing from the contest for the Chief Ministership, Pandey had done the only thing he could to avoid defeat. In the circumstances,

61. Statesman (Editorial), April 7, 1975.
62. Ibid., April 5, 1975.
63. Ibid., April 7, 1975.
J.N. Mishra was, unanimously, elected the leader of the Bihar CLP, on April 6, 1975. Mishra's name was proposed by the outgoing Chief Minister Abdul Ghafoor, who presided over the meeting and it was supported by Kedar Pandey.

**Ministry Making**

A 16-member two-tier Bihar Ministry, headed by J.N. Mishra, was sworn-in on April 11, 1975, by the Governor R.I. Bhandare. Of these, fifteen, including the Chief Minister, were Ministers of Cabinet rank. The remaining one member was a Minister of State.

Three of the Ministers were not members of either House of the Bihar Legislature. They were Nawal Kishore Prasad Sinha and Sukhdeo Verma, both members of the Lok Sabha, and Zawar Hussain, then the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bihar. While Sinha was a Member of the Lok Sabha from Muzaffarpur parliamentary constituency in the North plains, Verma was from Nawada Parliamentary constituency in the South Plains. Zawar Hussain had been a Cabinet Minister in the Harihar Singh, D.P. Rai and B.P. Paswan-led PVD Coalition Ministries. Before 1967, he was a Cabinet Minister in the B.N. Jha Ministry, formed in 1961 after S.K. Sinha's death. Nawal Kishore Prasad Sinha (N.K. Sinha) was also a State Minister in the K.B. Sahay Government.

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64. *Data India*, April 7-13, 1975, p. 236.
Five Ministers, including the Chief Minister, were members of the reconstituted Ghafoor Ministry. The other four were Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha, Ram Raj Prasad Singh, Narsingh Baitha and Ramashray Prasad Singh. Five Ministers, namely Ram Jaipal Singh Yadav, Vidyakar Kavi, Bindeshwari Dubey, Theodore Bodra and Karam Chand Bhagat were Ministers in the earlier Ghafoor Ministry. Mohammad Hussain Azad and Ram Ratan Ram were new entrants. While the former had been a Minister in the Harihar Singh and the D.P. Rai Ministries, the latter was a first timer. The State Minister, Taneshwar Azad, was a Minister of State in the first Pandey Ministry and a Cabinet Minister in his second Ministry.

J.N. Mishra, 38 years of age, was the youngest Chief Minister, after Satish Prasad Singh, the stop-gap-Chief Minister in 1968. Mishra Ministry was the smallest, with the exception of the purged Ghafoor Ministry in Bihar since 1967. His was the third Congress Ministry after the 1972 elections and he was the 15th Chief Minister since Independence and 12th since 1967. While three of the Ministers were not members of the Bihar Legislature, none was taken from the Vidhan Parishad. Table IV shows caste, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the Mishra Ministry.

**Caste-wise Analysis**

Of the sixteen Ministers, six were from the Upper Castes, three from the Backward Castes, three from the Scheduled Castes,
TABLE IV

showing caste/community, constituency, region and rural/urban bases of the members of the J.N.Mishra Ministry, 1975.

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<tr>
<th>Region/Name</th>
<th>Caste/Community</th>
<th>Rural/Urban</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CABINET MINISTERS</td>
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<td>North Plains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jagannath Mishra MLA Maithil Brahmin Rural Jhanjharpur (Darbhanga)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ram Dulari Sinha MLA Rajput Urban Gopalganj (Saran)</td>
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<td>Ram Jaipal Singh MLA Yadav Rural Sonepur (Saran)</td>
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<td>Vidyakar Kevi MLA Raj Bhatt Rural Alamnagar (Saharasa)</td>
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<td>Narsingh Baitha MLA Dhobi, SC Rural Bagaha (Champaran)</td>
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<td>Mohd. Hussain Azad MLA Muslim Rural Thakurganj (Purnea)</td>
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<th>South Plains</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Raj Prasad Singh MLA Kurmi Rural Chandi (Patna)</td>
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<td>Ramashray Prasad Singh MLA Bhumihar Rural Kurtha (Gaya)</td>
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<th>Chhotanagpur</th>
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<td>Bindeshwari Dubey MLA Brahmin Rural Bermo (Hazaribagh)</td>
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<td>Theodore Bodra MLA S.T. Urban Chakradharpur (Singhbhum)</td>
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<td>Karam Chand Bhagat MLA S.T. Rural Silli (Ranchi)</td>
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<td>Ram Ratan Ram MLA Chamar, SC Rural Silli (Ranchi)</td>
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<th>Non-Legislators</th>
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<tr>
<td>Zawar Hussain Azad Muslim (Former Vice-Chancellor, Bihar University, Musaffarpur)</td>
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<th>MINISTERS OF STATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Taneshwar Azad MLA S.C. Rural Gawan (Hazaribagh)</td>
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Notes:
(a) Names of the Ministers, Asian Recorder, June 11-17, 1975, p.12631.
(b) Caste of the Ministers, Vide supra Footnote 78(b), Chapter III, p. 190.
(c) Constituency of the Ministers, Vide supra Footnote 13(c), Chapter V, p. 282.
two from the scheduled Tribes and the remaining two were Muslims. Among the Forward Caste Ministers, three were Brahmins, including a Maithil Brahmin, two Bhumihars and one was a Rajput. Of the three Backward Caste Ministers, one belonged each to Kurmi, Koiri and Yadav castes. Among the three scheduled Caste Ministers, one was a Minister of State.

Regional Representation

The North Plains had got seven ministerial seats, including that of NKP Sinha, in the J.N. Mishra Ministry. All of them were in the Cabinet. There were five Ministers who came from the tribal belt of Chotanagpur. One of these was a Minister of State. The South Plains had got three seats in the third Congress Ministry since 1972. This includes Sukhdeo Verma also.

Barring two Cabinet Ministers, all other members of the Mishra Ministry represented the rural areas of the state. Of the two Ministers coming from the urban areas, one belonged each to the North Plains and the tribal belt of Chotanagpur.

With regard to the composition of the J.N. Mishra Ministry, it is important to note that the three non-Legislator Ministers, who had been brought in, perhaps, to give the Cabinet a 'clean image', had to resign from the Cabinet after six months, as they failed to get themselves elected to any of the Houses of the Legislature. They resigned on October 9, 1975.

with their resignation, the Mishra Ministry consisted of 13 Ministers, the same number as in the prunned Ghaffoor Ministry. Of these Ministers, five were of the Upper Castes (three Brahmins, one Rajput and one Bhumihar), two Backward Caste Ministers, three Scheduled Caste Ministers, two of the Scheduled Tribes and the remaining one was a Muslim.

**Dismissal of the Mishra Ministry**

The J.N. Mishra Ministry remained in office till April 30, 1977. On the same day, the acting President, B.D. Jatti, dissolved the Assemblies in nine Congress-ruled States, including Bihar, and placed them under President's Rule till the completion of the fresh elections in the middle of June that year. An official release said that Ministries in the nine States - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan had 'vacated' office.

In the period ranging from April, 1975 to April, 1977, some important events had taken place on the political scene of the country, which favourably contributed, to a large extent, to the continuity of the Mishra Ministry. Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha in 1971 was declared void by the Allahabad High Court on May 12, 1975 and debarred her from

holding any elective office for six years on grounds of corrupt practices. This verdict brought in a political storm in the country. The opposition parties, with the exception of the CPI, started demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister and threatened to launch a nation-wide agitation for this purpose. On June 26, the Government of India proclaimed a state of emergency throughout the country to counter an alleged conspiracy aimed at violently overthrowing it. Thus, by mid-1975 political situation came to such a pass that Congressmen had to rally round Mrs. Gandhi. Not that they forgot their personal ambitions, nor did their factional infighting came to an end, but in the 'hours of crisis', they had to show superficial unity.

Barring these fateful events, there was nothing in the Mishra Ministry, which could provide stability to his Government. On the contrary, there were signs of yet another ministerial crisis. For one thing, the takeover by Mishra had not brought about any qualitative change in the situation. The infighting in the State Congress had only been stilled for the time being and the Mishra Ministry was hardly an answer to the factionalism in the party. In fact, Mishra had himself sprung a few disagreeable surprises. Neither Kedar Pandey nor Abdul Ghafoor had been accommodated and R.L. Singh Yadav's claims had been ignored. From among the followers of these three only two had been included in the Cabinet. In this

69. statesman, April 15, 1975.
situation, Mishra had not been left in any doubt about the resentment he had provoked among the factional leaders. Except Ghaffoor, none of them were present at the swearing-in of the new government, even the BPCC Chief, Sitaram Kesari, stayed away.

Mishra's own followers and the fence-sitters, who had subsequently jumped on his bandwagon, were not going to wait indefinitely for the payment of their price for support. There were as many as 80 aspirants in the Mishra camp for ministerial berths and only 11 of them had so far found a place in the Ministry. Already, there was widespread discontent in his camp over the induction into his Ministry of the two members of the Lok Sabha and the Vice-Chancellor of the Bihar University. Further, Mishra owed his elevation to the Chief Ministership to a powerful group of Congressmen created by his elder brother L.N. Mishra's 'politics of money and patronage'. The late Mishra, however, had the ability, cleverness and resources to handle and control the 'Frankenstein' he had created. He was the acknowledged boss and mentor of his followers. But with the death of his political mentor and his inability to

70. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
oblige most of his followers by making them Ministers or by offering them profitable and juicy jobs, smooth sailing for the younger Mishra could not be expected. Mishra’s unopposed election as the leader of the CLP was due, at least in some degree, to the psychological climate resulting from the Samastipur bomb blast, which caused the death of the elder Mishra. Moreover, the quest for contrived unanimity, which was then the rule rather than an exception, seemed to have become a fetish with the Congress. The Congress appeared to have considered a contest a political set-back for the party. But given the unstable situation in the state, this sort of unanimity was hardly an enduring political asset. There was no guarantee that Mishra would not slip into the same situation in which both Kedar Pandey and Abdul Ghafoor found themselves soon after assuming office. Bihar’s record did not support the assumption that the High Command’s involvement in Mishra’s election was enough to shield him from factional attacks.

Past experience was enough to show that papering over of differences seldom lasted and it would have been a matter of months, if not weeks, before the rival factions began clamouring for more posts all over again.

Moreover, JP Movement was expected to be intensified after a massive ‘March to Parliament’ in March 1975 and it was hard to see how Mishra was better equipped than his predecessor to deal with a situation that was getting difficult.
Thus, given the circumstances, in which Mishra had won the race, it could hardly be taken for granted that he could have remained in office much longer than his predecessors.

**Conclusions: 1972-1977**

That three Congress Ministries came to power in a period of three years and three months (from March 1972 to June 1975) was a clear testimony of the oligarchic nature of governments in Bihar. Corruption and instability were only the symptoms. The hope of the Bihar electorate, that the Congress Party, headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, would provide stability to the state administration, was simply belied. The surfeit of promises with which the Congressmen fed the poor masses of Bihar at the time of election - of stability, prosperity and better life - proved to be mere sound and fury signifying nothing. They forgot the promises, they had made to the people of the state and got busy in factional fighting for a share in the ministerial cake. The irony of the situation was that all the three Chief Ministers were the 'unanimous' choice of the Congress legislators in Bihar, but the moment they assumed office, they came under heavy pressure from the prominent groups in the State Congress, which claimed patronage of some Central leaders. Pressure by the aspirants to the Ministership never ended and the Chief Ministers soon realised that they could not please everybody in the party.
Then came the dissidents, who were thirsty of the Chief Minister's blood. Dissidence in Bihar had been built up not over ideology and ministerial programme and performance, but over the inclusion in or the exclusion from the cabinet of some leaders of pressure groups and factions. Thus, there was no group interested in addressing itself to the task of bringing about much needed basic economic and social changes in the State. They fought among themselves for the division and redivision of spoils.

The Congress Central leadership must share the blame that it never allowed the State party a free choice to elect its leader. They failed in preventing the men at the Centre from interfering in the State party affairs. The root cause of the ministerial fiascos in Patna was the fact that State politics for long been subjected to long distance control by Central leaders, particularly L.N. Mishra. He had assumed the role of the 'king maker' in Bihar. He was instrumental in making L.P. Rai the Chief Minister, immediately after the Congress split in 1969 and he got him thrown out in no time. After 1972, first Kedar Pandey and then Abdul Ghaffoor became the Chief Ministers with his backing. But he soon got disillusioned with them, because both of them refused to be his mere puppets at Patna for a very long. Consequently, both of them had to go.
The real tragedy of the Bihar goings was that these compulsions of party bickerings and manoeuvres had so badly engaged the Congressmen that they failed to read the writing on the wall even after March, 1974. Instead of facing the situation unitedly, their only concern had been a continuous jockeying for power of which the campaign for the ouster of the Chief Minister had been but one of the manifest symptoms. Thus, the continuous misgovernment of Bihar had landed the state in such dire straits that even the worst critic of JP would have to concede that he had ample provocation. The chronic administrative incompetence and corruption had been compounded by exclusive ministerial preoccupation with shameful infighting and a constant struggle for sheer survival. Thus, the period was also one of continued instability worse than under the United Fronts. The Front parties, at least, had the figleaf ideology to cover their dissidence, but the Congress Party, having got brute majority in the legislature, had nothing to hide their hunger of power. The installation of third Ministry in three years bore testimony to the ruling party's determination to hang on to power by any means.
CHAPTER VI

PERFORMANCE OF THE GOVERNMENTS

For the purpose of evaluating the performance of the governments this chapter has been divided into two parts: one dealing with the coalition governments and the other with Congress governments.

COALITION GOVERNMENTS

Most of the coalition governments came to power on the basis of an agreed common-minimum-programme. However, the common minimum programme cannot include all the promises of the parties forming the coalition because coalition formation involves the process of cleavage and consensus. Naturally, all the promises of the constituent parties, which they had made to the electorate of Bihar in 1967 and 1969 elections, could not find place in different common minimum programmes. But a common minimum programme can be taken as promises of a particular government to the people of the state.

Programmes of the First United Front Government

The first UF government started functioning on the basis of a 33-point common minimum programme. The then Governor of Bihar, Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, while addressing the joint

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session of the Bihar Legislature announced the following 33-point programmes.

1. Fixation of price with a view to reducing the foodgrain prices and the cost of essential goods and taking drastic actions against blackmarketing, hoarding, profiteering and speculation.

2. Bringing about improvement in the distribution of government foodgrains and ending the system of private stockists in the distribution of foodgrains.

3. Cancellation of notices served on agriculturists under foodgrains levy order and withdrawal of cases launched in this connection.

4. Arrangement of proper help to the drought affected people of the state, especially the students and suspension of land rent for the current year.

5. Early completion of irrigation, drainage and flood-control schemes and giving priority to the pumping sets and tubewells in electrification and full utilization of irrigation facility.

6. (a) Taking necessary steps to withdraw increase in irrigation rates.

    (b) School fees and municipal fees during the last two years and cancellation of irrigation cess.

2. Indian Nation (Patna), March 18, 1967.
7. Abolition of land revenue system.
8. Ending Tata's special rights in Jamshedpur city.
9. Restoration of the ancestral forest rights of the Kisans living in forest areas.
10. Taking proper steps to minimise rural indebtedness.
11. Giving necessary financial help to small peasants through the cooperatives to increase their productive capacity.
13. Immediate tenancy rights to land labourers and landless peasants on homestead land.
14. Linking of D.A. of the nongazetted employees with the Central Government employees.
15. Reorganization of the trade unions on the basis of plebiscite.
16. Execution of decisions of the courts and labour tribunals and all actions against the defaulters.
17. Judicial enquiries into the Kishanganj, Samastipur, Muzaffarpur and Patna police firings.
18. Release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of cases against students and political workers, withdrawal of all restrictions on public meetings and demonstrations --- banning the entry of police into educational insti without the permission of their respective heads.
19. Amendment in the police manuals and framing them a to democratic needs.
20. Taking necessary steps to give a new direction to educational policy and giving immediate attention to the demands of the students and teachers.
21. Severe austerity in administration and of governmental lavishness and misuse, reduction of salaries and allowances of the Ministers.

22. Appointment of a separate Junior Public Service Commission for the nongazetted employees.

23. All governmental work to be done necessarily in Hindi, recognition of Urdu as the second official language and encouragement and protection to the languages of Adivasis and minority communities.

24. Taking proper steps for the upliftment of Harijans, Adivasis and Backward Classes.

25. Proper constitution of Panchayat Samities, Zila Parishads and other local bodies after election within a year and ending the nomination system in the local bodies and replacing them with system of cooption.

26. Reconsideration of the State’s Fourth Plan and redrafting it according to the development needs of the state.

27. Organization on a large scale the small and home industries in rural and urban areas for the unemployed masses.

28. Demand for more financial and industrial rights to the state from the Union Government with a view to strengthening the State’s economy.

29. Taking effective steps to end corruption in general administration and reform the administrative machinery.

30. Taking necessary steps to enquire into the bunglings of the Road Transport Corporation and the Bihar State Electricity Board.
31. Appointment of a higher power commission to probe cases of corruption.

32. Appointment of a separate commission to be presided over by a High Court Judge to enquire into definite charges of corruption against the members of the last Council of Ministers.

33. Submission of accounts of the personal and family property by the members of the present ministry to the state Legislature within a week of the commencement of the present session.

Thus, the programmes of the first UF government can be classified into five categories:-

(i) Concession to various interest groups like students, teachers, government employees and supporters of Urdu;

(ii) Rectification of alleged Congress misdeeds - release of political prisoners, institution of judicial inquiry into charges of corruption against Congress Ministers and police firings under the Congress regime;

(iii) Withdrawal of unpopular measures and taxes - grain procurement order, previous increase in taxation, the land revenue;

(iv) Provision of various agricultural benefits;

(v) Promise to provide efficient administration, eliminate corruption and check rising prices.
people and did not seek to touch any major problem or basic class relations. However, the programme was progressive and democratic and did not contain even a single communal and reactionary slogan.

Programmes of the First and Second Shoshit Dal Governments

The formation of the first Shoshit Dal Ministry under Satish Prasad Singh, as is mentioned in the third chapter, was a stop-gap arrangement to make the way clear for B.P. Mandal. The Mandal Ministry was a defector's government and its main object was to seize power. L.N. Sudhanshu termed the Shoshit Dal Ministry as "a group of power-hungry persons reared on the ill-gotten money of ill-famed and power-hungry politicians". Prem Bhashin, the General Secretary of the PSP, described that the way Mandal was made Chief Minister as "nothing short of fraud on the democratic constitution of India". The Times of India commented editorially that Mandal was a leader not of any party but of a group of defectors and any failure to provide suitable berths to all


the supporters were likely to snap the only bond which holds them together. Therefore, a government of purely self-seekers and power lovers did not introduce any common minimum programme in order to form a government.

Programmes of the Fourth Coalition Government

The fourth coalition and the second UF government, under B.P. Shastri, came to power on the basis of a 31-point common minimum programme. It is important that the constituents of the UF first formulated a 17-point tentative programme, avoiding controversial points, to prevent the Governor from delaying the formation of the government.

The 17-point programme was further improved and elaborated into 31-point programme by the Coordination Committee of the UF in its meeting on April 25, 1968.

The programme envisaged the following measures:

1. To strengthen the financial position of the state;
2. To strive for getting from the centre reasonable share of financial assistance for Bihar;
3. To make Bihar self-sufficient and strengthen the financial position of State Road Transport Corporation.

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5. Ibid., p. 328.
State Electricity Board and such other autonomous bodies in the public sector;

4. To effect austerity and eliminate wasteful expenditure in administration;

5. To set up at the earliest an all-party committee to recommend measures to improve the administration and to implement the recommendations at the earliest;

6. To improve the entire administration of state besides educational institutions and law and order situation;

7. To guarantee the rights of freedom to the citizens;

8. To provide adequate protection to comparatively weaker sections of the people and develop national outlook by eliminating casteism and communalism.

9. To effect necessary amendments in the police and jail manuals.

10. To hold elections in the Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and local bodies, to abolish the system of nominations and to implement at the earliest the Panchayat Raj scheme in the state;

11. To appoint a high power anti-corruption commission for taking suitable steps in the cases of illegal amassing of wealth and indulging in corrupt practices;

12. To make proper arrangement for smooth functioning of Aiyar Commission.

13. To take the following steps in order to make the State self-sufficient in food production at the earliest:
(a) extension of irrigation system with special stress on the use of underground water resources;

(b) early implementation of rural electrification;

(c) to take necessary steps for the modernisation and improvement of agricultural methods and use of improved seeds, necessary fertilizers and intensive cultivation;

(d) to pursue the policy of price-support and see that the farmer got reasonable prices for their produce.

13. (a) To set up new industries and expand the existing ones in order to earn additional revenues for the state;

(b) To solve the problem of unemployment, particularly, those of technical men and reduce economic and social disparities and to give preference to local people in the appointment of industrial undertakings.

15. (a) To rigidly enforce labour laws and implement the Tribunal awards and compromise and take suitable action against the offenders;

(b) To guarantee security of service to labourers and employees and solve the problem of recognition of trade union by plebiscite.

16. To take effective measures for streamlining the posting and service conditions of the nongazetted employees and teachers so that they are not deprived of justice and equity;

17. To take necessary steps to implement measures under land ceiling, consolidation of holdings and other land reform scheme;
18. To take steps for the restoration of illegally occupied land of Adivasis;

19. To give proprietary rights to the landless people and cultivators on the homestead lands;

20. To distribute available fallow land culturable government land among the agricultural labourers and poor farmers, especially Harijans and Adivasis;

21. To make suitable amendments in the Bihar Money Lending Act and set up Panchayat Boards to reduce the pressure of old debt on the farmers and agricultural labourers;

22. To abolish the remaining intermediary zamindari rights;

23. To exempt uneconomic holdings of the impoverished peasants from the payment of land rent;

24. To implement the recommendations of the Dhubar Commission, Kaka Kalelkar Commission and Thakkar Bappa Commission for the welfare and upliftment of Harijans, Adivasis and backward classes people;

25. To protect and restore the traditional rights of people living in forest areas provided these do not come in the forest;

26. To reorganize the educational system as per recommendations of the Kothari Commission in such a way as to make possible national solidarity, economic upliftment and social changes and strive for securing adequate financial help from the Union Government to achieve these ends;
27. To introduce free and compulsory education up to the middle stage as a first step towards achieving the goal of free and compulsory education up to secondary stage.

28. To take necessary steps for the development and protection of all languages studied, written and spoken in Bihar.

29. To take drastic steps against profiteers and black-marketeers and make available foodgrains and other essential commodities to consumers on reasonable price.

30. To make the Fourth Five Year Plan of the State agriculture and employment oriented.

31. To reconsider such decisions and orders taken by the outgoing shoshit Dal government as were against public interests.

The main thrust of the 31-point programme was toward improving the socio-economic conditions of the people and also streamlining the administration of the State. It may be mentioned, however, that some of the points, which created bitterness among the constituents of the first UF, were not mentioned specifically in the new programme. For example, the abolition of the Tata's Zamindari at Jamshedpur was not mentioned clearly though item number 22 of the 31-point programme did include Tata's Zamindari also. Similarly, the question of the protection of rights of 'bataldars' was not
mentioned. so was the case with making Urdu the second official language of the state. The programme was also non-committal about immediate switch-over to Hindi or discontinuance of English in official work.

Programmes of the Fifth Coalition Government

The first-ever Congress-led coalition, headed by Sardar Harihar Singh, had no specified programme agreed by the partners of the coalition. Nevertheless, the budget address of the Governor mentioned some priorities of the government:

1. To remit 50 per cent of the foodgrains that farmers were asked to pay under procurement drive. The rice millers and wholesalers, however, would have to pay at the old rate.

2. To ensure maximum economy in administration and to eliminate wasteful expenditure.

3. To obtain assistance from the Centre to quicken the pace of agricultural development; to make the state self-sufficient in food.

4. To provide irrigation facilities and to implement flood protection and drainage schemes expeditiously.

5. To take steps to reduce the indebtedness of the

8. Ibid., March 14, 1969.
Kisans and to increase the purchasing power with the help of cooperative societies.

6. To maintain law and order at all costs.

7. To take steps on a massive scale to establish small scale industries in rural and urban areas to reduce the presence of unemployment.

8. To make special efforts in the direction of bringing the economy of public sector undertakings like the Electricity Board and the State Transport Corporation in order.

9. (a) To take special measures to provide the much needed facilities to private sector industrialists;

(b) to make land and power available to industrialists at reasonable and concessional rates;

(c) to take steps to organise industrial estates being run by the Industrial Development Corporation in the state to increase their production capacity.

10. To expedite all schemes aimed at increasing food production.

11. To give top priority to irrigation and flood control schemes and to make available to farmers loans on easy terms.

12. To make provision of land, water, transport and power for faster development of industries, specially small scale units in the private sectors.

13. To take steps to improve educational institutions and public health measures.
14. To give special care to schemes for the uplift of Harijans, backward classes and Adivasis.

15. To set up a Regional Advisory Board to look into the special problems of Chotanagpur and Santhal-paraganas.

Of these programmes, item number 9 shows that private industrialists had considerable influence on the Government. This might have been included on the behest of the Janata Party and the Swatantra Party whose support was vital for the survival of the government. The programme failed to mention any step to eradicate corruption in the state administration. It was silent significantly on taking steps to implement land ceiling laws and protecting the rights of sharecroppers.

Programmes of the Sixth Coalition Government

The Second Shastri Government did not introduce any fresh common minimum programme. It was formed on the basis of the 31-point programme which had been agreed upon by the constituents of the UF at the time of the formation of the fourth Coalition government headed by Shastri himself. However, the Jan Sangh wanted some modifications in that programme also. The government resigned after remaining in

power for nine days only as the Jan Sangh withdrew its support to the government.

Programmes of the Seventh Coalition Government

The Congress(R) led Coalition government under the leadership of D.P. Rai formulated a 35-point common minimum programme as guideline for its functioning. The programme drawn by the six-party alliance submitted to the Governor in the night of February 13, 1970.

The preamble of the programme declared that it had been drawn up by the common desire to improve the social and economic conditions of the people to reduce social inequalities, ensure social reform and ensure a clean efficient and democratic administration, to abolish all forms of exploitation and to achieve goals of democracy and socialism.

The programme, it was said, would have to be implemented in phases. However, the following items would be implemented:

1. To implement agrarian reforms such as recording of homesteads, reduction in the ceiling on land holdings, distribution of waste lands.
2. To provide drinking water to Harijans and Adivasis.
3. To provide irrigation, electricity and various technical aids for the speedy development of agriculture.

4. To abolish rent on uneconomic holdings.

5. To reduce unemployment.

6. To protect the legitimate rights of workers.

7. To safeguard the interests of the weaker and backward sections of the people and minorities.

The other important points of the programme were:

8. ensuring clean and efficient administration, and for this purpose the -

(a) institution of Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta to investigate into complaints of corruption against ministers and high government officials and to

(b) expeditiously examine the findings of the Madholkar and Aiyar Commissions of enquiry for taking appropriate follow-up action.

9. (a) To set up consultative committees attached to every ministry and of a

(b) State Administration Reforms Committee.

10. To modify police code and the jail code to make them conform to a democratic set up.

11. To abolish Upper Council.

12. To take over the Zamindari rights of Tata.

13. To nationalise sugar industries.

Thus, the D.P. Rais Ministry was the first to give top priority to agrarian reforms, land ceiling and distribution of surplus and waste lands. It was again the seventh Coalition that envisaged the institutions of Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta
to check corruption in high-ups. Abolition of the Upper House of the State Legislature and nationalisation of sugar industries were also the innovations of this government.

Apart from the above mentioned programmes, D.P. Rai, while broadcasting in the night of February 16, 1970, assured the people that (a) law and order would be maintained without fear and favour, (b) problems of non-gazetted employees would soon be dealt with, (c) service conditions of the Panchayat Sevaks, Jan Sevaks, Dafadars and Chowkidars would be studied, and (d) education up to the middle standard would be made completely free.

Programmes of the Eighth Coalition Government

The constituent units of the SSP-led SVD Government finalised the following 26-point programme, which was announced by the Governor in his budget address to the state Legislature.

1. (a) To end land rent on uneconomic holdings;

(b) To make a new law on land ceiling; to form a land Commission to define profitable holding, decide boundary, ceiling and implement other measures of land reforms;

11. Ibid., February 17, 1970.

to take steps to bring uniformity in land revenue along with land ceiling;

(c) to implement strictly and honestly the existing Act of land ceiling as long as a new Act is not passed;

(d) To take immediate steps to end illegal occupation or illegal arrangements and illegal transfers of land;

(e) To guarantee legal rights of the share-croppers and implement the laws concerning these measures.

2. To give rights to privileged persons on homestead land and distribute culturable and fallow land to the landless people.

3. To take steps to provide drinking water to Harijans, Adivasis and other villages of poor people.

4. To make necessary amendments in Homestead Act and implement them in the urban areas where it seems to be necessary;

5. To hold secret poll for election of proper representation of Labour Unions and matter relating to their recognition.

6. (a) To end the use of English in official work;

(b) to end the use of English as a compulsory subject as a medium of instruction in educational institutions;

(c) to end the use of English in the working of courts;

(d) to discontinue the provision of compulsory English in the examination of Public Service Commission.

7. To bring uniformity in primary education.
8. To introduce free and compulsory education up to Class VII.

9. To provide special facilities and opportunities in education and employment to Harijan, Adivasis, women and other social backward castes.

10. To provide to the farmers water, electricity, seeds, fertilizers etc. at cheaper rates and give priority to small farmers.

11. To use on a large-scale governmental and non-governmental resources for irrigation of cultivable land of Bihar.

12. To set up institutions of Lokpal and Lok Ayukta for clean and efficient administration; to take action according to the recommendations of the commission established for ending corruption.

13. To make police force strong and efficient and implement the recommendations of the police commission.

14. To prepare a solid plan for the development of industry in Bihar in such a way that new industries may be set up.

15. To take steps to make public sector industries, corporations and boards profitable and to give workers share in their management.

16. To prepare a free and broad Five Year Plan in order to provide employment to illiterate, half-literate and literated unemployed; to provide employment to technical hand within five years.
17. To end the system of money lending in tribal, mines and industrial areas and to provide a special system of debts in these areas; to implement strictly the laws for restoring illegally acquired land to Adivasis.

18. To restore to the people living in the forest area their ancestral rights provided they do not hinder protection and development of forests, to make farm land available to poor people in forest belt.

19. To set up an Autonomous Regional Development Board for Chotanagpur and Santhal Paraganas, the powers and functions of these Boards would be determined by the State Government.

20. To implement the recommendations of Lhebar Commission, Kaka Kalelkar Commission, Thakkar Bappa Commission and Niyogi Commission and Adivasi and Harijan Commissions.

21. To take steps for the upliftment of the economically weak sections.

22. To hold elections for all suspended municipalities within six months and to convert existing notified areas into village panchayat or municipalities.

23. To implement immediately the Panchayat Raj scheme in the State.

24. To give priority to road construction in villages.

25. To implement Forest Acts to protect and preserve animals.

26. To control unnecessary transport of food grains in the State.
The 26-point programme of the Karpoori Thakur-led SVD Government had some interesting features. It envisaged, for the first time, very clearly the end of English in administrative sphere, in the working of courts, in education and in the public service examinations. It was the first government which made promise to provide compulsory and free education to all children up to class VII. Though the Jan Sangh, Congress(0) and the Swatantra party were important partners, the SSP-led Government succeeded in incorporating in the programme items like land reform, protection of the rights of share-croppers, ending of illegal occupation or transfer of land and distribution of surplus government land.

Programmes of the Ninth Coalition Government

The Congress(R)-led PVD Ministry, headed by B.P. Shastri, did not produce any new common minimum programme. The partners of the Coalition agreed to adopt the programme of the previous Congress(R)-led government headed by D.P. Rai.

It may be noted that only four Coalition governments had clear cut policy and programme statements. These were the first UF government, the second UF government, the first Congress(R)-led Coalition headed by D.P. Rai and the SSP-led SVD government. Three governments, namely both Shoshit Dal governments and the fifth Coalition headed by Harihar Singh, came to power without any programme. Two Coalitions headed
by B.P. Shastri in 1969 and 1971 accepted the programmes of the previous governments. It may also be noted that the Coalitions formed on the basis of an agreed programme survived a bit longer than those which had no such programme.

ACTION ON THE BASIS OF THE COMMON MINIMUM PROGRAMME

The first UF Government took action on the following items:

1. Fixation of prices to reduce the prices of food-grains and essential commodities and taking drastic action against hoarders, profiteers and blackmarketeers.

   Foodgrains were distributed throughout the state and fair price shops were opened which resulted in stabilising the prices of food-grains. Nearly 7,000 tonnes of food-grains were unearthed by raiding the godowns of big traders and big land-owners. Over 50 hoarders were put behind bars under Preventive Detention Act (PD Act).


2. Improving the distribution system of government foodgrains and abolition of private stockist system in the distribution of foodgrains. Private stockists were not allowed to operate and ceiling was placed on the stock of foodgrains that a wholesaler or retailer could keep. The government abolished private stockist system in foodgrains from May 1, 1967.

3. Withdrawal of levy: No levy was imposed on agriculturists. It was imposed on rice mill-owners, wholesale foodgrain dealers and on big farmers.

4. To make immediate steps for completing irrigation, drainage and flood control schemes with priority to the pumping sets, tubewells and electrification for agricultural purposes and full utilization of irrigation power: for the first time boring and pumping sets were introduced in Bihar on massive scale. 1,000 state tubewells, 3,000 private tubewells, 6,000 diesels, 15,000 pumping sets, and 5,000 borings were completed to cover 2.25 lakh acres for irrigation. Electricity was supplied to 12,276 pumps during the first eight months of 1967-68 where there was no electricity, diesel was supplied.

18. Governor's Address, op. cit.; Kapildeo Singh, op. cit.
5. Withdrawal of (a) increased irrigation rates; (b) school fees; (c) municipal taxes levied during the last two years; and (d) irrigation cess.

Three months' school and college fees were remitted throughout the state. Increased holding tax was withdrawn in Patna only. Irrigation cess was cancelled in the state.

6. Remission of land rent: The government decided to abolish the present system of land rents which were in continuation of the semi-feudal money rent of the permanent zamindari system. It also decided to impose a graded land tax on the bigger land holders and complete exemption for the uneconomic holdings.

7. Abolition of Tata's Zamindari: The government introduced legislation for the taking over of the zamindari rights of the Tatas in Jamshedpur.

8. Land Reform: The government cancelled the circular imposing a ban on the enforcement of legal rights of sharecroppers as laid down in the existing Tenancy laws.

19. Governor's Address, op. cit.; Indradeep Sinha, op. cit.
21. Governor's Address, op. cit.
22. Ibid.; Indradeep Sinha, op. cit.
23. Indradeep Sinha, op. cit.
24. Ibid.
9. To give immediate attention to the demands of the teachers and students and introduce a new direction to education policy. The government annulled Art. 357(a) and (b) of the Education Code and removed the restrictions on the civil rights of the teachers imposed by the Britishers and continued by the Congress regime.

10. To conduct all government business in Hindi with Urdu at the place of second state language and give encouragement and protection to all languages which are studied, written and studied in the state.

As a matter of fact, introduction of Hindi in official work was started during the period of the first UF. English as a compulsory subject on secondary level was abolished and the students were allowed to pass without English. In the combined competitive examinations of the Bihar Public Service Commission Hind was made a compulsory paper. However, emphasis on Urdu created bitterness among the partners of the government and resulted into communal riots.

11. Steps to end corruption; (a) to take effective steps to end corruption in general administration; (b) taking necessary steps to enquire into the bunglings of the Road Transport Corporation and Electricity Board;

25. Governor's Address, op. cit.

26. Ibid.
appointment of a high power commission to probe into the cases of corruption; (d) appointment of a separate commission to look into the charges of corruption against Ministers of the last Ministry.

The Anti-Corruption Department detected 480 cases of corruption, of them 16 gazetted officers were compulsorily retired and 41 were suspended. The government set up Aiyar Commission to probe into the charges of corruption against the Chief Minister and four of his colleagues of the last Congress government.

12. Civil Rights: (a) Release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of cases against students and political workers; (b) removal of restrictions on public meetings and demonstrations; and (c) banning the entry of police into the educational institutions.

Political prisoners not involved in criminal cases were released and cases against political workers, students, teachers and employees were withdrawn. The government scrapped the Bihar Maintenance of Public Order Act, debarred the police from violating the sanctity of educational institutions and removed the ban on the participation of school teachers in politics.

27. Ibid.


13. Judicial enquiries into police firings at Kishanganj, Samastipur, Muzaffarpur and Patna: The government set up commissions to go into the details of these firings. However, the Dutta Commission justified the firing in Patna on January 5, 1967. The U.N. Sinha Commission, appointed to probe into the Muzaffarpur firing, termed unjustified police firing in R.D.S. College on December 10, 1966 but justified the firing near Ram Dayalu Nagar Railway Station.

14. Austerity in administration and submission of statements of assets by Ministers: Ministers belonging to the CPI and Deputy Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur took Rs. 500 only as their salary. Chief Minister M.P. Sinha and some of his colleagues submitted details of their assets to the Assembly. The colleagues who submitted accounts were Karpoori Thakur, Kapildeo Singh, Srikrishna Singh, Ramanand Tiwari, W.K. Mitra, Sabhapati Singh, Upendra Nath Verma, Ramdeo Mahto, Indradeep Sinha, Tej Narain Jha, B.P. Mandal and Hasibur Rahman.

15. Arrangement of proper help to the drought affected people of state, especially students.

31. Ibid., March 26, 1969.
32. Kapildeo Singh, op. cit.
It may be said without hesitation that the first UF government fought the battle of drought heroically. At the time of its assuming power, Bihar was in the grip of famine unprecedented during the last hundred years. The production of foodgrain had fallen to 3 million tonnes as against 7.3 tonnes which was the normal output. Wells and tanks had dried up in 24,000 out of 67,000 villages.

The finances of the State were in a bankrupt condition. The government had inherited empty coffers and exhausted Amanati Fund (Consolidated fund). The public fund amounted to Rs. 464 crores involving a repayment liability of Rs.59 crores during 1967-68. There was a heavy overdraft of Rs.17 crores on the Reserve Bank.

The government declared 'famine' in 187 and 'scarcity' in 280 out of 587 blocks in the State. The former covered an area of over 24,000 sq. miles with a population of over 13 million people, while the latter covered another 20,000 sq. miles with a population of 20 million. Collection of land rent and loan was immediately suspended in the whole state. Approximately Rs. 66 crores were spent on relief and loans.

34. Governor's Address, op. cit., Indradeep Sinha, op. cit.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
During the seven months from March to September, 1967, as against 9.75 crores during the preceding five months of October 1966 to February 1967 under the Congress Government. During this period, foodgrains were supplied to all the people in the famine area, 50 percent to 90 percent in scarcity area and 40 percent in other areas, thereby covering 70-75 per cent population of the State excluding the famine struck people. Relief materials costing over Rs. 50 crores were received from non-official agencies - national and international. Emancipation and disease did certainly cost a few hundred lives, but there was no starvation death, no mass migration, begging on the streets and dying on the pavements.

SENSITIVE ISSUES

During five months of its existence the main concern of the government was confined to providing relief for the famine and scarcity affected areas. Differences in the government and the UP surfaced as soon as issues affecting class interest were taken up.

Food policy

The policy of the government to unearth hoarded food-

38. Governor's Address, op.cit.; Indradeep Sinha, op.cit.
39. Governor's Address, op.cit.
40. Indradeep Sinha, op. cit.
grains was not supported by the all Front partners. Houses of a number of MLAs belonging to the SSP and the JKD were raided in accordance with this policy. A warrant of arrest was issued against Shatrurmdrdan Shahi, a JKD member. Due to this strictness adopted by Kapildeo Singh, the Food Minister, the affected legislator left the Front and joined the Shoskit Dal.

Levy

One of the items in the 33-point programme was ending the levy. But the Food and Supply Minister was in favour of this system. The Cabinet also passed the levy order. However, the Jan Sangh and JKD were against the imposition of levy. The former even passed a resolution against this policy.

Tarani Prasad, a JKD member, also criticised Kapildeo Singh for realising levy from the farmers having more than five acres of land. Thus, both these policies did not succeed and resulted in reducing the strength of the coalition.

Urdu

The coalition had promised to make Urdu as the second

41. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, op. cit., p. 16.
42. Ibid.
official language of the state. But a memorandum providing some facilities to the Urdu speaking students and people created tension between the Jan sangh and the SSP. It ultimately resulted in communal riots in different places in the state. Language issue also became a law and order issue. Thus, the issue was sidetracked.

Bataldari

Among the agrarian reform measures the most controversial was the problem of 'Bataldari'. The implementation of the existing Tenancy Laws providing some protections to the Bataldars, the Santhals and other Adivasi peasants triggered off the bitterest controversy among the coalition partners. Though no law was introduced by the government, its Revenue Department under Communist Indradeep Sinha, issued a circular explaining the existing Bataldari rights in the old Tenancy Act. But the Jan Sangh opposed this. Thakur Prasad, the Bihar Jan Sangh president, criticised the Revenue Minister for creating controversy over the Bataldari laws without prior approval of the Coordination Committee. He appealed to the Chief Minister to prevent Indradeep Sinha from raising controversial issues like Bataldari issue. Ramdeo Mahto,

45. For detail see Chapter III, Pp. 131-134.


47. Indian Nation, October 27, 1967.
the Jan Sangh Co-operative Minister, characterized the Communist leaders attempt as creating chaos and confusion among the people. He felt that this would encourage them to loot the properties of the haves under the pretext of providing and protecting the have-nots. The controversy over the issue also disturbed the peace in the state especially in Purba and Lakhanga districts. The nine-man committee set up by the Coordination Committee on November 20, 1967 failed to resolve the differences between the CPI and the Jan Sangh as both parties could not reach an agreement. Thereafter, both Jan Sangh and the CPI continued mud-slinging on each other. While the former announced that it would resist the implementation of Bataidari Act and threatened to quit the Ministry, the latter blamed the former for obstructing the implementation of the law.

Demand of Enquiry

The controversy between both these parties reached such a point that both of them started demanding the setting up of an enquiry body to look into their conduct. It was V.K. Mitra, Jan Sangh Agriculture Minister, who, on October 26, told pressmen at Patna that he was going to request the

48. Ibid., October 17, 1967.
49. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, op. cit., p. 52.
51. Ibid., December 5, 6 and 14, 1967.
Chief Minister to set up a judicial body to inquire into charges of corruption and misuse of power against some of the Ministers of the Coalition. Though he refrained from mentioning the name of any Minister, from his very statement it was clear that he hinted at the CPI Ministers. He repeated his demand on December 28, 1967. On the other hand, Indradeep Sinha made several allegations against the JS Ministers, though he too did not mention their name and requested the Chief Minister to set up an enquiry into the conduct of Ministers. Although no enquiry was set up, the ill-will between the CPI and the Jan Sangh was a clear signal that the UF was cracking up.

Thus, the first UF Government did not introduce any basic reorganization of the administration or did not bring any basic change in the existing moral ethos. It failed to take any successful actions on some important issues affecting feudal socio-economic structure of the society. The promise of abolition of land rent meant nothing more than the suspension of collection of land rent for a couple of months and the Bataidari Act was half-hearted. Suspension of raids against blackmarketeers and hoarders created suspicion in the minds of the people. The programme to abolish the Zamindari rights of Tatas at Jamshedpur remained only a threat. Students found no improvement in the condition of life and study. Programmes

52. Search Light, October 27, 1967.
54. Ibid., December 31, 1967.
regarding upliftment of Harijans, Adivasis and other weaker sections of the society remained only on paper, so was the case with the item concerning a new education policy.

The government did not begin to tackle the problem of rooting out red-tapism, nepotism and corruption, on the contrary, some of its Ministers started taking actions, specially in transfers and postings, on the basis of caste consideration. The Government failed to bring communal harmony. Rather it took an ugly turn during its regime. The riots in Ranchi, Hatia and Sursand were its glaring examples.

In the battle for survival, instead of going down fighting, the Front Ministry started compromising and bargaining on principles with the result that good administration and welfare of the people were seriously hampered. The withdrawal of appeals pending in the Calcutta High Court against the Raja of Ramgarh and his brother involving Government claims of several crores of rupees was its glaring example. This appeal was withdrawn on January 25, 1968, the date on which the UF was voted out of power.

Performance of the Shoobhit Dal Government

The Shoobhit Dal Government was not formed on the basis of any clear-cut programme and policy. The Dal had no political

philosophy of its own. Neither was it in a position to formulate a clear and definite programme and line of action, because all shades of opinion had their place in the Dal. Devoid of any political philosophy, the Dal Government was like a rudderless ship and moved according to the desires of some powerful Congress individuals.

In the beginning the shoshit Dal Government aroused new hopes in the minds of some backward community, because the whole edifice of the Dal had been built on the slogan of backward caste rule. The Dal also succeeded in drawing 38 MLAs in its fold mostly from scheduled Tribes, scheduled Castes and Backward community. But soon their hopes were belied and they were disenchanted when they found that the Government was virtually run by discredited Congress leaders serving the interests of vested classes.

Retrospective steps

During its one and a half month existence, the shoshit Dal did hardly take any step toward the well-being of the exploited (shoshit) masses of the state. What was worse, some progressive measures of the first UF was undone by it. The Government decided to reimpose land rent which was abolished by the UF Government. It also abandoned the proposal to levy

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a graded land tax on big landholders. Most shocking was the
Cabinet's decision not to implement the land reform measure
initiated by the UF Government on the plea that time was "not
yet ripe" for implementation of the Bataidari provisions of
the Bihar Tenancy Act.

The failures of the Dal Government was openly admitted
by Ram Chandra Prasad, a Minister of State in the Shoshit
Ministry. In his view, the Shoshit Dal was "unable to deliver
goods to the people". He described the Dal as an organization
having "groupism, casteism, internal bickerings as its main
features whose policies and programmes are being influenced by
a handful of Congress stalwarts to serve their vested interests".
He further said that it "shocked my conscience to find that the
Shoshit Dal Government has also been neglecting the legitimate
cause of Harijan and Adivasis.

Sensitive Issue

The Shoshit Dal Government, it may be noted, got divided
over the issue of levy on land-grains. In Cabinet meetings
on February 13 and 20, 1968, there was sharp division over
whether levy should be continued or abandoned completely.
Jagdeo Prasad, Power and Irrigation Minister, and Satish
Prasad Singh, Food and Supply Minister, favoured the continuance

of the levy order. But Tarani Prasad Singh, Transport and PHED Minister, threatened to quit the Government if levy order was not withdrawn. As a face saving device, the Cabinet decided to withdraw the levy order and in its place to enforce State Aid of Grains and paddy order.

Performance of the Fourth Coalition

The fourth Coalition Government headed by B.P. Shastri had inspired new hopes in the people of Bihar in general and in the Harijans, Adivasis and other weaker sections of the society in particular. He was the first Harijan to be the Chief Minister of Bihar. This was a significant event in the Caste ridden politics of Bihar. Paswan had a good image among the people as he was a principled and honest politician and had no scandal behind him. His Government came to power on the basis of a 31-point programme which was clearer and an improvement upon the 33-point programme of the first UF Government. But the programme could not be put into action, first, because the Paswan Ministry did not have sufficient time at its disposal and secondly, because some of the constituents particularly the Janata Party did not show any cooperative attitude in accordance with the joint programme. The SSP and the Communists took several weeks to decide to join the Ministry. This inevitably created a good deal of uncertainty.

60. Ibid., February 14 and 21, 1963.
what paswan headed was not a team but a group of opportunists, and because of internal wrangles the Ministry paid little attention to the problems of the state. "He was struggling for survival and his colleagues neither co-operated with him nor showed any interest in making the Government stable". "All through its career of 90 days the Paswan Ministry was faced by one crisis after another and it never had a chance to settle down". The Raja of Ramgarh was his main problem. The way in which the Raja and his Janata Party bargained with Paswan would not have been tolerated by any Chief Minister.

However, during its short tenure in office, the Paswan Ministry did make an impact by firmly handling the affairs of the state. From the very beginning, Paswan refused to be bullied by the Raja of Ramgarh. He did not oblige the Raja by allocating the portfolio of Mines and Minerals to him or by elevating him to 'Deputy Chief Ministership'. He incurred the wrath of Raja by not ordering the withdrawal of 280 cases against his firm and by refusing to engage the lawyer of his choice on the Government side. He ordered prompt inquiry into the police firing in Chri in Chotanagar belt. Even after the threats and pressures from the Jan Sangh, he did not allow certain items like the land reform measures, protection and development of the interests of the minorities being

62. National Herald (Editorial), (Delhi), June 27, 1968.
63. Indian Express (Editorial), (Delhi), June 27, 1968.
64. For detail see Chapter III, Part C. p. 462.
It must be mentioned that after the shastri Government resigned and was asked by the Governor to continue as a caretaker Government, it took improper actions such as constitution of the District Education Planning Committees and Regional Transport Authorities in an irregular manner. Some of the Ministers in the caretaker Government had also attempted to fill up different boards, corporations and committees with ulterior motives. Some Ministers, in collusion with their favourite high-ups in different departments, hurriedly made transfers, postings and provisions for certain officials. Moreover, they placed Government orders for supply of goods with their own favourites.

**Performance of the Fifth Coalition**

The Congress-led fifth Coalition under the leadership of Harihar Singh went out of office without formulating a clear cut programme of action. All the time Harihar Singh was in office, he was busy in sifting the claims and counter-claims for Cabinet posts of Congress legislators on the one hand and the partners of the coalition on the other hand. Considering the multi-party character of the Coalition and the lack of...

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67. See Chapter IV, Part A.
cohesion within the Congress Party, the Ministry was a hetero-
genous, unwieldy team. It failed to arrange distribution of portfolios during its 115-day rule. Such a Ministry could not impart stability to the administration or launch any long term programme of development for the state. Though the Government had spelt out some programmes in the Governor's Address, nothing was done to give them practical shape.

The Hindu commented, "In all this, the worst sufferer was the welfare of the people and the administration of the state. The administration came to a standstill, and the state was sinking deeper into the morass of financial bankruptcy. The Government seemed to have little time to attend to pressing problems of the state, wholly pre-occupied as it was with the problem to keep itself in office. It seemed as if some kind of paralysis had overtaken the administration during the period Harihar Singh was in office. He did not endeavour to improve the image of his Government by providing the state with a clean and efficient administration. He proved a captive of the big bosses and danced to their tune. Harinath Mishra, the then Loktantrik Congress leader, described the Congress-led Coalition as "the rule of a coterie, by a coterie for a coterie" and "an engine of oppression and blackmail" for the mass of the people. Shoshit Dal, a constituent of the ruling


69. Search Light (Editorial), June 22, 1969.
Coalition, accused the Chief Minister of casteism and factionalism and even threatened to walk out of the coalition. The removal of S.V. Sohoni, the Chief Secretary and the elevation of S.N. Singh to the post, who belonged to the same caste as the Chief Minister, was a clear case of casteism. The non-Rajput officials did not seem to make a secret of their being in resentful and defiant mood over this appointment. Even worse was the row in the Bihar Cabinet over the posting of some District Magistrates and the demand for posting or not posting of officers of certain castes. The Search Light editorially commented, “When caste becomes an important factor in the postings of officials and the matter is debated in the Cabinet meeting itself, it is obvious that political corruption has reached a high watermark and is bound to affect whatever efficiency and integrity is still left in the administration!

The main aim of the Harihar Ministry was stated to be the maintenance of law and order in the state. But during the period of four months, that it had been in power, there had been no improvement in the situation. On the other hand, in respect of certain crimes deterioration in the situation was clearly visible.

72. Search Light (Editorial), May 18, 1969.
73. Ibid. (Editorial), June 21, 1969.
However, the most controversial act of the Harihar Ministry was the appointment of a Briefing Committee supposedly for helping the Aiyar and Mudholkar Commissions of inquiry in expediting their work. But, in actual practice it was a bid to save the skin of S.N. Sinha, Ambika Sharan Singh, Raghvendra Narain Singh, Ram Lakhan Singh and the Raja of Ramgarh. It evoked spontaneous opposition and not only the Opposition parties but a section of dissident congress leaders sharply reacted to it. Even some constituents felt flabbergasted at this act and threatened to withdraw from the Coalition. Because of strong public criticism the Chief Minister had to beat a hasty retreat and scrap the Briefing Committee.

Performance of the Sixth Coalition Government

The sixth Coalition headed by B.P. Shastri was the shortest-lived Government in Bihar. It remained in power for ten days only. It was composed of some smaller and splinter groups and, of course, some defectors. None of the major partners of the Coalition - SSP, CPI, PSP and Jan Sangh - joined the Government on the ground that they wanted to act as watch-dogs to ensure the implementation of the programme.


77. See Chapter IV, Part B.
ultimately, the Government resigned following the withdrawal of support by the 34-member Jan Sangh group in the Assembly, without taking any steps towards implementing the common minimum programme.

**Performance of the seventh Coalition Government**

The Congress(P)-led ruling coalition headed by D.P. Rai took measures on the following items of the 35-point programme:

1. **To abolish rent on uneconomic holdings:**
   The Government abolished land rent on 2½ acres of irrigated land and 5 acres of unirrigated land.

2. **To take over the zamindari rights of the Tatas:**
   The Bihar Legislative Assembly passed the Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 1970, on June 22, introduced by the Rai Government, empowering the Government to abolish the Tata Zamindari at Jamshedpur. It may, however, be noted that the Bill was returned to the Speaker without presidential assent, which was a must for such measures, with the recommendation that it be modified to ensure that the growth of industries in Jamshedpur was not hampered.

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3. Land Reform

(a) Recording homestead land and giving rights to privileged persons on homestead land;
(b) Reducing ceiling on land holdings;
(c) Distribution of waste and surplus land.

The Government included 'Kala' and 'Bari' in the homestead land and gave away 'Parchas' to 2,10,000 families on homestead land. By amending the Homestead Land Act, the privileged persons were given tenancy rights over the homestead land without any compensation. The Governor, on September 10, 1970, issued a land reform ordinance empowering the state Government to acquire and distribute surplus land (in excess of land ceiling) speedily and effectively. Accordingly, nearly 10,000 acres of Government fallow land was released from the illegal occupation of landlords and nearly 1,50,000 acres of fallow land was distributed among 1,40,000 families.

4. Reform in Administration:

To set up Administrative Reforms Committee, the Government set up a Administrative Reforms Committee headed by Harinath Mishra. But, according to D.P. Rai,


it proved fruitless; first, because it was set up very late and, secondly, Mishra indulged too much in theoretical aspects of the problem.

5. steps to end corruption:

Immediate examination of the findings of the Aiyar Commission for taking appropriate follow-up action: A retired Chief Secretary from Orissa was called to examine the report. On his report some actions were taken against some officials, but there was no ground to take actions against political leaders, though CBI raids were conducted on their houses.

Besides, the Government, by amending Bihar Tenancy Act, imposed restrictions on illegal occupation of Bataidar's land and set up Tripartite Board for the solution of Bataidari disputes. By an ordinance, the Government imposed restrictions on 168 big landlords for selling land beyond ceiling. Nearly 500 acres of land misappropriated by money-lenders were returned to the Adivasis.

It is, thus, obvious that except land reforms, hardly any other item of the minimum programme was touched. Even in

84. D.P. Rai, op. cit.
85. Ibid.
this respect much was lacking. Hundreds of cases arising out of the land struggle were still pending, the repression against the Bataidars, agricultural labourers and Adivasis continued. Landlords were frequently resorting to firings with the connivance and even backing of the police. Not a single Batai Board Panchayat was set up. The fate of the proposed tribunals to distribute land to Adivasis was no better. In industrial areas, the colliery owners were indulging in gangsteism and nothing was done by the police and the authorities to check it.

The CPI, a constituent of the ruling coalition, in a resolution said, "Performances of the Government has been woefully poor in matters of policy regarding labour and industrial relations, employment and industrialization, credit and irrigational facilities for peasants, rooting out corruption and nepotism in administration, curbing gangsteism of landlords, Mahajans and colliery owners and putting down highhandedness of the police and the bureaucracy against workers and peasants.

The B.P. Rai Ministry did not bring improvement in the administration. His Government's work had been reduced to

87. New Age (editorial), December 6, 1970, p. 2; Jagannath Sarber, op. cit.

88. Link, November 8, 1970, p. 16.
transfers and postings. Even in transfers and postings of Government officials a lot of favouritism and unfairness was openly practised which further demoralised the already shattered administration in the State. Raisul Azam (Congress-O) and Sadhu Garen Sani (PSP), on May 15, 1970, alleged in the Assembly that Rai Ministry was indulging in whimsical transfers and appointments to serve its own interests. D.P. Rai did not conduct himself creditably during the period he was in office. Even his own partymen levelled grave allegations against him challenging his integrity and sincerity. Charges of corruption were levelled against some Ministers at a meeting of the Congress legislature party. What was worse, an open charge of bribery against a Minister was levelled by Harinath Mishra, a respected leader of the State, in the Assembly. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Rai Ministry did not take any action against the politicians indicted by Aiyar Commission.

Law and order in the state was fast deteriorating.

89. Ibid.
90. Search Light (Editorial), December 20, 1970.
91. Ibid., May 16, 1970.
92. Ibid. (Editorial), December 20, 1970.
93. Ibid., December 29, 1970.
94. Ibid. (Editorial), May 27, 1970.
"Lawlessness seemed to have let loose specially in rural areas and an impression was created that the Government was not keen to protect the life and property of peaceful citizens. Even Satya Narain Sinha, Union Minister for Communication, Information and Broadcasting, had to express grave concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the state. The Hindustan Times gave the following break-up of crimes recorded between May and July, 1970, by different police stations in and around Patna: armed robbery 40, murder 27, dacoity 19, burglary 214, theft (including copper wire) 566 and riot 96.

Performance of the Eighth Coalition

The SSP-led SVD Government headed by SSP Chairman Karpoori Thakur took actions on the following items of the 26-point programme:

1. To End Land Rent on Uneconomic Holdings:

   The Government abolished land rent on holdings upto 6 1/2 acres of unirrigated and 3.5 acres of irrigated lands.

95. Ibid. (Editorial), December 20, 1970.

96. Ibid., October 12, 1970.


2. **Land Reform:**

To establish a land Commission to define profitable holding, decide boundary, ceiling and implement other measures of land reform:

The Government appointed a Committee headed by Krishna Kant Singh, a Cabinet Minister in the SVD Government, to suggest land reforms afresh. But it proved fruitless, because the Commission did not even commence its work.

3. **Language:**

(a) to end the use of English in official work;

(b) to end the use of English as a compulsory subject and as a medium of instruction in educational institutions.

(c) to end the use of English in the working of courts.

The SVD Government ended English in official work. It also abolished English as a compulsory subject and students were allowed to pass without English up to the Matriculation stage. It also ended English as a medium of instruction.

4. **Administrative Reforms:**

(a) to make police administration strong and efficient


and implement the recommendation of Police Commission;
(b) to hold elections for suspended municipalities and convert the existing Notified Area Committees into Village Panchayats or municipalities.

Notified Area Committees of Mokeman, Dehri-on-Gone, Dalmianagar, Jahanabad, Khagaria, Begusarai, Lakhisarai, Saharasa and Supaul were converted into municipalities.

5. To set up an Autonomous Development Board for Chotanagpur and Santhal Paraganas: An Autonomous Commission for Chotanagpur and Santhal Paraganas was set up, but it was not effective.

It is clear that during its 161-day regime, the SVD Government touched very few items of the common minimum programme. Out of five items regarding land reform, only one was touched. So was the case with other items. The SVD Government, like its predecessors, soon lost its enthusiasm and idealism and bogged down in a bitter struggle for its own survival. Thakur expanded his Ministry no less than eight times in less than six months and acquired the dubious distinction of heading Bihar's largest ever (53)-Council of Ministers. "Such ministry could not have taken any concrete steps in the interests of the people, particularly in respect of land reforms and economic development of


the state when major partners of the combine were there to block any radical measure and safeguard the feudal landlords and industrial tycoons".

The record of the SDP Government in respect of land reform was regrettable to say the least. In order to oblige its vested interests and owing to its anxiety not to lose power, Thakur Ministry resorted to the subterfuge of appointing a Commission to delay and obstruct any steps in this direction. Thakur halted the implementation of even petty land reform measures set in motion by the Congress(R)-led Coalition. Even the recovery of land from the illegal occupation of landlords and the conferring of occupancy right on the landless on their homestead land were not convenient to the SSP-led coalition. All the SSP demands for reduction of ceilings on land were conveniently forgotten.

A mockery was made of the anti-corruption drive. Some actions were taken when it became clear that the Ministry would not survive. But otherwise corrupt officers had a wonderful time. A politician indicted by the Aiyar Commission was appointed as Chairman of the Bihar Financial Corporation. An officer, who was under a cloud as a result of the findings of the Aiyar Commission, was rewarded. Karpoori Thakur himself was not free from blame. He threw all norms and decencies

104. Link, June 6, 1971, p. 16.
overboard and appointed a son and a son-in-law of two politi-
cians indicted by the Aiyar Commission as Chairmen of the
two important Boards dealing with crores of rupees.

Bihar had seen quite a number of corrupt and inefficient
ministries, one excelling the other. But the Thakur Ministry
easily surpassed all of them. All the sacred and valued
principles of administration were thrown to the winds.

D.P. Rai Ministry was accused of being engrossed in transfers
and postings. But the racket of transfers and postings
became worse under the Thakur regime. Officers were trans-
ferred, retransferred and transferred again before they
had joined the place of their first transfer. Favouritism
and nepotism committed during the Chief Ministership of
D.P. Rai paled into insignificance when compared to what
happened during the Thakur Ministry. A large number of
irregular, illegal and indefensible decisions were taken in
various departments causing heavy loss to the Government and
hardship to the people. A writ petition was filed before
the Chief Justice K.B.N. Singh of the Patna High Court by
Kuldip Narain Jaiswal on May 6, 1971 alleging that Bagun

106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.; Link, June 6, 1971, p. 16.
Sambrui, Minister of Excise in the Thakur Ministry, had demanded a bribe of Rs. 1,00,000/- for awarding the contract for supply of liquor. Already one BSP Minister had changed another SSP Minister with having taken bribes of Rs. 40,000/- from some colliery owners.

The law and order machinery had virtually broken down resulting in large number of murders and dacoities during the period of the SVF rule. The murder of the principal of Rajendra College, Chapra, in his office in broad day-light and the looting of a train and kidnapping of two brides by dacoits showed the chaotic conditions prevailing in the state.

Suraj Narain Singh, Chairman of the Indian Socialist Party, a partner of the SVF, on June 26, 1971, assailed the Government in the Assembly for what he called it "utter failure" in checking mounting incidence of robberies in trains and buses. He added that "the whole administration had collapsed and it was suffering from cancer".

**Performance of the Ninth Coalition**

The PVF Ministry headed by B.P. Shastri, as has been mentioned above, adopted the 35-point programme of the


110. *Link*, May 9, 1971, p. 16.

Congress(R)-led seventh Coalition headed by D.P. Rai. But its performance in giving effect to those programmes was far from satisfactory. The Paswan Ministry survived by some adjustment among the coalition, but it made no effort to implement any programme. "Before he assumed office, Paswan made lavish promises but after his resignation, he had only a largely barren records to look back upon". Expansion of the Ministry and distribution of portfolios had been the sole pre-occupation of the Government since it assumed office. Nothing could be more characteristic of the situation than the fact that when the Cabinet expansion came up before the Congress High Command in August 1971 about 50 Congress(R) aspirants pitched their tents in New Delhi and were busy canvassing for themselves and for their friends. Bihar was then in the grip of the worst flood and the Prime Minister had to tell them bluntly to go back. There was a prolonged tussle for key portfolios like Finance, PWL, PHED, Industries, Irrigation, Power, Excise and Transport, between Ministers belonging to rival L.N. Mishra and R.L. Singh Yadav groups. Ministers drawn from other constituents were also making their respective claims. Files piled up in the Chief Minister's secretariat and the relief work virtually came to a halt as Paswan had little time for anything else, except entertaining


the rival claims for 'juicy portfolios'. What was more, he had no time to fix a date for debate on the grave flood situation and bungling in relief operations as demanded by a delegation of Opposition parties led by Ramanand Tiwari.

The Paswan Ministry failed to take any steps to check corruption in administration. A significant act of his Ministry was to scrap the Latta Commission of Inquiry set up by the Thakur Ministry to probe into the charges of misappropriation of Bharat Sevak Samaj fund by Lalit Narain Mishra and some other Bihar Congress leaders.

The Paswan Ministry had a plus point. It promulgated two ordinances seeking to lower the ceiling on land holding-ranging from 4 hectares to 12 hectares per male co-sharer depending on the category of land, and fixing a ceiling on urban property ranging from 5 lakhs to 10 lakhs. However, the *Times of India* commenting on land ceiling wrote, "Bihar's land ceiling ordinance is unlikely to satisfy those who are in favour of drastic land reforms. In spite of a 50 per cent reduction in the maximum permissible size of holdings of various categories the number of landowners who will be affected is less than 4,000. In the face of it, the ordinance

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114. Ibid.
116. For detail see Chapter IV, Part E, pp. 261-262.
may appear to be anachronistic, which, in effect, preserves the status quo. The Paswan Ministry failed to implement other measures of land reforms and to give protection to share-croppers. The brutal mass murder of Santhal share-croppers by the landlords was a glaring example.

This analysis of the performances of the various coalition governments shows that although six governments agreed on common minimum programmes for the betterment of the life of the people, most items of the programme remained real only on paper. Before coming to power, they all made lofty promises but after assuming office, they all bogged down in struggle for their own survival. They had little time to attend to the pressing problems of the state as their main concern was either warding off threats to their government or expansion of the Ministry and distribution of portfolios. Whatever little time they saved from these problems, they spent it on postings and transfers of government officials for selfish ends.

To recapitulate briefly what has been said earlier in this chapter about the acts of omissions and commissions of the various governments, it can be remarked here that the first of government did a commendable job in facing the calamity of the drought and providing some other immediate

118. *Link*, January 2, 1972, p. 27.
relief to the people. Its other main work was the setting up the Aiyar Commission. The Mudholkar Commission, appointed by the Mandal Government to probe the charges of corruption against 14 UF Ministers, said, "most of the ministers tried as best as they could do to improve the conditions of the people" and they "were responsive to public grievances which they sought to remove speedily often, however, in an unorthodox manner."

Insipite of the acknowledgement of the Mudholkar Commission that "they may emerge perhaps even better than their admirers claim for them", the UF Government did nothing to bring changes in the administrative setup and socio-economic structure of the society. What was worse, the government compromised with the Raja of Ramgarh for the sake of its survival. The inclusion of Raja and his younger brother in the Cabinet was itself against the interest of the State. Commenting on the conduct of the Raja, Justice Mudholkar said, "I am surprised that the Mines and Geology portfolio would have been offered to a person who, despite his denial, has substantial interest in mines in a state which is one of the richest in the country in mineral deposits".

119. Free Press Journal (Bombay), and Times of India, December 13, 1969.

120. Ibid.

121. Search Light, December 12, 1969.
The fourth Coalition created great political impact by refusing to bow before the Raja and compromising the interests of the state. It was the seventh Coalition which initiated some land reform measures making legislation regarding abolition of Tata’s zamindari right, conferring rights on homestead land and distribution of fallow and surplus land. The eighth Coalition, like its immediate predecessor, abolished land rent on uneconomic holdings. However, its main concern seemed to be abolishing English from every sphere of life of the state. The ninth Coalition did one important work. It promulgated ordinances seeking to fix ceilings on land holding and urban property. However, it earned a bad name by scrapping the Dutta Commission.

During the whole period of the Coalition governments no effective steps were taken to better the lot of the poor, exploited and suppressed section of the society, in spite of the fact that several governments had promised through their programmes to do that. Their promise to lessen the pressure of loans on the poor farmers, agricultural labourers and to end the system of money-lending in tribal, mines and industrial areas and to introduce a special system of loans proved a mere slogan. No steps were taken to bring improvement in the administration and to check corruption. The seventh and the eighth Coalitions had promised to set up the institutions of Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta for checking corruption in the administration but nothing was done in this direction.
on the contrary, the general fall in the standard and efficiency of administration was more steep in the state than elsewhere. Commenting on the state of the administration, the Search Light wrote,

"One of the greatest bane is casteism which has seeped in everywhere. Whether in appointments or promotions or seeking favour it plays a role. What is more distressing is that casteism has become a dominating factor in the realm of education also whether at university level or in colleges or schools. Another marked feature is the misuse of official machinery to obtain personal and private gains. Many in the higher rungs of services are in fact the biggest defaulters in this respect and have set the pace". 122

The Government's promise to introduce reformation in the education system was conveniently forgotten. So was the case with the promise to revamp the economy of the state. Even the land reform measures taken by some governments were far below the mark. This resulted in large number of agrarian agitations in Bihar. The statement given below shows agrarian agitations in Bihar, 1967 - 70.

Agrarian agitations in Bihar, 1967-70

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

122. Ibid. (Editorial), September 24, 1969.

However, the most deplorable was the law and order situation in the state throughout the whole period of coalition governments. It was disturbing to note that not even the minimum of the security of life and honour that the citizen was entitled to could be guaranteed to him. The *Search Light* wrote, "while politicians are fighting for power like kilkenny cats, lawless elements are having a field day in most parts of the state". It further wrote that "people have begun to lose faith in the police as a law enforcing authority and indeed have reconciled themselves to the situation that not much can be expected of it". Even in Patna, the state capital, the people found themselves very much at the mercy of the ruffians. What was more worse was the emergence of a new class of law-breakers. It included some so-called respectable elements who secured impunity from legal consequences because of their connection in high quarters.

In many cases, the police expressed helplessness in dealing with this class of anti-social elements quite a number of whom had penetrated one political party or the other. The following Table shows the increasing number of crimes during the coalition period, with exception of a fall in 1971 in the first two columns.

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125. Ibid., December 17, 1970.
126. Ibid., December 17, 1970.
Table - showing true cases of serious crimes in Bihar, 1967 - 71 during Coalition period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rioting</th>
<th>Murder</th>
<th>Dacoity</th>
<th>Robbery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>8,282</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>8,048</td>
<td>1,282</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>8,334</td>
<td>1,299</td>
<td>1,333</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>10,239</td>
<td>1,523</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>1,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>8,306</td>
<td>1,318</td>
<td>1,976</td>
<td>1,256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONGRESS GOVERNMENTS

The 1972 General Elections to Assembly resulted in the end of multi-party and mini-party Coalition system and the return of one party system. After five years, Bihar could have a full-fledged Congress Government. The Congress, in its election manifesto, had made the following promises to the people:

Promises

1. To obtain self-sufficiency in economy; (a) to organise


economic programmes and to mobilise material and mental resources in such a way that will help getting self-sufficiency without foreign aid; (b) to eliminate drawbacks in economy in order to get full productive capability of steel, fertilizer etc.; (c) to reorganise production structure in such a way that will help in producing employment opportunities, defence-oriented essential commodities and capital oriented goods; (d) to curtail the consumption of those sections of society which have benefitted most by social programmes for the purpose of mobilising more means; (e) to have harmonious relations between workers and management and to get workers' share in management at all levels of production.

2. To remove social and economic injustices; to better the income standard of the weakest sections so that they may fulfil their minimum needs; to set up a system that will provide them essential commodities at proper rates.

3. To establish proper harmony between the state and the centre in economic programmes, agricultural production, irrigation and electricity, education, health and the welfare of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Backward classes.

4. To bring fundamental reform in education and examination system in order to inculcate new social values, enhance secularism and national unity, help in adopting a humane,
rational and self-sufficient outlook and to help students in developing their full personality and face challenges of the fast developing world.

5. To provide compulsory education to all children upto 11 years by 1975 and upto 14 years by 1980.

6. To take steps to give teachers due respect in society and improve the institutions in which they work.

7. The State Government will be fully responsible in implementing the programmes aiming at providing employment to weaker sections, educated unemployed, specially technical and engineers and in providing benefits to small, marginal and agricultural labourers.

8. To take steps to bring land reforms and to implement them effectively.

9. Safeguarding the interests of minorities: (a) to provide educational facilities to all linguistic classes; (b) to attend to the socio-economic problems of Muslims, Christians and other religious and linguistic minorities; (c) to provide proper place to Urdu; (d) to take steps to check discrimination in appointments and promotions against minorities; (e) to take special care of education employment and welfare of weaker sections, particularly scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Backward classes.

However, the first Congress Government, headed by Kedar Nath, spell out the following 13-point priorities of his Government.

1. Rehabilitation of the families of Jawans and officers killed or disabled in the war with Pakistan.

2. Expansion of irrigation network and rural electrification to boost agricultural production and small scale industries.

3. Provision of drinking water facilities and construction of village roads, particularly in the sugarcane-producing belt.

4. Improvement of civic amenities in big towns like Patna and Ranchi.


6. Introduction of panchayat Raj in all districts.

7. Introduction of better farm techniques and subsidiary agro-industries.

8. Special care and welfare of the Scheduled Castes, scheduled Tribes and Backward classes.

9. Introduction of land reforms and fixing of ceilings on urban property.


11. Reorientation of village plans and providing jobs to rural unemployed particularly the unemployed landless.

12. Provision of jobs for educated unemployed, particularly those holding engineering degrees and technical diplomas.

13. Review of the Five Year Plan to fulfil the needs of the Backward State with an increased subvention from the Centre.
It may be mentioned, however, that from July, 1975 onwards, the state Government declared its determination to implement the following 20-point programme announced by the Prime Minister in the night of July 1, 1975—


2. Implementation of agricultural land ceiling and speedier distribution of surplus land and compilation of land records.

3. Stepping up of provision of house-sites for landless and weaker sections.

4. Bonded labour, wherever it exists, will be declared illegal.

5. Plan for liquidation or rural indebtedness. Legislation for moratorium on recovery of debt from landless labourers, small farmers and artisans.

6. Review of laws on minimum agricultural wages.

7. Five-million more hectares to be brought under irrigation. National programme for use of underground water.

8. An accelerated power programme. Super Thermal stations under central control.

130. Times of India, July 2, 1975.
9. New development programme for development of handloom sector.
10. Improvement in quality and supply of people's cloth.
11. Socialisation of urban and urbanisable land. Ceiling on ownership and possession of vacant land and on the plinth area of new dwelling unit.
12. Special squads for valuation of conspicuous construction and prevention of tax-evasion. Summary trials and deterrent punishment to economic offences.
13. Special legislation for confiscation of smugglers' properties.
15. New schemes for workers' association in industry.
17. Income-tax relief to the middle-class exemption limit raised to Rs. 8,000/–.
18. Essential commodities at controlled prices to students in hostels.
19. Books and stationery at controlled prices; and
20. New apprenticeship scheme to enlarge employment and training, specially of weaker sections.

PERFORMANCE OF THE PANDEY GOVERNMENT

Land Reform

The first Congress Government, headed by Kedar Pandey, fixed a maximum ceiling on agricultural land by amending the
existing Land Reform Act. Under the new Act passed by the legislature in June 1972, while the ceiling for per family of up to five members for Canal or State tubewell irrigated land was 15 acres, it was 18 acres for private tubewell irrigated land, 30 acres for non-irrigated land in the plains and 37½ acres in the reverine belt and 45 acres of hilly or sandy land. The ceiling on homestead land was reduced from 10 acres for each co-parcener to one acre for a family and the ceiling on orchards from 15 acres for each co-parcener to three acres for a family. By enforcing this Act, the Government acquired 6,000 acres of surplus land by February, 1973 and expected to acquire more than 500,000 acres of surplus land for distribution among landless tillers. Before this Act, the Government distributed 2.75 lakh acres of land among 2.30 lakh landless families.

The Government distributed 9,000 acres of land among 3,700 retired army men. Similarly, it distributed 4.28 lakh acres of agriculturable land, obtained under the Bhoomi scheme, among landless tillers.

133. Ibid.
Urban Ceiling

Bihar was perhaps the first state to have passed a bill in June, 1972 fixing a ceiling on property worth Rs. 2 lakhs in a town whose population exceeds 10,000. But when a family exceeds five members each additional member was allowed to have property worth Rs. 20,000 each, with the provision that the total, in no case, would exceed 3 lakh. 134

Administrative Reform

In order to bring improvement and efficiency in the administration, the first Congress Government created 12 new districts, 19 sub-divisions and a new Koshi Division. It also created 14 new police stations to maintain law and order. 135 To check train robbery, it set up a special squad.

Irrigation

The Pandey Government started work on West Koshi Canal which had been stopped in 1966 due to the objections raised by the Napelose Government. It sanctioned Rs. 9 crores. It started a special scheme for minor irrigation, road construction, tree plantation and land consolidation in areas like Palamu, Jamui and Bhabhua-Sassaram-Nawada areas. 136

134. Ibid.
Industry

The Government decided to set up autonomous authorities for the development of areas selected for industries. It established such authorities for Adityapur and Bokaro by issuing an ordinance on May 15, 1972. It started work in Patratu, Dehri, Gagalcut, Fatwa, and Hajipur for the establishment of industrial estates. It also started work in 1,437 industrial units.

Electricity

It was during the Pandey regime that the first honest effort was made to put the State Electricity Board in order and at no time so many tubewells were bored and energized as during one year Pandey was in office. The production of electricity was increased from 165 MW to 300 MW. For the first time 600 Harijan villages were electrified.

Education

In order to remove irregularities and growing indiscipline in universities, the Government, by promulgating an ordinance in April, 1972, dismissed senate, Syndicate, Academic Council

137. Ibid.
139. Governor's Address, op. cit.
etc. and vested their powers in new I.A.S. Vice-Chancellors. It had a telling effect on the regularity and fairness of examinations and publication of results. The Government appointed a high level committee to recommend ways to bring reform in the structure of universities and their administration. It established a new Mithila University.

The Government opened 75 residential schools, including 6 meant for girls, for the educational uplift of scheduled Castes and scheduled Tribes. The students of these schools were provided lodging, boarding, clothing and other facilities by the governments. All Harijan and Adivasi meritorious students were given scholarships. In all 2,99,800 students were given scholarships during 1972-73.

However, the Pandey Government could not do much to fulfil the promises given by the Congress. Even some important items in 13-point priority spelt out by his Government were not touched. His Government took a number of unpopular decisions more to protect the interests of the rich than to give relief to the poor. His Government reimposed land rent

140. Ibid.
142. Governor's Address, op. cit.
143. Ibid.
on uneconomic holdings abolished by the previous two govern-
ments. Even in the new land reform law, he provided various
exemptions which were exploited by individuals and organiza-
tion. This belied the Government's expectation about surplus
land. Inspite of tall claims, only 770 acres of surplus land
were distributed among the landless tillers. Karpoori
Thakur (socialist) and Chandra Shekhar Singh (CPI), while
speaking on Governor's Address, criticised the Government
for its failure in checking price rise, supplying essential
commodities, imposing land rent on uneconomic holdings,
implementing land reform measures, protecting the right of
share-croppers, checking the eviction of landless on homestead
land, providing irrigational facilities, providing security
to Harijans, Adivasis and minorities. They also criticised
the Pandey Government for not bringing any reform in the
administrative set up, its failure in providing employment
to educated unemployed and checking increasing rates of crimes,
robberies, dacoities and train robberies. Harihar Singh
(Congress-0), Janardan Yadav (Jan sangh) and Kapildeo Singh
also criticised the Government for its failure in controlling
corruption in administration and for its action for increasing
taxes, land rent and electricity rate. Chaturanan Mishra(CPI),

147. Ibid., pp. 18-20.
B.P. Mandal (soc.) and Ramji Prasad Singh (Jan Sangh), while speaking on the budget criticised the Government for its failure mentioned above. Thakur Munishwar Nath Singh (soc.) criticised the Government for its failure in tackling unemployment. He gave the following figures of educated unemployed: Matriculation 1,42,545, Between Matriculation and Graduation 53,582, Graduates 51,374, above graduation 3,716, Overseers 8,857, Engineers 3,929, Doctors 278. In all there were 5,46,875 unemployed in Bihar by the end of June, 1972.

Instead of rooting out corruption, some of Pandey's colleagues indulged in it. Several serious charges were levelled on the floor of the Assembly against some Ministers. Kapildeo Singh levelled charges of corruption and misuse of official position against Lahtan Chaudhary, and L.P. Shahi (both Cabinet Ministers) and produced some photostat copies. Janardan Tiwari (Jan Sangh) levelled serious charges of corruption against senior officials. He also levelled charges of corruption against L.P. Shahi and charges of casteism against another Minister Ramesh Jha. Sunil Mukherjee (CPI) told Pandey, "Your ministry is certainly under suspicion".

149. Ibid., pp. 47-51.
151. Ibid., p. 85.
152. Ibid., p. 63.
Thus, the Pandey Government functioned on the old and beaten track of other Governments and failed to bring any fundamental changes in the socio-economic political setup of the state. The hopes raised by Mrs. Gandhi in 1969, 1971 and 1972 and the promises made by her party in Bihar were belied. Excepting land reform and maintaining discipline in the universities, Pandey's performance in all other fields was far from satisfactory. He swore by the name of the poor and the downtrodden yet under no regime were so many industrial workers and landless peasants killed by the police or the landlords as during his tenure.

His performance on law and order front was in no way better than the Coalition Governments. Rather his Ministry's record began with the spilling of blood. On the eve of his assumption of power, a CPI MLA Mazaharul Hasan was murdered in the Patna MLA Hostel and till his ouster Pandey was unable to locate the murderer. Another MLA, this time of the Socialist Party, a veteran socialist and freedom fighter, was beaten to death by Kedar Pandey's police when he was on fast demanding recognition of the Union he led. It was not only the murder of the MLAs that blackened the Pandey Ministry's record. Six peasants and a Communist leader Santu Mahto were killed by the landlords backed by police in broad daylight at Seliberi village in Madhubani district and the main

culprit was not apprehended. The police opened fire at Sirka colliery, Kumardhubi and Bokaro killing 20 workers. In all, the tally was of 35 legalised murders committed by Pandey's police. Some 40 share-croppers were killed by landlords in a bid to suppress their claim to land. Kapildeo Singh (soc.) gave the following figures of crime during five months from March to June, 1972:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crimes</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dacoity</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loot</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgery</td>
<td>1,406</td>
<td>1,159</td>
<td>1,349</td>
<td>1,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>1,956</td>
<td>1,669</td>
<td>1,839</td>
<td>1,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riot</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other sections of the population also received shocking treatment from Pandey. In September, 1972, students, journalists and even MLAs were beaten by the police when the students were demonstrating before the State Assembly gate.

His performance on food front was an utter failure. The complete failure of the crash programme for wheat production and the wheat procurement drive created difficult food situation in the state. Inspite of 125.37 crores spent on wheat production, the production remained where it was last year, i.e. around 29 lakh tonnes. As against the procurement and levy target of six lakh tonnes, two months of special drive yielded only 22 thousand tonnes. The Times of India commenting on Pandey Ministry performance wrote, "During its year of office, the Pandey Ministry has been unable to cope with any of the pressing problems of that backward state". The Patriot commented, "His administrative ventures were always ludicrous".

PERFORMANCE OF THE GHAFOOR GOVERNMENT

Irrigation

The Ghafoor Government created an additional irrigation facility for 3.47 lakh acres of land under the 'Emergency Agriculture Production' programme apart from the irrigation facility provided to twenty-five thousand acres of land under the 'Special Employment scheme'.

158. Ibid.
161. Governor's Address, Bihar Legislative Assembly Debates, vol. 8, No. 1 (Part II), March 18, 1974, p. 2-8.
Employment

The Government started Special Employment Scheme and 'Half-a-million Job Programme'. Under these programmes, by December 31, 1973, 10,328 persons were provided regular employment. Besides, 19,520 educated unemployed were given either employment or training for employment. The Government also started 'employment incentive' programme in the year 1974-75 under instruction from the Planning Commission.

Foodgrains

In order to make available foodgrains at cheaper and proper rates, the second Congress Government opened 24,717 foodgrains shops. It also started dehoarding and procurement drive.

Small Marginal Farmers and Drinking Water

The Government, with the purpose of benefitting the small and marginal farmers, started Small and Marginal Farmer Programme in Purnea, Patna, Champaran and Rohtas districts with the help of the Union Government. The Government provided 7,500 hand-pipes, 1,050 tubewells and 350 drilled wells.

162. Ibid.
164. Ibid.
165. Bihar Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. 8, op. cit.
tubewells to the rural people under 'Drinking Water supply' scheme.

Freedom from debt

The Ghafoor Government enacted a law under which landless and agricultural labourers, Harijans, Adivasis and Backward Castes (Annexure I) were freed from all kinds of debts. The Government made law to end the age-old bonded labour system.

Industry

For the systematic development of industrial areas, the Government enacted Bihar Industrial Area Development Authority Act and set up Development Authority in Adityapur, Bokaro, Ranchi and Patna. The Ghafoor Government started the spun silk mill in Bhagalpur in 1974 and increased the production capacity of the Super Phosphate Factory and electrical Equipment Factory in Sindari. Apart from these, the Bihar State Industrial Development Corporation started work on a scooter factory, which if started production, would provide employment to 1,800 people.

Education

The Government set up a committee consisting of educational experts, headed by Zawar Hussain, to recommend measures...
for educational reforms. To provide lodging facilities to the students, the government decided to build two hostels in each university of the state and released two lakhs rupees to each of them as a first instalment of its share. The Government also increased the number of scholarships from 2,250 to 4,000.

**Administration**

In order to bring impartiality and efficiency in the state administration, the government took steps for on-the-spot inquiry by the flying squads of allegations against administration, set up 'Technical Supervisory Cell' to check misappropriation of government fund in the public works department. It also set up an Anti-Corruption Committee at the district level.

However, the Ghafoor Government was taken to task by the members of the Assembly for its failure in tackling the problems of rising prices, mounting unemployment, non-availability of consumer goods and foodgrains and prevailing inefficiency, corruption, favouritism and nepotism in the administration. The government was also criticised for deteriorating law and order situation and increasing crimes.

169. Ibid.
170. Ibid., Vol. 8, No. 3 (Part II), March 21, 1974, pp. 2-7.
171. Ibid., Vol. 11, No. 1, February 12, 1975, pp. 2-19.
in the state.

The sufferings caused to the common people by the non-availability of foodgrains and soaring prices were accepted by the Government also in the Governor's Address to the legislature in 1974. Chandra Shekhar Singh (CPI), while participating in the 'Motion of Thanks' to the Governor, criticised the Government for its failure in making foodgrains available, controlling rising prices and mounting unemployment. He also criticised the Ghafoor Government for adopting pro-hoarders, blackmarketeers and pro-vested interest policy. The CPI leader blamed the Government for the failure of land reform measures. He criticised the Congress Government for the plight of the poor Harijans, Adivasis and other poor sections of the society. In the opinion of the Communist leader, the state administration was too corrupt to take steps in the interest of the common people. He alleged that cabinet Ministers took bribes and were busy in postings and transfers only.

Thakur Mukeshwarnath Singh (Congress(o)) alleged that the ruling party was involved in the process of Government-breaking, Minister-making and Minister-removing, while the people of the state were suffering from non-availability of foodgrains, rising prices, unemployment and corruption in

172. Ibid., Vol. 8, No. 1 (Part II), March 18, 1974, p. 2.
173. Ibid., Vol. 9, No. 2 (Part II), June 6, 1974, pp. 25, 2630-34.
the administration. Not only Opposition members but some
important Congress members like Deep Narain Singh, Prabhanath
Singh and Vidyakar Kavi also criticised the Government for
price rise, unemployment, inefficiency, corruption and
nepotism in the administration. According to Kavi, the
Government was not paying attention to the basic problems
of the common masses and was concerned only with transfers,
postings, promotions, extension and money allotment. Develop­
ment works were at a standstill and corruption was showing
its real colour. Umraon Salho Kujur and Bagun Sumbrui
criticised the Ghafoor Government for the exploitation of
Adivasis and deteriorating law and order situation.

During debates on the Governor's Address to the state
legislature in 1975 also, Chatwaraan Mishra (CPI) and Bhola
Prasad Singh (Rebel SP) criticised the Ghafoor Government
for price-rise, non-availability of foodgrains at proper
rates and growing unemployment. They held the Government
responsible for hoarding, blackmarketing and corruption in
the state. These leaders expressed deep concern at deteriora­
ting law and order and increasing number of murders and
dacoities and robberies in trains and buses. Echoing the
sense of insecurity prevailing in the state, the CPI leader

174. Ibid., p. 38.
175. Ibid., No. 8, June 12, 1974, pp. 15-18; No. 12, June, 1974,
176. Ibid., No. 4, June 10, 1974, pp. 15-18.
177. Ibid., No. 5, June 11, 1974, p. 39.
said that the Government, unable to provide security to MLAs, MPs and Ministers, including Union Ministers, could not provide security to the common man. Finally, both these leaders criticised the Government for its utter failures in land reforms. Nand Kishore Singh, Satyanarain Singh and Rajo Singh (all Congress) expressed their anxiety at the growing number of crimes in the state. Kamdeo Singh (also of the Congress) expressed his dissatisfaction at the performance of the Government. Theodore Bodra and Paika Mami (Congress) criticised the Government for neglect and exploitation of the Adivasis in Chotanagpur and Santhal Paraganas. Mahabir Paswan and Ram Chandra Paswan expressed their concern at the plight of Harijans. None of these problems, however, were new. It is significant that R.N.Jha, an important Congress leader, criticised his own Government for not fulfilling the promises given to the people.

179. Ibid., No.4, February 17, 1975, p. 44.
181. Ibid., p. 9.
183. Ibid., No. 8, February 21, 1975, p. 25.
186. Ibid., No. 9, February 24, 1975, p. 8.
It is also interesting to note that while the Chief Minister was reported to have said that 75 per cent of supply inspectors in Bihar were corrupt, Birendra Pandey, a Congress member in the Assembly, levelled charges of corruption against the Chief Minister Ghafoor, Finance Minister D.P. Rai and Industry Minister Chandra Shekhar Singh.

The state was practically without effective administration apart from what Central Reserve and local police was able to provide. "Bihar topped the list of States requiring assistance of the defence forces for maintenance of law and order as well as essential supplies during last year". In fact, the going-on in the ruling party leading to periodical replacement of a set of Ministers by another set of Ministers appeared to the people of Bihar to be a vast irrelevance. While the problems of the state cried for resolute action by purposeful administration, all that the party in power was able to do was to act like "marionetters worked by the puppeteer from New Delhi".

189. Times of India (Editorial), February 8, 1975.
PERFORMANCE OF THE MISHRA GOVERNMENT

The third Congress Government, headed by Jagannath Mishra, started functioning on the basis of 20-point programme announced by the Prime Minister on July 1, 1975. The Mishra Government took the following steps to fulfil the promises given in the programme:

**Price Control**

The Mishra Government succeeded in lowering the prices of foodgrains between 32% to 43%, as compared to 1974. After the declaration of emergency there was further fall in prices between 12% to 33%. The Government also intensified actions against hoarding. It raided the godowns and houses of 5,005 traders and farmers, arrested 601 persons and unearthed 2,08,700 quintal of foodgrains. It also raided rice-mills and dehoarded 65,000 quintals of paddy and 2,624 quintals of rice. The Government raided simultaneously the shops of kerosene oil dealers and arrested 8 persons under various charges.

**Procurement and Production**

As against the rice procurement target of 25,000 metric tonnes, the Government procured 60,000 m. tonnes rice in 1975-76. It also succeeded in procuring 52,000 m. tonnes of wheat against the target of 50,000 m. tonnes. During the

193. Ibid., p. 3.
tenure of Mishra there was a record production of 95 lakh m. tonnes in foodgrains as against 82.50 m. tonnes in 1974-75.

Land Reforms

Under land reform measures, the Government acquired 1,27,000 acres of surplus land, while upto 1974-75 only 97,000 acres of surplus land had been acquired. Of these 73,000 acres were distributed among the landless tillers. About 3.32 acres of Government land were distributed among 3,66,000 Harijans, Adivasis, Backward Classes and retired army men. Also, about 11,166 acres of land were restored to 14,477 Adivasis.

Home Facilities

By the end of May, 1976, 17,239 homestead lands were distributed among 54,000 landless families under 149 blocks. Besides, 10,000 houses in the state, excluding the 400 houses in Patna alone, were being built for those landless and poor families whose houses were either damaged or completely washed away in the 1975 floods.

Bonded Labour

After July 1975, 581 bonded labourers in Patna and


Gaya districts were liberated from exploitation of landlords. They were also freed from the debt of Rs. 36,114 and 19 acres of land were also restored to them. Besides, 376.65 acres of Ghair Mazrooa' (Government land) were given to liberated bonded labourers. Two landlords who violated the law were put behind the bars for a year.

**Minimum wages**

In order to liberate landless, labourers and poor farmers, the Government promulgated an ordinance in November, 1975 and sent it to the President for his assent. The Government also fixed minimum wages for agricultural labourers in irrigated area Rs. 5 a day and in unirrigated area; Rs. 4.50 a day besides Re. 1 for food. In order to implement it, the Government appointed officials at block level, district level and in the secretariat.

**Irrigation**

Under 20-point programme, 98,000 hectares of land were provided irrigation facilities and Rs. 41.21 crores were spent on irrigational facilities. Besides Rs. 5 crores were allocated to Gandak planning which provided additional irrigation facilities to 63,000 hectares of land. During

197. Ibid., p.11; Bihar Assembly Debates, op. cit.
199. Ibid., p. 14; Bihar Assembly Debates, op. cit.
Rabi season 4.43 lakh hectares of land were provided irrigation facilities. Apart from these, the Government distributed 21,676 tubewells and pumping sets.

**Electricity**

During 1975-76, 2,247 m.w. units of electricity were produced as against 2,070 m.w. units in 1974-75. Between July 1975 to June 1976, 1,714 villages and 1,069 Harijan villages were electrified. During this period, 177 Government tubewells, 13,620 private tubewells were provided electricity. Also, 2,640 industrial units were provided electricity facilities.

**Employment**

The Government opened 9,581 controlled clothes shops, of these 7,744 shops were started by unemployed youths. The banks provided loans of Rs. 1,25,91,863 to 2,261 unemployed youths, under self-employment scheme. Besides, 549 motor co-operative sanitis were set up which provided employment to about 3,294 educated youths. Further 900 new entrepreneurs were given training under self-employment scheme.

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Students' welfare

The Government opened Book Bank in 239 colleges and university departments in order to provide book facility to students. There was twenty per cent fall in the prices of school and college books. The Government also supplied, on controlled rates, foodgrains and other essential commodities to students residing in 842 hostels and lodges. The Government also increased the amount of scholarship awarded to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward classes. The Government provided lodging facilities to Harijan and Adivasi students by building 40 new hostels.

Legal Aid

The Government set up legal aid committees in 10 districts to provide legal help to landless, Harijans, Adivasis and weak sections. The Government issued an ordinance to end the exploitation of rickshaw pullers. As a result 9,700 rickshaw pullers were provided ownership to their vehicles in Patna alone. In Ranchi, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga and Saharasa about 7,000 rickshaw puller were made owners of their rickshaws.

204. Bihar Legislative Assembly debates, op. cit., pp. 24-35.
206. Ibid., p. 8.
Streamlining Administration

The Mishra Government took actions to streamline the administration. The Indian Nation commented, "A perceptible change in attendance and work is visible in almost all the government offices including new and old secretariats since the proclamation of Emergency. A general climate of alertness and promptness in work seems to be gaining ground. The official sloth and lethargy, which was not long ago a common feature of Bihar, is on the wane now. There is a marked improvement in punctuality and discipline in offices". The government sacked 52 officers, including three IAS officers, one DIG rank police officer, five departmental heads, including Engineer-in-Chief and three selection grade doctors because, according to the Chief Minister, they ceased to be efficient. Mishra further declared that 100 more officers, who have ceased to be efficient, might be compulsorily retired. The Government also decided to withhold one increment of all those Government officers who resorted to 'pairvi' and resent representation through public men for their transfers during Emergency.

It thus appears that the Mishra Government fared for

209. Ibid., August 1, 1975.
210. Ibid., August 6, 1975.
211. Ibid., January 20, 1976.
better than the previous two Congress governments. But all that glitters is not gold. No doubt, due to fear psychosis created by Emergency, Mishra fared comparatively better on some fronts, particularly land reform and price control. He also succeeded in maintaining what was called 'discipline' in administration. All this he did in the early phase of the Emergency. After this everything seemed to be relapsing to the old ways. This was conceded by no less a person than Mrs. Gandhi herself in the conference of Chief Secretaries that "though the emergency had brought about some discipline, the initial alertness has slackened". The Mishra Government, with all Emergency force behind it, failed to bring any real change in socio-political set up of the state. It did not touch the real ills of Bihar administration, namely corruption, favouritism, nepotism and casteism. Similarly, in the field of education, no change was sought to be done.

What was worse corruption was on the increase in the State administration. This becomes clear by the Report of the Anti-Corruption Committee of the Assembly, headed by the Deputy Speaker, Shakoor Ahmad. Bristling with strictures against the staff of the Supply Department in particular and top officials in the Secretariat in general, the Report expressed grave concern that at a time when drastic action against corruption was the declared objective, the administrative machinery should sit tight over several reports including

official and non-official. As regards corruption in the supply Department the Committee said that essential commodities including sugar meant for distribution in rural areas never reached the intended place because "a well-knit gang" of the panchayat Mukhiya, the dealer, the BMO, the Supply Inspectors and others worked in unison to divert the goods for surreptitious sale in urban areas.

Sunil Mukherji (CPI), leader of the opposition in the Bihar Assembly, criticised the Mishra Government for its failures in lowering the prices of industry-based goods, controlling the beating and murders of Harijans, Adivasis and share-croppers, checking dacoities in buses and trains, checking corruption, favouritism and misuse of official position even in emergency, checking excesses of officials in collecting land rent and Government loans. He also criticised the Government for its utter failure in implementing minimum wages even in Government owned factories and in tackling the growing problem of unemployment. Bhola Prasad Singh (rebel socialist) criticised the Government for its failures in checking increasing corruption and briberies and crimes. Anirudh Jha (rebel Jan Sangh) blamed the Government for


215. Ibid., pp. 32-37.
prevalent irregularities in administration and education. Punit Roy (Congress) blamed the Government for its negligence of Chotanagpur belt. He criticised the Government for its failures in maintaining law and order and for the increasing number of robberies and dacoities. Janardan Tiwari (rebel Jan Sangh) also criticised the Government for corruption in education and administration.

The three Congress governments, like the previous coalition governments, failed to tackle pressing problems facing the common people of the state. They all failed in bringing revolutionary changes in the existing administrative, economic and political set up, though some steps were taken by these governments to provide immediate relief to the masses. What was agonising was that during the Congress regime also there was a mad rush for the ministerial cake and juicy portfolios. Fractional fighting, based not on the performance of the government and devoid of any principle and ideology brought down the Pandey and the Ghafoor Ministries. In view of the behaviour of Congress legislators and their changing factional loyalties, it appears that the Mishra Government would have met the same fate had there been no Emergency.

216. Ibid., pp. 49-52.
217. Ibid., pp. 53-56.
219. For detail see Chapter V.
The Congress Chief Ministers, like the Coalition ones, were busy more in shifting threats from one corner to another than in implementing the programmes of their governments. Their non-performance on the law and order front was most conspicuous. The following statement shows their failure in maintaining law and order and providing security to the people.

Statement of serious crimes in Bihar, 1972-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rioting</th>
<th>Murder</th>
<th>Dacoity</th>
<th>Robbery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>8,207</td>
<td>1,291</td>
<td>2,060</td>
<td>1,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>9,904</td>
<td>1,572</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>1,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>12,597</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>2,866</td>
<td>1,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>10,150</td>
<td>1,713</td>
<td>2,765</td>
<td>1,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that occurrence of serious crimes during the Congress regime was on the increase. Among the Congress governments, the Mishra Government succeeded, to some extent, in checking crime rates. But during this regime also the situation was worse than during any of the Coalition governments.

From the above analysis, it appears that Coalition and Congress governments were two sides of the same coin. They were basically similar in nature, character and performance. They were not honestly devoted to the causes of the poor and the exploited masses. Therefore, all of them failed in bringing qualitative change in any sphere of life in the state. Their performance in some vital fields, namely land reform, administrative reform and educational re-orientation was far from satisfactory. Even the steps in these fields that they took were not adequate. This was conceded in personal interviews with the author by Ram

221. In an interview with the author on February 15, 1980, Yadav, a PWL Minister in the K.B. Sahay Ministry, an important Congress leader during 1967-77, is, at present, Vice-President of the Congress(U) in the state.

222. In an interview with the author on February 9, 1980, Rai, Deputy Minister in 1959, State Minister in 1963, Cabinet Minister in 1969, Chief Minister in the seventh Coalition, a powerful Minister in the Pandey and Ghafoor Governments, is, at present, in the Congress (I).

223. In an interview with the author on February 12, 1980, Singh, a Minister of state in the Eighth Coalition and a Cabinet Minister in all the three Congress Governments, is, at present, in the Congress (I).

224. In an interview with the author on February 9, 1980, Singh, Deputy Minister from 1957-62 and a Cabinet Minister in the fourth, sixth and eighth Coalition, is, at present, in the Congress (U).

225. In an interview with the author on February 13, 1980, Singh, a Cabinet Minister in the second Shoshit Dal Government and Chief Minister of the fifth Congress-led Coalition, is, at present, leading a retired life.
Singh, Kapil Dev Singh and Karpoori Thakur. They were kind enough to give oral or written answers to a questionnaire presented to them by the author. A number of other leaders were also approached but they could not find time either for an interview or for written answers to the questionnaire.

226. In an interview with the author on February 15, 1980, Singh, LSG Minister in the first UF Government, and a Cabinet Minister in the Eighth Coalition, is, at present, a Member of the National Executive of the Janata(S) (Raj Narain).

227. In an interview with the author on February 16, 1980, Singh, Food Minister in the first UF Government and Agriculture, and Parliamentary Affairs Minister in the first Janata Government, is, at present, General secretary of the Bihar Lok Dal.

228. In an interview with the author on February 22, 1980, Thakur, Deputy Chief Minister in the first UF Government, Chief Minister of the Eighth Coalition and first Janata Chief Minister after the 1977 election, is, at present, leading Lok Dal in the Bihar state.
CHAPTER VII

PROTEST MOVEMENT IN BIHAR

The governmental instability at the top did not take long to travel down to the political base - the masses. Discontent spread far and wide and vocal and politically active elements assumed positions of leadership. Agitations snowballed into a movement which further complicated the already instable, directionless and chaotic politics of Bihar. In this sense, the year 1974 constituted another landmark in the none-too-happy state of Bihar politics. Taking a cue from the success of the "Students' Movement" in Gujarat, the students of Bihar started a Gujarat type movement in March, 1974. Though the Students' Movement, which later on became famous as 'JP Movement', started with the March 18 massive demonstration to the Bihar Assembly, it was the result of people's long-standing grievances and demands which had remained unheeded or heeded only in words. There had been, no doubt, some immediate sparks that lighted the fuse.

Having experienced uninterrupted Congress rule, the people of Bihar, in 1967, gave a chance to the opposition parties in the hope that they would solve their basic problems. But the Opposition parties also got involved in manipulative power politics, worse than the Congress, and ignored the promises on the basis of which they had got people's verdict.
The electorate of Bihar turned again to the Congress, headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and gave it, in the 1972 Assembly elections, a massive mandate on its promises of 'Garibi Hatao' and other populist slogans. But, again, they were cheated by their 'own' representatives. The Congress fond of preserving their legacy of factional strife, remained riven with factions based neither on class interest nor on political ideology. They also forgot their promises to the people.

Thus the politicians instead of taking care of people's interest, took care of their own interests and fought for political power for personal gain. For achieving, holding and advancing their power, they resorted to manipulative tactics and treated politics as their 'private enterprise'. They used propaganda and organizational skill, money, might and patronage to win elections. Having acquired power, they tried to maintain it by hook or by crook. The result was that the state, since 1967, continuously suffered more than any other state, from instability of governments.

Consequently, the gap between heightened public consciousness and unfulfilled promises got widened. The Congress Government, when it returned to power, displayed extreme anemia and drift, a proclivity to hide behind unconvincing alibis and a tendency to increase the role of bureaucracy at the expense of the party which inhibited political communication and increased the gap between the
government and the people. The hardships of the ordinary people, disparities between them and the upper class, mal-distribution of the essential commodities and indifference to poverty and unemployment in practice, despite rhetoric to the contrary, were all on the increase.

Not only was there a let down in respect of policies and performance, the operators of the system showed scant regard for the rules of the game which had been built step by step over a long period and which provided the basis for the system's legitimacy and appeal. Men in power either behaved irresponsively or claimed ignorance of where responsibility lay and generally permitted—actively or through connivance—unfair practice and foul means in the conduct of politics.

The normal mechanism of the system and the rules of the game on which it was based were not used as they should be. The practice of choosing puppets for different state capitals had certainly done much to undermine the people's basic faith in state Legislatures and administrations. The tragedy of Bihar was that it had been governed for long through remote control by individuals, who had been reluctant to assume direct authority. Bihar had been saddled with such a selfish, short-sighted, corrupt and faction-ridden ruling

party. Ministers and leaders of the ruling party had earned notoriety for spending more time in trips to and from Delhi than in tackling urgent problems of the state or rendering urgently needed relief to the people.

Besides the Bihar Government found it necessary to 'rule by ordinance' at the rate of one for every two days of its existence so far. Other states, too, from time to time may have been guilty of promulgating ordinances without necessarily replacing them by Acts duly passed by their Legislatures. But the practice had assumed scandalous proportion in Ghafoor's Bihar. The then Home Minister Uma Shankar Dikshit had to admit in the Lok Sabha on August 29, 1974 that "the practice of repromulgating ordinances instead of replacing them by Acts of Legislature is an unsatisfactory practice". However, he tried to explain it away by speaking of instability and short-lived governments in Bihar since 1967. Commenting upon this sorded affair, the Hindustan Times wrote, "Nothing so exposes the inglorious record of the existing Bihar Assembly as JP's telltale statement that the state Government has adopted 258 ordinances over the past two years, 176 of them in a single year". Thus, the Assembly

4. Everyman's (Delhi), September 21, 1974, p. 13.
was reduced to a useless body.

Whereas complaints of incompetence or corruption on the part of the state government were relatively of recent origin, the malaise itself was of chronic nature in Bihar ever since Independence. It was more or less universally recognised that Bihar was about the worst governed state in the entire country and that its people had to put up with the venality of politicians in power to such an extent and for so long a time as to strain the tolerance of the most philosophical, the most cynical and the most supine among them. The administrators were not much interested in carrying out their duties. The conscientious among them found their work 'frustrating and pointless'.

Corruption among politicians was a rule. "A minister took a bribe of Rs. 1,75,000 from a contractor, a son of a chief minister used 500 acres of government land for ten years without paying rent or compensation, tenders of one company were accepted over those of others because it paid money or because the owner belonged to the minister's or secretary's caste or kin group; ministers entered into shady transactions with firms".

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Several such shady deals were made by the power-proud
and power-hungry politicians. None other than R.D. Bhandare,
the then Governor of Bihar, stated in Bombay that "there
would not have been agitation in Bihar if action had been
taken on what he had suggested a year ago. He had then said
that he was in possession of intelligence reports pertaining
to corrupt practices by several Bihar Ministers". "It was
a naked struggle for power with no holds barred and with
each faction regarding public office as a means of furthering
its own position. Charges of corruption, nepotism and plain
abuse of power were freely bandied about". Even today some
of the leading politicians of the State, with whom the author
was able to have personal interviews, admit that corruption,
favouritism and nepotism in administration was rampant in
Bihar. The leaders giving such opinion were Ram Lakhan
Singh Yadav, Daroga Prasad Rai, Ram Raj Prasad Singh, Krishna
Kant Singh, Sardar Harihar Singh, Bhola Prasad Singh, Kapil-
Deo Singh and Karpoori Thakur.

While the Government and the Congress Party behaved
in this manner, the record of the Opposition parties had
been miserable, to say the least. Their role in 1974, as
often before was quite opportunistic. The issues that were

11. supra, Footnotes 221 - 228, Chapter VI, pp. 417-418.
stirring the masses and throwing them behind Jaya Prakash Narayan had become particularly sensitive in the State. If they had tackled them more effectively in the earlier years, if they had not cut themselves off from the masses and run only after power, whether inside or outside the Congress, if they had not jumped at short-cuts and forfeited their moral authority; if they had not been clever only in small things and inept in big ones, they would have been the inspirers and leaders of the student upsurge or perhaps the situation that had led to the upsurge would never arisen.

Love of power more than the spirit of service had caught hold of most of the opposition party leaders.

While politicians were playing the game of power, the common people were reaping the harvest of rising prices, scarcity of essential commodities, hoarding, blackmarketing and profiteering. The poor people in the villages were victims of inhuman forces, a hybrid between crafty feudalism and greedy capitalism. The invidious distinction between the high-born and low-born has made the socio-economic system callous and unbearable. With the rising prices of foodgrains, the landless poor in the villages found it difficult to procure food with the meagre wages they used to get. Even if the centre allocated food for them, they had no money to purchase it nor would the crafty politicians and the corrupt bureaucracy allow it to reach them.

Agrarian Troubles

Agrarian unrest had been very acute in Bihar. In 1970, there were 649 agrarian agitations, seven times more than 90 only of the previous year. In August that year, the SSP and the CPI had launched 'land grab' movement and in the process a bitter clash occurred in Chanpatia in Champaran district between them and the landlords in which Ramanand Tiwari was fatally assaulted. The Naxalites and the Left parties were engaged in mobilising poor peasants and landless labourers and clashes between them and the landlords were frequent. In June 1973, about 5,000 people, mostly landless labourers and poor peasants, carrying CPI banner attacked the house of a farmer in Ghorbanki village in Madhubani district. They took away all that he had in cash and kind. The estimate loss was about Rs. 50,000. It was reported that 70 bighas of his land were grabbed by the armed mob and his ploughs and oxen were also taken away. But Ghorbanki was only one in hundreds of such cases. In all, about 15,000 cases arising out of agrarian troubles were pending in the district.

Urban Unrest

Teachers, Government employees and other sections of the articulate urban middle class raised their voice against

13. supra- Footnote 123, Chapter VI, p. 383.
soaring prices and increasing hardships. The imposition of professional tax up to the income of Rs. 300 per month in 1973 added insult to injury. The opposition parties and trade unions formed an organization, Bihar Rajya Mahagai Abhab Pesha Kar Virodhi Mazadur Swa Karamchari Sangharsh Samiti (The Bihar State Struggle Committee of Labourers and Employees to Oppose Price Rise and Profession Tax) to launch a struggle against the imposition of the tax. The Committee organized a massive rally before the state Assembly on December 17, 1973 against high prices, non-availability of essential commodities and imposition of the profession tax. More than 120 trade unions, including those of industrial workers, teachers, engineers, journalists, government and university employees, railwaymen etc. participated in the demonstration. The main slogan of the procession was: Pura Ration Pura Kam, Nahito Hoya Chakka Jam (we want full ration and full work, else the wheel would stop moving). The demonstration was addressed by the trade union leaders of different political parties, including the CPI and the Jan Sangh.

Again, the Samyukta Sangharsh Samiti (The United Struggle Committee) of the CPI, CPI(M), SSP, Jan Sangh and other smaller groups gave a call for "Bihar Bundh" on January 21, 1974 in protest against high prices and scarcity of

15. Ghanshyam shah, op. cit., p. 84.
essential commodities. The bandh was supported by nearly 17,000 trade unions and it was a complete success. However, a small section of the Jan Sangh had reservations about the bandh call. So, the party organized a separate procession to support the bandh. On the day of bandh, clashes occurred between the administrative authority and demonstrators at Ranchi, Begusarai, Gaya, Katihar, Motihari and Jahanabad. Police fired at the crowd at Koderama Railway Station.

**Student Unrest**

Side by side the rural and urban unrests, student unrest regarding facilities on the campuses, reduction in fees, concession in buses and cinema tickets, etc. erupted in Patna and other towns. In Patna, students hijacked two state Transport buses on December 4, 1973. Clashes between students and Road Transport authority continued for a few days. On December 10, several hundred students of the Magadh University, students and non-teaching employees of the Patna University and colleges affiliated to it, Anand Margis and their supporters and students of Homeopathic College held demonstrations before the Old Secretariat for varying demands of their own. The police fired 17 rounds of tear-gas shells to disperse the demonstrators. This was followed by regular strikes and

demonstrations in several parts of the state. On January 22, 1974, in a symposium on 'Youth for Democracy' organized by the Patna University students Union, JP called upon the students to take a few days' leave from their universities and go to villages where people belonging to lower strata of society were not allowed to exercise their right of franchise. He expressed the view that only the students could do this successfully. If they did not come forward, democracy was bound to prove a failure in the country. K.B. Sahay also exhorted the students and youth to come forward in large numbers and take over from the older generation the responsibility of reconstruction of the country. Similarly, Karpoori Thakur appealed to the opposition parties, lovers of democracy intellectuals, students and youth to declare a 'jehad' on the pattern of Gujarat for ending the Congress 'misrule' in Bihar.

Meanwhile, the Bihar bandh of January 21 was followed by a month of hectic consultations among the various groups taking part in the agitation. Joint Action Committees were set up and meetings were held. At this point polarisation of sorts started. The students soon started dividing between 'Leftist' and 'Rightist'. When the Patna University students Union organized a convention on February 17 and 18 to plan

a Gujarat type agitation in Bihar, the CPI student wing, All India Student Federation (AISF) and Marxist-Leninist students belonging to the Bihar Students Association (BSA) walked out of the meeting in protest against the insistence of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidhrathi Parishad (ABVP) on the need for 'Bharatiya Education' and 'equal distance in relation's with Russia and America. The Leftist students organised a separate conference on February 26, and 27, and formed the Bihar Chhatra Naujawan Sangharsh Morcha (BCNSM) with a long-term programme of struggle starting from March 16. Its demands were, inter alia, supply of foodgrains and essential commodities at subsidized rates, unemployment allowance to the educated unemployed youth and establishment of Students' Union in all colleges. The rest formed the Bihar Chhatra Sangharsh Samiti (BCSS), and decided to launch an organised struggle in protest against soaring prices, prevailing corruption, scarcity of essential commodities, supply of ration at the rate of 15 kg. per person per month, mounting unemployment and to press for adequate facilities and amenities for the students and change in the system of education to make it job-oriented. Thus, both the student organizations, Communist and non-Communist, started separate preparations to mobilise students and youths in favour of their agitations.


24. Indian Nation, March 16, 1974; Search Light, March 18, 1974.
Earlier, the students of Muzaffarpur organized a procession against price rise in the town on February 13. It turned violent and the mob smashed the windscreen of three trucks. The agitators also set fire to an empty bullock cart.

Again on February 16, the students staged a demonstration demanding reduction in the price of text books and concession in cinema tickets. They also formed a flying squad to check the distribution of essential commodities. The CPI workers of Muzaffarpur also organized an anti-price rise rally on February 26, in front of the District Magistrate's office.

On March 2, 1974, a meeting of businessmen, officials, students and youth of Muzaffarpur was called at Gandhi Peace Foundation to make available and to fix the price of vanaspati ghee for the coming 'Holi Festival'. This meeting was attended among others by the District Development Officer, District supply Officer and Sub-Divisional Officer. It was called by the newly formed 'Chhutra Yuva Manch', consisting of students and youth of different political parties apart from the people attached to the Gandhi Peace Foundation. The Manch then formed a flying squad and checked the stocks of wholesale traders and made vanaspati ghee available at Rs. 8.75 per kg. Before this, vanaspati ghee was either not available or was sold at Rs. 11.50 per kg. Encouraged by

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their success, the Manch tried hard to fix the prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities. The Manch called a meeting of officials and businessmen on March 13, in which traders besides the District Magistrate, representatives of several/Associations participated. But by then the traders had changed their mind and did not provide the previous prices of essential commodities to enable the meeting to fix a new and reasonable prices of essential commodities. On March 16, the Manch produced the list of prices prepared by the students. But the representatives of the business community perhaps were not prepared to accept the list and went away from the meeting on the pretext of the non-arrival of some of their important men. The City Magistrate called another meeting on March 17, but neither the officials nor the traders turned up at the meeting. At last, on March 19, 1974, the Manch announced the prices prepared by it at a general meeting. Thus the stage was set for a confrontation between the students and the businessmen.

Meanwhile, by the end of the first week of March, Chhatra sangharsh samities were formed in several districts of the state and demonstrations were staged under their banner. Their rallies in Sitamarhi and Bhagalpur were, particularly, impressive. The steering committee of the BCSS decided to gherao the Assembly on March 18 in favour of its demands.


28 Banwari, Aathwein Dashak ka Doosra Mohabhang", op. cit., p. 27.
In Patna, the students of Anugrah Narain College took out a procession and paraded in the main thoroughfares of the town on February 27 demanding the removal of the College Principal, formation of Students' Union and a complete change in the present educational system. On March 13, the students of Bihar University set fire to the University building and demanded the postponement of the dates of M.A. and M.Sc. examinations as classes had not been held for a full session. In protest against the Government's closure of Patna University, about two hundred students raided the University office on March 14 and forced out the Vice-Chancellor, officers and staff of the University, seized the keys and locked up all the doors and declared Bashishtha Narain Singh (B.N. Singh) a senior member of the BESS, as their Vice-Chancellor.

On March 4, the BCNSM gheraoed the District Magistrates of Patna, Barh, Patwah and Mokemah. They demanded that the authorities concede the pending demands of the Homeopathic, Ayurvedic, IIT and B.N. College students and hijacked nine buses of the state Transport. The BCSS also held a demonstration on March 4, before the residence of the Education Minister.

30. Ibid., March 14, 1974.
32. Jan shakti (Hindi)(Patna), March 5, 1974.
to press for its demands. The Minister assured the students that he would put their demands before the Cabinet.

The Youth Congress, too, organized demonstrations in the Chotanagpur area against soaring prices, scarcity of essential commodities, mounting unemployment and rampant corruption, black-marketing, hoarding and profiteering. At some places, processions and demonstrations took a violent turn. At Motihari, the students raided and ransacked the Railway station and the telephone exchange.

Thus, the events of February and early March 1974 were a clear signal of widespread unrest in Bihar. The Indian Nation commented, "leaving them to the care of frustration and hunger is neither socialism nor capitalism. The government ought to realise that the instinct for survival is compelling many of them to resort to extremist measures. What is happening at present may be just a rehearsal of what may come on a bigger scale in the near future if the government takes no steps to prevent catastrophe". Taking the above mentioned factors into account, it is surprising, as to what happened on March 18, 1974, could not occur earlier in Patna. Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, Bhola Prasad Singh, Kapildeo Singh and Karpoori Thakur all admit that rising prices,


34. Gianshyam shah, op. cit., p. 89.

35. Indian Nation (Editorial), March 8, 1974.
mounting unemployment amongst the educated youths, irrelevance
of present day education, non-implementation of the Congress
promises to the people, apart from corruption, favouritism,
and nepotism in the administration were the most important
causes that gave rise to the protest movement in Bihar.
In the opinion of Harihar Prasad Singh and Krishna Kant
Singh, "general deterioration in every aspects of life and
frustration among the people compelled the people to rise
in revolt."

The Turning Point: 18th March 1974

On March 16, BCWSM organized processions before the
Collectorates all over the state to press their demands
which included checking price rise, implementation of land
reform measures, closure of university for a year and state
takeover of the universities. 'Bihar bhi Gujarat Banega' was
their main slogan. The processionists clashed with the
police at Arrah, Motihari, Sitamarhi, Begusarai, Darbhanga
and other places. There took place a ding dong battle,
lasting several hours, between the processionists and armed
police in Bettiah in which at least seven were killed and
fifty-five injured. In Patna, the members of the Morcha
clashed with the police before the residence of the Education
Minister. The demonstrators brickbatted the residence
of the Minister and the police burst tear-gas shells. When
the Minister came out to meet them, he was manhandled and
his 'kurta' was torn up. The demonstrators also brickbatted the offices of the Indian Nation, Search Light, Aryavarta, Pradeep and Press Trust of India.

On March 18, the BCSS organized a gherao of the Assembly and the Governor to prevent him from addressing the Joint Session of the Legislature. The BCSS programme for the gherao of the Assembly was jointly sponsored by different student and youth organizations, such as the Youth Wing of the Congress (O), ABVP, TSS, Samajwadi Yuwajana Sabha (SYS), Bihar State students' council, Bharatiya Krantikari Yuvak Sangh and Bharatiya Yuva Sabha. The BCNSM did not oppose the 18th March programme, but asked its members and supporters not to participate in it. In a joint statement on March 17, the members of the BCSS, the President of the Patna University Students' Union, Lallu Prasad Yadav and the President of the Bihar Chhatra parishad, Narendra Kumar Singh, warned politicians not to involve the students in the game of power politics. They asked them to keep their hands off "tomorrow's gherao and demonstration before the Bihar Legislature". They said that politicians would not be allowed to participate in the demonstration because their main object is to gherao the Governor, Ministers and MLAs, belonging to all political parties. "Our agitation is against the high prices, rampant


corruption and mounting unemployment among the education youth.

On March 18, 'tens of thousands students' from Patna and other parts of the state picketed the Assembly building in an attempt to prevent the Governor from opening the budget session. The Governor, however, changed the route and eluded them. But direct confrontation between the police and the students took place near the Assembly. The police responded with tear-gas shells and charged with long steel-tipped bamboo sticks. The students pushed back from the Assembly went on a rampage through the town looting and setting fire to public buildings, hotels and shops. A mob attacked newspaper offices and set fire to the offices of the English daily search Light and the Hindi daily Pradeep, both housed in the same building. The police themselves let loose a reign of terror against the BCSS demonstrators. At least five persons were reported to have been killed and scores injured in police firing, and a dusk to dawn curfew was imposed in Patna. In Gaya, the CRPF and BSF and other para-military personnel entered houses and brutally attacked innocent citizens. Almost the entire armed forces available to the state Government had been pressed into service to 'protect' the Assembly, the Secretariat and the 'Raj Bhawan' and no protection was provided by authority to newspaper offices, government offices or private buildings. The Indian Nation

38. Ibid.
and the Aryavarta would have met the same fate, if their workers had not risked their lives to save them.

The incidents of March 18 oiled the wheel of agitation and it spread to different parts of the state. On the following day disturbances took place in Ranchi, Dhanbad, Chapra, Saharasa, Gaya, Madhapura, Hazaribagh and Monghyr. Railway stations, Post-offices, Courts, State dispensaries and other buildings were the main targets of attack. In Bhagalpur, a bomb was thrown on the fire brigade office, and two fish-plates on the main railway line between Manai and Mahesh Kunt stations were removed. By March 20, curfew was imposed on eleven towns - Patna, Ranchi, Bihar Sharif, Jahanabad, Gaya, Monghyr, Chapra, Bettiah, Bhagalpur, Giridih and Chaibasa. On March 20 alone four persons were reported killed when the police opened fire on mobs, which attacked and set fire to Railway stations and rolling stocks in Monghyr and Sitamarhi districts. By March 25, according to the police sources, 1,800 people were arrested, 28 killed and 86 were injured in shooting incidents. Riots police and border guards poured into Bihar from the neighbouring states to add to the tens of thousands already on duty. The army

41. Indian Nation (Editorial), March 20, 1974.
43. Times, March 21, 1974.
44. Guardian (London), March 26, 1974.
was called out at several places and ordered to shoot at sight.

The trouble also spread to rural areas. A village Post-office in Jagdishpur was attacked. At Garhan some office papers were destroyed. Two Post-offices in Manjhaul village in Begusarai district and Negla village were heavily brickbatted. Office records were thrown into a well. Block Officers at Hussainabad, Majhiwad and Chainpur were attacked.

Support for students came from Jaya Prakash Narain, who advised the Bihar Chief Minister Abdul Ghafoor to step down for his 'inept handling of the situation'. Commenting on the March 18 incident, JP said in a statement, on March 20, that 'in any democratic country after such a monumental failure of the administration as Patna witnessed on Monday last, (i.e. March 18) the Government would have resigned. But in this country we are pastmasters in covering up things and making alibis and scapegoats'. He further added that, 'Not only has the search light, that beacon of the freedom movement, been destroyed, but much else. It is Bihar's very soul that is torn and bleeding today. I wonder if Bihar would be allowed to be destroyed.


In protest against the police atrocities, indiscriminate arrest of students and refusal to allow a silent procession on March 21, the BCSS gave a call for Bihar bund on March 23. Political demands - resignation of the Ministry and dissolution of the Assembly - came to be raised only after this. On March 29, the BCSS threatened to launch a movement "to paralyse the Government" if the Ministry headed by Ghafoor did not submit its resignation by April 8. It also demanded immediate reopening of the colleges, withdrawal of the police forces, unconditional release of all students and payment of compensation to families of the victims of police-firing.

By this time the agitation was joined by college girls, housewives, lawyers, doctors, teachers, artists and other sections of the urban middle class. Different groups organized processions, observed fast or gheraoed offices and Congress leaders. Simultaneously, violent incidents such as throwing of crackers, setting fires to public buildings, looting of shops and brickbatting of the police and Government offices continued at several places. Public Transport - symbol of Government authority - was a traditional target.

Uptil now, JP was not directly involved in the student agitation. However, on March 30, he warned the Government that "I cannot remain a silent spectator of misgovernment, corruption and the rest whether in Patna, Delhi or elsewhere".

47. Indian Nation, March 30, 1974.
I have decided to fight corruption and misgovernment and black-marketing, profiteering and hoarding, to fight for overhaul of educational system and real people's democracy. He urged the Government to understand that violence was "brewing in the very heart of the people" and that anger of the people was "reaching white heat on account of their misery that is growing day-by-day". He further warned the Government that if it continued to suppress peaceful movement, he will lead a demonstration of shakti saniks, students and other citizens despite his poor health. "This shall be the beginning. The rest will follow". On April 6, the president of the Patna University Students' Union along with some student leaders met the Sarvodaya leader and requested him to take over the leadership of the movement. They assured him that they would abide by his guidance and follow his direction. JP, sympathetic to the students, had been watching the events in agony and so he agreed to lead the movement.

The student-led agitation in Bihar entered a new and decisive stage on April 8 with JP leading a silent procession of one thousand people of satyagrahis, Chhatra Sangharsh-led youth and students, teachers and Sarvodaya workers in Patna in support of the 25-day old agitation against corruption, high prices and alleged police atrocities. The processionists

48. **Times of India** (New Delhi); **Sunday Standard** (New Delhi), March 31, 1974.

49. **Search Light and Indian Nation**, April 7, 1974.
had covered their mouths with saffron-coloured scarves and tied their hands on their back. Their slogans depicted on playcards were: "Lathi, Goli, Hinsa, Loot - Nahin Kisika Iski Choot" (No one has got the licence to wield lathi, bullet and indulge in violence and loot); "Manhgai, Berozgari, Bharashtachar - Satta Hi Hai Jimmedar" (The administration is responsible for price rise, unemployment and corruption); "Chhubadha Hirdaya Hai - Band Zaben" (Hearts are embittered but tongues are tied). A new slogan emphasising non-violence was also raised: "Hamla Chahe Jaisa Ho - Hath Hamara Nahin Utega" (Whatever be the form of attack, we shall not raise our hands in retaliation). Silent processions of teachers and students were also taken out at Gaya, Motihari, Dhanbad, Sitamarhi and other district headquarters to express solidarity with the BCSS. The Sangharsh Samiti reiterated its earlier decision to launch "Paralyse-the-Government" movement from April 9 to press their demands.

Several programmes such as observing 'Black Day', 'Janata Curfew', 'Dharnas', taking out 'Silent Processions', 'Torch Processions' etc. also continued throughout April. Checking prices, unearthing hoarding, distributing essential commodities at fixed prices etc. also continued in some towns of the state. General enthusiasm was at its peak. It may be

50. Banwari, "Nagrik ki Garima", Dinpan, April 16-22, 1978, p. 27; Search Light, April 9, 1974; Motherland and Hindustan Times (New Delhi), April 9, 1974.
noted that teachers, engineers, non-gazetted employees etc. were also fighting for the redress of their grievances. This also added to the surging tempo of the agitation.

Thus, what began in the third week of March in Bihar as a purely grievance-oriented non-political agitation by students, centering round supply of foodgrains and text-books and stationery had snowballed into a people's movement against corruption, inflation spiral and foodgrain scarcity with the ultimate aim of bring about the resignation of the Ghafoor Ministry, dissolution of the Bihar Assembly leading to a fresh election and a moral revolution. Political leaders also joined the stir. Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, a former Chief Minister and a Congress leader, called for the resignation of the Ghafoor Ministry and the dissolution of the State Assembly. Karpoori Thakur also supported the agitation. However, it was JP who provided teeth to the movement. He mobilised hundreds of people, raised several issues and launched several programmes. After June 5, 1974, JP announced "Total Revolution" and an "all round revolution" i.e. social, economic, political, moral and cultural revolution as the ultimate objective of the movement. According to JP, "This struggle is not for any petty or small aims. It is a revolutionary movement. He stressed "the internal and external change, changing the

entire society from within and also from the outside, individuals as well as institutions."

JP, however, did not unfold the various stages of the revolution. In his opinion, a political party starts with a programme, policy statements and so on:

"This is not a political party that it should have a policy statement and a detailed blueprint of all the steps leading to revolution. That short of rising is meaningless and impractical. This is a people's movement started by the students who are still carrying its main burden. A really revolutionary movement involving the people has to go step by step. The next step has to be formulated according to the situation as it develops with each step."

It is to be noted that the movement started with twelve demands; eight of them were related wholly to students' issues. Four other dealt with issues of wider interests affecting the people. These were the basic demands but in the opinion of the sarvodaya leader, it was not possible to fulfil them without complete political, economic and social transformation in society. "You cannot keep everything as it is today and say that you will remove corruption, remove unemployment and so on. Therefore, you must think in terms of social change, administrative change, political change, cultural change and so on. In fact, this is a beginning of

a social revolution that will touch all aspects of social life and even individual life. "This struggle in Bihar is not just a flash in the pan of history, but a continuing process of revolutionary changes. That is why I have called it a struggle for total revolution". Nevertheless, he gave a long list of proposals: "agricultural development, equitable landownership, application of appropriate technology to agriculture, such as improved labour-intensive tools and gadgets of which the gobar gas plant is a fine example, development of domestic and rural industries and the widest possible spread of small industries, regional planning and development, political and administrative decentralization of a kind qualitatively and materially different from the present Congress decentralization that we have in the shape of gram panchayats, panchayat samitis and Zila Parishad, etc. drastic educational reforms to destroy its elitist character and to relate it to the problems of socio-economic development and the lives of the students themselves, dismantling the hierarchical structure of Hindu society and dismantling also the economic hierarchical structures in a manner that will not discourage production or create a privileged class of managerial bureaucracy linked with the political and administrative class that we have today".


56. Everyman's, December 1, 1974, p. 1.

57. Ibid., p. 5.
He further added that:

"We want to reshape the economic policy and administration of the state so that young men, both educated and uneducated, may secure gainful employment, peasants acquire ownership over the land they till and also get adequate facilities like water, fertilizer to improve the yield from it and people working in offices, factories and mines become free from the scourge of inflation and also secure their due place in the management of the concerns in which they are engaged". 58

The Issues

Initially, the movement started with twelve demands, but new ones were added from time to time, while some got priority, some others remained in the background.

Price Rise

Price rise was one of the most glaring of the Ministry's failures. Not only that, essential commodities had a tendency to disappear from the market overnight. These were among the main grievances that triggered of the agitation. The state was facing acute shortage of foodgrains and the government had failed to check hoarding, blackmarketing and profiteering. The fair price shops were sporting nothing except signboards in most part of the state, excepting big towns like Patna, Ranchi and Jamshedpur and the industrial and colliery belt. The failure to keep the fair price shops

58. Ibid., January 19, 1975, p. 3.
59. Ibid., May 18, 1974, p. 6.
going in rural areas had pushed up prices of foodgrains far beyond the capacity of people deprived even of seasonal employment in the fields on account of flood and drought. The people demanded unearthing of hoarded commodities and equitable distribution of essential commodities at fixed prices. The Government and its authorities were charged with protecting the black-marketeers and hoarders. JP held the Government responsible for the hardships experienced by the common people.

**Students' Problems**

As already mentioned most of the demands of the students in the early phase of the movement were related to their educational problems. One set of demands concerned with students' future after they had ceased to be students. They demanded employment-oriented education, assurance of employment, unemployment allowance, provision of bank loans to the educated unemployed for starting industries etc. Other demands related to their educational facilities. They demanded increase in the number of scholarships and supply of books, stationery, food etc. at cheaper rates. They also demanded provision for proper hostel facilities, representation of students in policy making bodies of the universities such as the senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council, setting up of students' Union in every college, decentralization of examinations, removal of percentage restrictions for Inter science students appearing in competitive examination for
admission to medical colleges, combining of marks in written papers and practical etc. To these demands was added the demand for concessional rates in bus fares and cinema tickets etc.

These demands were further broadened by JP. He said that the present system of education had 'outlived' its utility. After completing their studies "what the students get in the name of education equips them for nothing but salaries and white collar jobs. This is true of technical education as well. what they seek is the security of jobs or security of bondage in order". In his view, "the first requirement of a better and more meaningful education is the presence among youngmen and women a sincere desire for knowledge and skills". He said, "I have been appalled to find that only the small percentage of our students today are charged with such desire. The rest want nothing more than a degree, which is prized not for its educational but for commercial value. A degree for most students is a mere passport to employment. Guardians and parents, too, have the same attitude towards education and degree". He was in

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60. Ghanshyam Shah, op. cit., p. 106.
favour of delinking education with employment and appealed to the students to discard their present attitude toward education. "No educational reform of a basic nature is possible unless either (i) degrees are abolished or (ii) the degrees are delinked from employment".

Corruption

One of the most important issues of the Bihar movement was corruption. For years Bihar had been known as the most corrupt and caste-ridden state in India. In the 1967 elections, the opposition parties, the teachers and the students made it a major issue in their campaign against the Congress regime. The first United Front Government instituted an enquiry commission to go into the charges of corruption against some of the Congress Ministers. The Shoshit Dal Government and the SSP-led SVD Government also set up similar enquiry commissions to probe into the charges of corruption against some of the leading politicians of the state. In such a situation it was not shocking if the students and JP made corruption a central issue of their movement. According to JP, "In Bihar corruption is at least ten times greater than in Gujarat". Therefore, he warned that "if it is not checked, the whole country will be drowned in the bog of corruption".

64. Everyman's, September 14, 1974, p. 5.
65. Ibid., June 1, 1974, p. 5.
A sarvodaya leader believed that "unless corruption is brought under control even the best socio-economic policies will go wrong and no 'ism', social or any other, can have a chance".

"Corruption is prevalent not only in the government but in the whole system. It is not only a moral question, it touches the very bread of the people. Political corruption, in his view, was the worst form of corruption because it bred many other forms. According to him, the Central Government was the Gangotri, the fountainhead of corruption. He, however, assured the business community that the movement was not against them because he did not believe that businessmen were responsible for corruption. The movement was against the Government because it was the licence-and-quota policy of the Government which by forcing them to give money to politicians, made them corrupt.

**Democracy, Dictatorship and Election**

Indian democracy, according to JP, was in-heading for ruin in its present state of affairs. "The utter confusion, lack of direction and purposelessness, galloping corruption..."

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69. *Everyman's*, June 1, 1974, p. 5.
at all levels of politics and Government may suit to Prime
Minister Mrs. Gandhi's style of leadership but it spells
ruin for the Congress as a democratic organization and democracy
itself. He was of the opinion that "behind the facade of
democracy the country is slowly moving towards dictatorship.
"Even the state Governments under Congress-rule, today, has
been reduced to the status of municipal councils due to the
dominating power of the Prime Minister", said the sarvoday
leader. He felt that the Congress seemed to be consciously
led towards the 'democratic centralism' a Soviet euphemism
for dictatorship. During the course of movement, he accused
the ruling party and the Prime Minister of working for dicta-
torship. He protested against the repressive measures taken
to curb the fundamental rights of the people. JP and his
colleagues felt that the weakening of democracy in the country
reached the point where the mechanism of self-correction has
completely broken down. It is, therefore, necessary that the
people - the real masters - should rise and take recourse to
peaceful means to assert themselves and bend the powers that
be to their will. This what he called the control of 'Lokshakti'
over the 'Rajshakti'.

71. Indian Express and Motherland, April 1, 1974.
74. Indian Express and Motherland, April 1, 1974.
75. Everyman's, December 8, 1974, p. 7.
JP felt that "democratic process, today, is restricted, distorted and vulgarised". "Elections are today neither free nor fair. Election officers are bribed or threatened or influenced by caste considerations. Booth capturing, bogus voting and similar actions follow". He wanted the electoral system be changed radically. Under the present system, "the unlimited use of money, large-scale impersonation, use of force to prevent the weakest sections from exercising their franchise, abuse of electoral machinery, hood-winking of the people, particularly the poor and the unsophisticated, by attractive and false promises etc. have robbed the elections of much of their value and eroded the people's faith in them. If this loss of faith persists and deepen, we would soon have a dictatorship in this country". But "let no one think that the ruling party alone has been guilty of distortion of electoral process. Whichever party, irrespective of its ideology, that has found possible to indulge in any of the corruption or illegal methods, has not hesitated from resorting to it on the ground that they are fighting elections to win and not to lose". He wanted the elections to be "genuinely free by curbing money power and creating people's power in its place by giving the people of the constituency

76. Ibid., June 29, 1974, p. 1.


78. Everyman's, April 20, 1974, p. 6.
the dominant role in the selection of candidates for these elections. "Election expenses should be curtailed if you want that a poor candidate, a peasant or a worker may contest elections, a party of the poor may set up its candidates. JP also wanted that elected representatives should be responsible to the electorate. "What I want is that those who represent the people in the legislatures should be under the control of the people, that they should not be masters but their servants". For this purpose he suggested the inclusion of the right of recall in the electoral law.

**dissolution of the Assembly**

The resignation of the Ministry and the dissolution of the Bihar Assembly did not form part of the original twelve demands of the students. As a matter of fact, when the dissolution demand was first raised by the BCSS, JP advised them not be rash and not to try to imitate Gujarat. He made it clear that he was not interested in this or that Ministry being replaced or the Assembly being dissolved. "These are partisan aims and their achievement will make little difference. It would be like replacing Tweedledum.

79. Ibid., January 19, 1975, p. 3.

80. Ibid., June 22, 1974, p. 9; Indian Nation, June 6, 1974.


with Tweedledom* It was only (a) when the political and administrative corruption in the state showed no signs of abatement despite the mounting opposition to it; (b) when the Bihar Government remained paralysed for months due to undifying factional and infighting among Congress legislators and leaders, to the irreparable damage to the people's interests; (c) when the Bihar Government stumbled from one set of misdeeds and failures to another in dealing with the peaceful movement of the Bihar students and people that it became inevitable that the demand or the resignation of the Ministry and dissolution of the Assembly, under whose authority the Ministry functions, should be raised and should gather force and momentum. The events that were decisive for him were: (a) the unwarranted, unprovoked and unjustified Gaya firings and the (b) Abraham Committee's report declaring, according to the Press reports, all the three firings at Gaya to be fully justified. "The Assembly by endorsing the Government's repressive measures became a symbol of dishonesty. It gave an apparent popular sanction to the Government which the people would never endorse". Had the Assembly censured


85. Ibid.

the Bihar Government for its inefficiency, corruption, mismanagement of the people's affairs and its wrongs and misdeeds and established a cleaner and better government, the situation would have been very different. But the Assembly became the source of "all sins that the Government has committed. That's why the Ministry must go. The Assembly must go".

JP felt that the Assembly was not performing its functions, the Congress High Command having reduced it "to an unnecessary, burdensome and costly farce". It had abdicated its legislative function to the Executive which ruled the State with the help of Ordinances. The Bihar Government has established a record in this respect having enacted no less than 176 ordinances within a year. Therefore, JP said, "Bihar MLAs have no moral and political authority to represent their constituents". "What the Assembly members were guilty of was nothing short of betrayal of the mandate which they received in 1972 from their electorate". They should, therefore, go to the electorate and seek their votes.

87. J.P. Narayan, Bihar Movement, Indian Express, op.cit.
88. Everyman's, June 22, 1974, p.9; Indian Nation, June 6, 1974.
89. Ibid.
90. Everyman's, January 19, 1975, p. 3.
91. Ibid., May 18, 1974, p. 3.
92. Indian Express, June 14, 1974.
JP quoted A.G. Noorani's article, published in the *Sunday Standard* a few days ago, in which Noorani had quoted Lacey, according to whom "dissolution in essence is an appeal from the legal to the political sovereign". The people are the political sovereign, the supreme power, and therefore they had the right to ask for the dissolution of the Assembly. As regards the MLAs having been given a mandate of five years and that nobody had the right to ask them to resign earlier, the Sarvodaya leader maintained that there being no "right to recall" in our constitution and the democratic institutions and the process having been so abused and distorted, the people have no alternative except to demand the resignation of their representatives if and when they forfeit their confidence. People can not be expected to wait for five years and bear everything in silence even if things became intolerable. JP's contention got support from an important journalist, Sham Lal, according to whom, "A majority secured at polls only gives the winning party a mandate to serve the people and provide them food, cloth, shelter and education. It does not give it the right to betray the people and then expect to wait for another three or five years before they can get a chance to secure redress for the wrongs they suffer".

94. *Indian Express*, June 14, 1974.
Thus, the agitation which began as non-political centering round the educational and economic issues became political. Dissolution of the Assembly became the all important issue of the movement and other aspects and other objectives like fighting corruption and black marketing, dehoarding, bringing about educational reform etc. receded to the background. This was accepted by JP himself. "Dissolution of the Assembly and the resignation of the Ministry is the first step. When this first step is over, the direction and the character of the movement will change and it will become constructive. At present, it is, undoubtedly, agitational and confrontational but inevitably so".

Programmes

Several programmes were chalked out and launched, keeping in view the requirement of the movement. They can be placed under two important categories: (1) People's awakening or mobilising programmes; (2) Constructive or issue-oriented programmes.

Awakening

The programmes of people's awakening included organising processions, demonstrations, rallies, public meetings and undertaking fasts to mobilise the people and explain to them the programmes and their objectives through speeches and distribution and sale of literature.

96. N.S. Jagannathan, op. cit.
There had been three major processions, up to the declaration of Emergency, on June 5 and on November 4, 1974 and on March 18, 1975. They all were massive though the strength of each successive procession was smaller in size because of the repressive measures of the Government.

On June 5, Patna witnessed an unprecedented mass upsurge when a five-kilo metre long procession led by JP submitted to the Governor a truckload of memoranda with about 10 million signatures and thumb impressions of voters collected from different constituencies demanding the resignation of the Ghafoor Ministry and dissolution of the Assembly. The tail end of the procession was still at its originating point at Gandhi Maidan when the vanguard reached the Rajbhawan. This was done in spite of the active hostility of the ruling party. What was worse, shots were fired at the procession from a flat, which housed the office of the 'Indira Brigade' - a pro-Congress militant organization. The flat was booked in the name of Phulena Rai, a Congress MLA. Despite all this the processionists, faithful to their pledge remained peaceful.

On November 4, 1974 the BCSS and the Bihar Jana Sangharsh Samiti (BJSS) planned to organize a procession and gherao the Ministers to demand their resignation. On the other hand, the Government took all measures to foil the programme. Barricades were put up in and around Patna upto

97. Indian Express and Motherland, June 6, 1974; Ghanshyam Shah, op. cit., p. 111.
a radius of about 30 miles to prevent people from all over
the state from joining the programme; fifty-eight trains on
the Eastern Railway were cancelled, all steamers on the
Ganga and several state Transport buses stopped plying; a
number of private vehicles and public carriers were also
impounded by the Government. About 3,000 persons had been
arrested by the evening of November 3, 1974.

Despite all the repressive measures a big procession
of students, youth, Sarvodaya workers and members of political
parties, was led by JP from Gandhi Maidan. Police burst
several rounds of tear-gas shells and resorted to both mild
and severe lathi charges at a number of places to stop the
processionists. JP himself received a lathi blow on his
head, the second blow aimed at him was taken on his arm by
Nanaji Deshmukh, the next was stopped by Baburao Chandavar,
a Sarvodaya worker. JP's eyes and throat were affected by
tear gas. Yet JP along with the processionist managed to
reach the Secretariat. Commenting on this process, the
Indian Nation wrote in its editorial, "that in spite of the
heaviest police bandobast in the history of the state,
barricades and restrictions and what not, JP could take out
a big procession in Patna goes to prove that he is a force
to reckon with. Lakhs of rupees spent on the security
arrangements could very well go for the expansion of
irrigation facilities?"

98. Ghanshyam shah, op. cit., p. 112.
It is to be noted, however, that all the three processions focussed on one political issue: the dissolution of the Assembly. Out of the 25 slogans prescribed for June 5 procession, 11 were of political nature, 6 related to Government repression, 2 concerned corruption, 2 slogans concerned with price rise, 2 demanded changes in the education system and 2 asked people to be ready to fight and sacrifice. On November 4, none of the slogans was related to economic issues. "The Police is our brother, we are not fighting against them", was introduced on November 4. Similar slogans were repeated at March 18, 1975 procession.

August 1 was observed as "Anti-Corruption Day" in Patna, thousands of men and women took the pledge to end corruption standing in pouring rain at a meeting addressed by JP. August 9 to 15 was observed as 'Total Revolution Week'. August 15 was observed as 'People's Freedom Day' and January 26, 1975 was celebrated as 'People's Republic Day'. On both these occasions different CSSS and JSSS organized separate flag-hoistation programmes. At some places flags were unhurled by rickshaw pullers.

Anti-Repression Day or Black Day was observed on August 23 and November 11 against police atrocities. Black flags were hoisted on some buildings and students, youth, members of the political parties and Sarvodaya workers wore

100. Ghanshyam Shah, op. cit., p. 112.
black badges. JP appealed all to observe a 'dawn-to-dusk fast' and did it himself at Patna along with a batch of 180 followers. In July and September, groups of satyagrahis went on fast in front of the Assembly gate, demanding the dissolution of the Assembly. This was followed at district and sub-divisional headquarters and at some places including blocs.

Meetings were also held to explain the purposes and the issues involved in the movement and also to give instructions regarding future programmes. JP himself toured and addressed meetings in districts and sub-divisional towns and invariably attracted large crowds. On June 5 and November 19 his meetings at Gandhi Maidan in Patna were among the biggest in the history of the state. The Indian Nation commenting on the November meeting said:

"For two reasons the public meeting addressed by JP was of great significance. It demonstrated, if any demonstration was necessary, that the counter-offensive launched by the Congress and the CPI has made no impact whatsoever on the minds of the people who are under the magic spell of the magnetic personality of JP. With sheer numerical weight, the Gandhi Maidan meeting of the agitationists has more than neutralized the impact of the rally held by the Congress Party. In making a comparison between the two one should not forget that while the Congress rally was a laboured affair, the other one was to a great extent, effortless, spontaneous."

Several important leaders belonging to different Opposition parties also addressed meetings in different

parts of the state. student leaders, sarvodaya workers, 
teachers, artists, writers organized street corner meetings 
in cities and towns to explain the need and purpose of the 
agitation. But this did not continue for long.

Leaflets, generally issued by the BCSS and local CSSS 
and JSSS were the common means of communicating programmes, 
instructions and JP's appeal.

Issue-oriented Programmes

The issue-oriented programmes can be divided into two 
categories as suggested by JP himself: (1) Struggle Programmes, 
involving confrontation with the authority, and (2) Constructive Activities.

Struggle Programmes: Several Satyagrahas were launched as 
part of the struggle programme, demanding 
the dissolution of the Assembly. The largest of these was 
the Satyagrah from June 7 to 12. Every day a batch of Satyagrahis, enrolled in advance by the BCSS, sat at the gates of 
the State Assembly and the secretariat and tried to prevent 
the MLAs from attending the Assembly. On June 13, some of 
the volunteers manhandled five legislators and tore their 
clothes while they were going to the Assembly. However, JP 
tendered personal apology for the incident.

103. Everyman's, May 18, 1974, p. 4.
In October and November, 1974, the agitators gheraoed government offices to paralyse their working. On November 4, the Ministers were gheraoed. This programme often led to confrontations between the agitators and the police. Bandh was an attractive programme for the students and the youth. The Bihar bandh call between October 3 and 5, 1974, was a complete success. Normal life all over the state, except in some industrial towns or south Bihar, remained paralysed on all the three days; all shops remained closed, buses, rickshaws, cars etc. went off the roads, law courts wore a deserted look, Government offices worked partially, train services on many sections of the North-Eastern Railways were disrupted, the tracks at several places having been removed, the telecommunication system was snapped and some stations gheraoed by the supporters of bandh. JP led the Satyagraha at the Secretariat gate on October 3 and 4. Confrontation between the Central Reserved police (CRP) and the youth took place at several places. About 2,500 persons were arrested and 13 persons, according to official sources, were killed. Dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed in several towns, including Patna. Bihar became normal only after October 7, 1974.

The 'Dissolve Assembly Week' from May 8, 1974 was observed by the BCSS and BJSS. JP wrote an open letter to the MLAs asking them to resign in the interest of "good, 

clean and efficient government". To the Opposition MLAs he said, "So, if you Opposition MLAs, continue to stick to your seats in the Assembly, you not only expose your erstwhile support as being hollow, but also become a party to all the wrongs perpetrated by the Bihar government". The Opposition parties also asked their MLAs to resign from the Assembly. About 40 opposition MLAs did so but many defied the directive. The SSP, the SP, the Congress(o) and the Jan Sangh, who were supporting the movement were split into two. Later some of them joined the Congress. It was a pity that the movement which had for its objects the overhauling the entire political system resulted in splitting the entire opposition.

No-Tax Campaign

In order to paralyse the Government, SP asked the people in July, 1974 not to pay taxes. But the programme did not receive any response in urban areas though a few farmers did not pay the land revenue or the levy to the Government. Picketing of liquor shops was part of no-tax campaign. But the Government and the liquor contractors joined forces, and the students were unable to resist the police and privately hired goondas of the shopkeepers. So, the picketing programme was abandoned. Similarly, the stir against cinema houses was also abandoned.

105. Everyman's, May 18, 1974, p. 4.
107. Ibid.
Jamata Sarkar

Soon after the three-day bandh in October, 1974, JP called upon the people to set up "People's Assembly and parallel Government" if the Assembly was not dissolved by a deadline "to be set up in near future". The CSSs and the JSSs were to set up candidates and hold elections to the Peoples Assembly. Soon after JP's announcement, reports of the formation of parallel government in three or four blocks were received. However, a reporter of the Indian Nation, who visited the Warsaliganj block in Nawada district (known to be running a parallel government) reported: "supporters and active workers of JP-led agitation in Nawada are more amused than jubilant over the reported claim of formation of a "parallel Jamata Government" in the district. At Warsaliganj this reporter could not locate a single active worker of the Action Committee. Its office was also locked ... Krishna Murari (16) is a student of class eleven in the school and he said he had heard of such a government formed by JP. In answer to a question whether such an institution existed at Warsaliganj, he said: "Not here, but at Patna under JP's leadership".

In January, 1975, JP gave the programme of the Jamata Sarkar. It was to be formed from the village upwards. It was decided to form Jamata Sarkar in 150 blocks out of the

587 blocks in the State, by the end of March, 1975. In May, the CSS decided to set up Janata Sarkar in 300 blocks but only a few days later JP declared in Madras that Janata Sarkar would cover the entire Bihar by July. However, by the end of March, 1975, only 18 blocks were declared to have formed Janata Sarkar. In many of the villages of these blocks CSS and JSS had not been formed. The members of the block level Janata Sarkar were not elected by anyone. They were mostly from the dominant sections of society. In Chandi Block, for instance, the landed class had formed in January, 1974 a Kisan Sangh to protect the interests of Kisans. The governing board of the Sangh converted itself into Jana Sangharsh Samiti which was later converted into Janata Sarkar. 4 of 18 Janata Sarkars had become inactive within two months of their formation.

Elections

JP and the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi met on November 1, 1974 but they could not reach an agreement on the dissolution of the Bihar Assembly. Mrs. Gandhi said that JP should wait till the next elections to know the will of the people. JP announced in his November meeting at Gandhi


Maidan that, "he has accepted the challenge of the Prime Minister to show at the next general elections what the Bihar people want". He said, "Election will be part of the struggle. So the context will be only between two parties - one of those who support the struggle and the other of those who oppose it". He appealed the people to ensure the victory of 'their candidates' against Congress candidates. He said, "Whoever may be the candidate adopted or supported by the committee, students' and people's, you have accepted the challenge. Now it will be for you to act". Thus, by the end of 1974, the emphasis shifted from the dissolution of the Assembly to the defeat of the Congress at the polls.

**Constructive programmes**

Many tasks had been outlined for students, youth and others who had joined the movement. Some of the programmes were:

1. Checking corruption and bribery in Government offices in cooperation with officials if possible. Volunteers will not violate any law. Their teams will take turns to watch that the people are not harrassed and not forced to pay bribes;

114. Ibid., August 17, 1974, p. 11.
2. picketing of liquor shops;
3. Checking blackmarketing and hoarding of essential goods. Popular support should be mobilised in this task to see that proper action is taken officially in cases detected by the volunteers;
4. Checking irregularities of ration shops and getting ration cards issued to the homeless;
5. Correction of electoral rolls and voters' education;
6. (a) securing homestead rights for Harijans and others in villages;
   (b) Assuring their legal rights to sharecroppers. Detecting false and benami land mutations in the villages.
   (c) volunteers from Agricultural colleges and also others with a little training should teach farmers to make compost manure and also manufacturing cowdung-gas requiring little investment;
7. studying the problems of Harijans, landless workers and other workers both in towns and villages;
8. vaccination to be done by medical college students. They will later have to undertake innoculation against cholera. They should also teach the people simple rules about hygiene, sanitation, clearing, water to make it for drinking and nutrition;
9. women can generally participate in all the programmes, but they should also engage in some tasks specially suited to them, namely picketing liquor shops, visiting hospitals and also visiting women prisoners arrested
in connection with the movement. They can also help in checking irregularities in ration shops.

10. Distribution of literature and running study and discussion centres. Adult education not of the traditional type but in a way suited to Indian conditions.

It may be noted that JP called upon the people to launch a war against three sins - profiteering, hoarding and blackmarketing. However, this fight was confined to unearth ing ghost ration cards and negotiating with traders and Government officials to fix prices. In the beginning, the students unearthed hoarded goods and fixed prices of essential commodities at Muzaffarpur, Patna and in some other towns. Flying squads were also set up for this purpose. After sometime this was abandoned. The Indian Nation reported: "Unscrupulous wholesalers and retail dealers are trying to defeat the commendable scheme to end hoarding and profiteering. They are openly flouting the assurance they gave to the District Magistrates to seal things at the mutually agreed rates. Essential commodities have either gone underground or one being sold at blackmarket rates". The agitators tried to implement the agreed rates of essential commodities. In such cases, businessmen, their hired goondas and police beat up the boys. But the boys had no programme and organization to back their struggle. Further, sons and relatives of

traders had infiltrated the movement and sidetracked it. The *Times of India* reported that "there is some talk that hoarders and profiteers have been financing the students. Significantly, the godowns owned by profiteering wholesalers or shops belonging to retailers who raised prices without any reason have not been picketed by students".

Another important constructive programme, namely, speedier implementation of land ceiling and Bataidari laws and distribution of legal documents for homestead land to Harijans remained unimplemented. Similarly, the item regarding the problems of workers in towns and villages remained untouched.

In response to *JP*'s call, some students from different parts of the state visited villages in July and August, 1974. But after some weeks they returned home and resumed their studies complaining that they did not have any concrete programme for sustained work. In 1975 students participated in flood relief work and vaccination programme against cholera.

To attack the caste system, *JP* asked the high caste boys to give up the practice of wearing the sacred thread.

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some boys followed it and threw their thread in public meetings but it caused some resentment among the orthodox Hindus. According to Shivanand Tiwari, an important leader of the steering Committee of the BCSS, JP was prevented from speaking against this practice. The political parties also pleaded against it on the plea that it would jeopardise their chances in the elections. Finally, JP had to yield. Another programmes of social reform also failed to evoke favourable response. Though JP pleaded that taking and giving of dowry led to corruption, he failed to persuade many among his own youthful followers to turn their back on it.

Most of the programmes laid stress on the political demands, viz. dissolution of the Assembly and resignation of the Ministry. Only political programme found enough response, constructive programmes remained in the background after some sporadic attempts. students and youths - the vanguard of the movement - were mainly interested in mobilising programmes. This was accepted by no less a person than JP himself. He said that the revolutionary ardour was noticeable among the youth when they were required to be demonstrative but in the constructive aspects of the programme there were not many persons willing to go through the drugery of sustained drive. sachchidananda, the Director

120. Indian Express and Hindustan Times, December 26, 1974.
of the A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna, also
gave the opinion that the energy of the movement was exhausted
more in demonstrative activities and less in constructive
works. No dent was made on the rampant corruption of the
Government. Even the struggle programmes like Janata Sarkar
did not go deep into the villages, because the members of
the Janata Sarkar belonged to the landed and Upper Castes
and they were not ready to sacrifice their interests. This
fact is also admitted by Shivanand Tiwari, an important
leader of the Steering Committee of the BCSS. JP's call to
'total revolution' struck a responsive chord in the hearts
of many who felt genuine concern for the country's future.
But the mechanics he had in mind and the strategy he had
adopted left even some of his admirers cold. This fact was
later conceded by Baburam Chandavar, a close associate and
an important sarvodaya worker. He felt that by accepting
the challenge of elections, JP moved away from his total
revolution, because fighting election and becoming legisla-
tors became an important objective of the movement.

Participants

Students and youth were the main force behind the

122. Ibid., February 5-11, 1978, p. 27.
Bihar movement. As a matter of fact, it were they who started the agitation. JP and his Sarvodaya workers joined it after sometime, though the Sarvodaya workers gave very vital support to the movement. Then came the political parties, who in the opinion of Baburam Chandavark came on the scene after sensing the direction of the wind. The urban middle class also gave their support to the movement. According to Jagannath Mishra, a former Congress Chief Minister, unemployed youth, middle class, so-called intellectuals and urban people were the supporters of the movement. Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, Krishna Kant Singh, Bhola Prasad Singh, Kapildeo Singh and Karporei Thakur all concede that students, youth and opposition parties were main participants in the movement. According to Bhola Prasad Singh and Kapildeo Singh also the middle class, middle caste and urban people supported the movement. It may be noted, however, that political parties became the forefront organization of the movement. According to Shivanand Tiwari, with the demand of dissolution of the Assembly, political leaders came on equal footing with the youth leaders. After this, the latter lagged behind the former. The reason for this was that student and youth leaders were not mature, their outlook was not clear and they were not expert in political manoeuvring. Political leaders, on the contrary, were part-masters in political machinations though their outlook

125. supra, Footnotes 11, p. 424.
was also not clear. They knew the art of attracting people by promising them false paradise. Besides, the students also were more divided on party lines or split into Left and Right groups.

There had been no serious attempts to involve Adivasis, Harijans and Muslims on a large scale. Poor peasants, landless labourers and industrial workers, by and large, remained indifferent to the movement. Not only Jagannath Mishra but Baburam Chandavar and Kapildeo say that there was negligible involvement of the poor in the movement. Similarly, the movement did not penetrate deep into the rural areas. This is accepted both by Mishra and Chandavar. During the early period, however, the urban poor people were sympathetic to the movement because they felt that the students were fighting for their cause. But later as the issues like corruption and dissolution of the Assembly came to the fore they grew cold. Thus, the movement of 1974-75 was the movement of students, middle class and urban people. This is conceded by no less a person than Baburam Chandavar who was deeply involved in the movement.

It is also important to note that woman participation

126. Dinkar, February 5-11, 1978, p. 27.
in the JP movement was also negligible. According to Smt. Kamla Basawan Singh, an important socialist leader, who actively took part in the movement, urban women took their participation in dharna, fast and similar programmes merely as the fashion of the time. They did not have real consciousness of the movement. Chandavarkar also admits this fact.

Political Parties

Political parties which joined the movement in a big way with their students and youth organizations were the Socialist Party, Samyukta Socialist Party, Congress (O) and the Jan Sangh. The Swatantra Party, with a few pockets of influence, also joined the movement. It had only one member in the Assembly. The All-India Forward Bloc had also extended its ‘fullest support’ to the Bihar movement. However, its following in the state was also negligible. Of these parties, the Jan Sangh was the most organized party working in the movement. The JSS was strong in areas where the Sangh was strong. The party co-ordinated its work with its two sister organizations, the ABVP and RSS. The ABVP dominated the CSS at many places and at some places RSS workers were either office-bearers of the CSS or guided the members of the CSS.

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130. Statesman (Delhi), October 7, 1974.
The socialist parties, being sentimentally attached to JP, because he was once their leader, tried to mobilise as much support for the movement as they could. Their youth organisation SYS was actively involved in the agitation from its very beginning. But owing to the split, which occurred only a year ago, the organization of both these parties was not in good shape.

The CPI(M) also supported the movement but did not participate in it. The party extended its support to the Bihar's people's movement for the dismissal of the Congress Ministry with its alliance with the landlords, speculators and hoarders reeking with corruption and for dissolution of the Bihar Assembly and for a new and fair elections. It called upon the people to protest against the brutal repression in Bihar and express their full solidarity with the fighting people of Bihar. However, the party had serious reservation about the movement. The party felt that the movement was not radicalised to reflect the socio-economic problems of the workers, peasants and weaker sections. The movement did not rally all the left and democratic forces to conduct the programme; it failed to involve workers, peasants and other toiling sections of the mass and strength their struggle. The party was also apprehensive of the participation of the "reactionary parties like the Jan Sangh, BLD (Bharatya Lok Dal) and the Congress (O)."
The CPI(Marxist-Leninist) known as Naxalities, supported the movement because its main target was Mrs. Gandhi who was authoritarian but did not participate in it on two grounds: first, the Congress (0) and the Jan Sangh were the major partners; and, secondly, JP did not give radical economic programmes.

It is important to mention here that the political parties actively involved in the movement were more inspired by the same lust of power that characterized the ruling party, than by the real objectives of the movement. The astute, calculating leaders of these parties and groups, found in JP a messiah, a leader with a charismatic personality, a veritable banyan tree under which they could conveniently take shelter. Most of them began supporting him out of sheer frustration or helplessness but they soon found that he could trigger off an agitation from which they could benefit and gain strength. They found in JP a tremendous force which, like Indira Wave, may culminate into a JP Wave winning the next elections for them. They showed rare unanimity, worked out a united front under him and spoke with one voice on most of the issues because their eyes were set on elections whenever it may take

133. Ghanshyam Shah, op. cit., p. 130.
135. J.D. Sethi, Ibid., p. 82.
place. Their aim was to overthrow the Congress in the state and at the Centre and to get power for themselves. In fact, the militant students and Sarvodaya workers, who gave the movement its initial impetus, had already receded into the background and its leadership had been taken over by cadres belonging to the Jan Sangh, Socialists and the Congress and some other groups which had nothing in common except a desire to take advantage of the waning fortune of the Congress to feather their own nests. JP himself admitted that the opposition parties tried to take advantage of the movement in order to enlarge their influence and reduce that of the Congress. He was apprehensive about the sincerity of the political parties. Would they pursue the other objectives of the movement embodied in the total revolution when they come to power. He said, "At the moment several political parties are supporting the struggle and their members are making sacrifices. If the Assembly is dissolved and elections are held within a few months these parties will contest them. I do not know how far they will go in the struggle for achieving the broader objectives of the movement. The Jan Sangh may not go very far. For I remember when I advised the SVP Government in 1967 to implement some laws, the Jan Sangh Ministers threatened that rivers of blood will flow

if the issue was taken up". The Sarvodaya leader further said that "for Jan Sangh the revolution would be total if L.K. Advani or Atal Behari Bajpayee become the Prime Minister and so would be the case with the BLD if Charan Singh come to power". Though JP later said that he had jokingly remarked about the Jan Sangh and BLD, but ironically it proved true after the Janata Party came to power at the Centre and in most of the states.

JP had believed that the Socialists, the Sarvodaya workers, students and people's struggle committees might carry further the struggle against blackmarketing, hoarding and other socio-economic laws. But this was also belied as all of them, perhaps, with the exception of Sarvodaya workers, indulged in power politics. What is more, some of the socialist leaders had doubts about JP's concept of total revolution. Students, youth and Sarvodaya workers, the main force in early stage of the agitation, were pushed behind by pragmatic, hardboiled, businessminded politicians for whom

138. *Indian Express, Hindustan Times* and *Times of India*, December 26, 1974.
139. *Indian Express* and *Indian Nation*, December 27, 1974.
the movement was a pure and simple power struggle. Many of them were sceptical of JP's concepts and philosophy, especially his "Total Revolution". Even those who did believe in revolution were doubtful if it could be brought about through the present movement. Students and youth on whom JP placed so much reliance took active interest only in mobilising programmes of the movement. Their ways proved no different from the 'adult political culture' and they engaged as shamelessly in 'operation grab' as the elders, when twenty-six of them became MLAs and some of them were made Ministers and Parliamentary secretaries.

The movement failed to achieve its basic objectives, i.e., social, economic and political reforms. It failed to check price rise, hoarding, blackmarketing and profiteering. It also failed to keep corruption in check. It did not succeed in breaking the nexus between politicians in power and vested interests and thus relieve the people from their tyranny.

Of course, one result of the movement might be said to be the dethrowing what was called 'authoritarian' regime at the Centre and whole of North India. This view is admitted by Karpoori Thakur, Kapildeo Singh, Bhola Prasad Singh, Krishna

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142. Ghanshyam Shah, op. cit., p. 133.

143. The term 'adult political culture' and 'operation grab' have been borrowed from S.C. Dubey, "Democracy in India: The Trauma and Traivail", Gandhi Marg, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1975, p. 21.
Kant Singh, Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, Daroga Prasad Rai, Ram Raj Prasad Singh and many others. But that was not the avowed aim of the movement.

It is to be noted that at the time of agitation and also of election the common people was assured by JP and other leaders of the movement that if the leaders of the movement were voted to power, they would set the ills of the society right and would establish the control of 'Lokshakti' (people's power) over the 'Rajshakti' (state power). But this was simply belied and the electorate of India, particularly of Bihar, was cheated once more. The Congress was dethroned and the leaders of the movement came to power first at the Centre and then in states. But there did take place no qualitative change in the social, economic, political and administrative set up of the state. Everything went on the same Congress pattern which the new rulers had criticised day in and day out. Corruption continued to grow, hoarders, black-marketeers and profiteers continued to flourish. The same out of date educational system was allowed to continue. There came no positive changes in the life of the poor, suppressed and exploited. This view was shared by Akhtar Hussain and Raghupati, both important leaders of the BCSS, Kishan Patnaik well known Socialist leader and Shivanand Tiwari. All of them agreed that the Janata Party and Government were disappointing, youth and students because the 'Janata Sarkar' was following in the foot-steps of the Congress Government.

JP himself admitted that the Janata Government was behaving in the Congress Government's way. Thus, it may be said that the basic causes that gave rise to the protest movement led by JP in Bihar remained very much there in all their ugliness.

However, JP movement was a great movement of protest against the failures of the Congress to manage the economy, bring down prices and remove corruption. It served a useful purpose by exposing the weakness of the political system that has just not been able to solve the basic problems of the people by highlighting the issue of corruption and pointing to the rot that had got into the system as a result of the declining morality of electoral politics, it exposed its basic weaknesses and that of both ruling and opposition parties - their lack of real popular base and their increasing reliance on politics of manipulation from above and on politics of blackmoney. The positive aspect of the movement was that it sought to apply in practice the fundamental principle of "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", but mass discontent could also be used by vested interests for selfish ends. Every agitation does not lead to a purposeful revolution. Nor was there a dearth of those who liked to fish in troubled waters. Thus was it that although the protest movement did


contribute towards a change of Government in 1977, it
did not succeed in helping to bring stability to state politics.
The year 1967 could be the watershed in the shabby politics of Bihar. But what was hailed as a new direction changed into a drift. The establishment of the first government by the Opposition parties failed, ironically, to realize the dream of an effective alternative government. Uptil 1967, Bihar was ruled by one dominant party and had seen only four Chief Ministers, one of them only a caretaker Chief Minister. The composition of the Councils of Ministers had also been negatively uniform, the core remaining unchanged. But the new government, which succeeded the Congress government, could not prove equal to the task of uniting the people of the State under a purposeful, honest and strong government. The period of instability, which in the 1970s turned into turmoil, began. During this period, Bihar had the doubtful privilege of having 12 governments, one of them being a stop-gap arrangement. There were 12 Chief Ministers, among whom Bhola Paswan Shastri became the Chief Minister of three different governments. This state of affairs was, naturally, reflected in the composition, nature and duration of the various Councils of Ministers formed from time to time.

As is clear from the preceding pages, three distinct phases are discernible from the point of view of nature
of the coalition partners. The period from March, 1967 -
June, 1968, the first phase, saw four governments of the
non-Congress parties. One of these governments remained in
power for three days only. The Congress, though it supported
a government, was completely kept out of office.

The second phase, the phase of mixed Coalitions, began
came back into the government as a partner of these Coalitions,
but it was not the same dominant and monolithic Congress; it
started splitting up. It remained, however, the major partner.
The various non-Congress parties, namely the SSP, PSP, Jan
Sangh, CPI and other splinter groups also played their role
in the 'market polity' in different ways. At the end of this
phase, Bhola Paswan Shastri formed the government as an
Independent with the support of the Congress (R), PSP and the
CPI.

One party governments reappeared in 1972 with the
Congress, as the Congress (R) was re-designated by the
Election Commission of India, staging a definite comeback
on the political scene. This constituted the third phase.
The Congress continued to enjoy overwhelming majority in
the Assembly from March, 1972 to April, 1977, i.e. till the
dissolution of the Assembly by the Janata Government at the
Centre.

This analysis of the governments indicates the party-
wise composition of the various Councils of Ministers formed during the different phases under study. The representation of the various political parties in the Councils of Ministers is shown in Table I, and the total number of Ministers belonging to different political parties during Coalition period is shown in Table II.

It is evident from the above Tables that during the phase of non-Congressism, the major parties, namely the SSP, PSP, CPI and the Jan Sangh, did not have a final say as far as the composition of the Councils of Ministers was concerned. They also got less seats in the ministries in comparison with the splinter groups. While these all-India parties secured only about 32.53% of the total ministerial posts of 83, the Shoshit Dal managed to get about 43.37% of the ministerial berths. Though it had only 38 members in the legislature.

However, in the mixed Coalitions, this position was slightly changed mainly owing to the participation of the Congress parties in the governments. Inspite of the non-participation of the CPI, the share of the major parties was about 54.97% of the total strength of 171 ministerial berths. However, the smaller, splinter and regional groups also played a vital part in the making and breaking of each of the five ministries. The Janata parties, Loktantrik Congress, Jharkhand groups, Shoshit Dal, BKD and the rebel
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Period of Non-</th>
<th>Mixed Coalitions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Congressism</td>
<td>(Second Phase)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(First Phase)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.87</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (Undivided)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (R)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (O)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKD</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulu Jharkhand</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoshit Dal</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>43.37</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loktantrik</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janata</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BKD</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Bloc</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 83 171
### Table II

Showing total number of Ministers belonging to different political parties during Coalition period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Cabinet Ministers</th>
<th>Deputy Ministers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress (Undivided)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (R)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (O)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sangh</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatantra</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hul Jharkhand</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoshit Dal</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loktantrik</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janata</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BKI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Bloc</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>151</strong></td>
<td><strong>95</strong></td>
<td><strong>254</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PSP named ISP, along with the Independents, had obtained highly disproportionate shares in the Councils of Ministers. They had among them 43.46% of the total strength of Ministers, whereas their strength in the Assembly was only 21.37%.

One important feature of this phase was the bigger share and more influence of the Independents in the composition of the Ministries than they had in the preceding phase. Their share of the Ministerial posts in the first phase was only 2.49% while it rose to 7.62% in the second.

From the point of view of parties, we do not find any changes in the third phase, i.e. the period of one party governments, because the Congress continued to remain in power during the entire period. However, during this period also, political instability and infighting were reflected in the reconstitution of ministries and in the changing of Chief Ministers.

It is interesting to note that the defectors' game, which began in full swing during the tenure of the first United Front Government, continued to be played in the period of mixed Coalitions also. Out of the four Chief Ministers in the first phase, three were defectors. One government had the distinction of being a defectors' government hundred percent. This was 'appropriately' headed by a defector himself. Table III shows the defectors' share in the ministerial offices during 1967-71.
TABLE III

Showing defectors' share in the ministerial offices during 1967 - 1971.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Period of Non-Congress</th>
<th>Mixed Congress</th>
<th>Coalitions</th>
<th>(First Phase)</th>
<th>(Second Phase)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Ministers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers of State</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Ministers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>57.83%</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.35%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next to political parties, the Councils of Ministers can be analysed from the point of view of another important factor in State politics, namely, castes of Ministers. The details of the castes of Ministers are given in Table IV. The total number of Ministers belonging to different castes from 1967 - 1977 has been shown in Table V.

From the above Tables, it becomes clear that the Forward Castes continued to have a better share in ministerial offices in comparison to the Backward Castes. However, they did not have the same domination in the ministries, which they enjoyed in pre-1967 period. The Backward Castes succeeded in increasing their strength during the period.
## Table IV

Showing castes of Ministers, 1967 - 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes</th>
<th>Non-Congress (First Phase)</th>
<th>MixedCoalitions (Second Phase)</th>
<th>One Party Governments (Third Phase)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.45</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35.73</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.45</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teli</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallah</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali Backward</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwari</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castes</td>
<td>Cabinet Ministers</td>
<td>Ministers of State</td>
<td>Deputy Ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Castes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayastha</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Backward Castes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koiri</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bania</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Backward Castes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teli</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallah</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali Backward</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwari</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of mixed coalitions possibly because out of the four Chief Ministers, two belonged to these castes. But during the one party governments period in the third phase, their share dwindled again.

It is to be noted that the Rajputs, among the Forward Castes, continued to be in an advantageous position throughout the whole period though their percentage in the ministries varied from phase to phase. In the first phase they secured 14.45% of ministerial offices, while securing 15.78% in the second phase, the highest by any caste. In the third phase, however, they were relegated to the second place getting only 12.37%, when Brahmins led them by over 5%. Inspite of the highest percentage, the Rajputs were not the only dominant caste during the first two phases because other castes had secured about equally high percentages.

The influence of Bhumihars, another important caste, which used to be in a dominant position before 1967, began to wane from 13.25% in the first phase to 11.69% in the second phase and finally 10.39% in the third phase. This could be explained by the absence of a strong recognised leader like Sri Krishna Sinha. On the contrary, the Brahmins, including the Maithil Brahmins, gained from 6.24% in the first phase to 6.43% in the second phase. In the third phase they occupied a dominant position by securing the highest percentage of 17.52% of the berths in the Councils of Ministers.
Among the factors possibly accounting for this rise, we could consider (i) two Brahmin Chief Ministers in the third phase; (ii) presence of a strong Brahmin Minister from Bihar in Union Cabinet, and (iii) the consequent defection of a number of Brahmin leaders from the Opposition parties to the Congress.

The Kayasthas continued to be in poor strength throughout the whole period, being only in a slightly better position in the first phase. Their percentage in the first phase was 3.61%, which came down to 2.92% in the second phase. Their share in the third phase was 2.61% only, being able to secure only 2 out of 97 ministerial posts. The decline of the numerically small Kayasthas, however, was marginal and relative, compared to other castes which went up the ladder of educational and social progress faster.

Coming to the Backward Castes, it is interesting to know that the four castes constituting the advanced segment among such castes cornered above 90% of ministerial posts in all phases.

Among the advanced segment of the Backward Castes, Yadavas succeeded in getting a higher percentage of posts in the second and third phases. In the first phase, however, they got lesser percentage of posts than Kurrus, another important advanced Backward Caste. The percentage of the Yadavas in the first phase was 9.63%. It rose upto 12.22% in
the second phase and again came down to 7.21% in the third phase. The Kurmis, on the other hand, got 14.45% in the first phase, while in the second and third phases they got 5.26% and 4.12% respectively. Another advanced Backward Caste, Koiri, got 4.81% in the first phase, 7.26% in the second and 3.92% in the third phase. The Banias continued to increase their percentage from 1.24% in the first phase to 2.33% in the second, and finally to 5.15% in the third phase. Other Backward Castes were not of much importance from the point of view of the composition of the ministries. On the whole, the Yadavas and the Kurmis appeared to be in an advantageous position among the Backward Castes.

The Scheduled Castes continued to improve their position in the Councils of Ministers from 4.81% in the first phase to 11.69% in the second and then to 13.42%, next only to the Brahmans in the third phase. The Scheduled Tribes, on the other hand, had 13.25% in the first phase. However, their position in the second and third phases remained static. They secured 11.69% in the second phase and 11.34% in the third phase. The variations in the representation of Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Councils of Ministers appeared to reflect nothing beyond the manipulations for office and adjustments among the State leaders. It had little to do with the promotions of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes concerned.
The Muslims secured a higher percentage of 9.63% of ministerial posts during the period of non-Congress governments. In the second phase their share came down to 8.77%, but during the third phase they improved their position by securing 9.27%. The Scheduled Tribes having about twice the population of the Muslims had a larger share of seats in all phases; the ratio being 13.25%, 9.63%, 11.69%, 8.77%, 11.34%, 9.27%. The Scheduled Castes numerically about equal to the Muslims had a larger share of ministerial positions in all phases except in the first, their ratio being 4.8: 9.63%, 11.63: 9.77%, 13.47: 9.27%. In the case of the Muslims also as in the case of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, variations in the ministerial positions represented no more than superficial adjustments having nothing to do with participation by the Muslim masses in the political processes or promotion of their interests by the governments concerned.

Another aspect of the ministries was their region-wise representation. Table VI makes it clear that the North Plains continued to dominate the Councils of Ministers. It was only in the first phase that the region got slightly lesser percentage of berths than the South Plains. However, in the third phase also its share came down, while that of the South Plains went up. The tribal belt of Chotanagpur continued to be under the domination of other two regions of the State. No Chief Ministers during the period of 1967-1977 came from
this region. Three of the four Chief Ministers during the first phase belonged to the North Plains, while the one to the South Plains. Similarly, during the second phase, out of the five Chief Ministers, four belonged to the North Plains and the remaining one, again, to the South Plains. During the period of one party governments, all Chief Ministers came from the North Plains. Thus, ten of the twelve Chief Ministers came from the North Plains. The North Plains, therefore, had a larger share, including Chief Ministership, in all the three phases under the non-Congress and Congress governments alike. One reason for the predominance of the North Plains over the South Plains could be the larger area and population of the former which sent more members to the Legislative Assembly.

As far as rural/urban bases of Ministers are concerned, the analysis has, unfortunately, been incomplete owing to the non-availability of data. No list of legislators or for that matter of Councils of Ministers, official or non-official provides this information. However, an attempt has been made to surmise and locate Ministers on rural/urban bases, which, again, cannot be claimed to be accurate. As is clear from Table VII, members elected from rural areas remained in dominant positions in all the ministries as well as in all the three phases. Urban representation in the Councils of Ministers ranged between 15.52% in the
TABLE VI

Showing region-wise representation, 1967-1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>North Plains</th>
<th>South Plains</th>
<th>Chotanagpur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Congression</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39.18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Coalitions</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>50.31</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Party Govts.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47.12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>151</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VII

Rural/urban bases of Ministers, 1967-1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Congression</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>86.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Coalitions</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>84.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Party Governments</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>87.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>276</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
second phase to 13.90% in the third phase. The overwhelming rural profile of the state (having only about 9 cities) where students from the villages poured into towns for college education, could account for rural predominance in the Councils of Ministers. This is not to say that the policy of the governments had a rural bias or promoted the interests of the larger section of the rural population.

During the entire period of ten years, the representation of women remained very poor. During the phase of non-Congressism, their representation was 1.20% only. Out of the four Ministries, only the first UF Government included a woman. In the second phase two women were made Ministers, but their percentage was again 1.23% only. The Congress-led coalition was the only government which included these two women members. However, during the phase of one party governments, the representation of women considerably improved. Nine women were made Ministers and their representation went up to 9.86%. This increase, however, did not appear to have any political significance as it made no impact on the policies or the performance of the governments.

Coming to the role of political leaders in the State, it should be stated that since the failure of the Undivided Congress to get an overall majority in the 1967 General Elections, unprincipled party bosses and power-seekers found an excellent opportunity to sell their membership to the
highest bidder. After the mid-term elections also, the situation did not improve. Defections became a cardinal feature. About 300 acts of defection, 200 in the first phase alone, took place during this period. No less than 100 legislators changed their sides, at least, twice, while at least a few of them did so as many as four times. At least 63 defectors were rewarded with ministerial posts.

Thus, a political situation developed in Bihar in which some persons came to occupy the position of 'permanent' Ministers. No matter which ministry was formed, they became Ministers because of the pivotal position they occupied in the balance of parties by virtue of their extra-ordinary ability to defect and redefect. The names of such Ministers were found in every list of new Ministers that appeared. Such permanent Ministers were primarily interested in getting hold of some particular departments to serve their personal interests, and wanted the fullest freedom to misuse their power and create havoc in administration. The net result had been a 'virtual competition' in the misuse of powers, especially in matters of transfers, postings and promotions of officials and granting licences and permits. Changes of Ministries did not really make any difference insofar as the misuse of powers by Ministers and civil servants were concerned. In fact, Ministers were busy in trying to get rich quickly rather than formulating State policies and ensuring
their implementation. This was true of the Congress as well as non-Congress Ministers.

The composition of the Cabinets and ministries during this period reflected the manoeuvrings of the top political leaders for loaves and fishes. It was not a real representation of interests of class, castes or the people of Bihar as a whole. Despite superficial changes in party and government labels, small oligarchic group formed factions and continued to rule Bihar for a decade. Further, no unilinear relationship can be established between caste and political party in Bihar in this period. The sections of the society, which were economically and socially well-off seem to have dispersed, irrespective of caste and dominated different political parties, competing with each other for the spoils of office.

While the election manifestoes and programmes of political parties indicated that interest articulation and interest aggregation were moving in the right direction, the performance of the governments left much to be desired. Without going into the discussion about the merit of specific programmes or priorities given to particular items, it is clear from the data incorporated in Chapter VI that the governments did not live up to their promises. They preached but they did not practise. If "performance is the test of legitimacy" then on this score, the legitimacy of the governments may be questioned.
The lack of genuineness of the governments as true representatives of the people was equalled by their lack of stability. The composite Table VIII confirms, among other things, the instability of the governments in Bihar during the period. The lives of governments could be counted not in years but in days and months; some lasting only for 95, 47, 10 or even for 3 days. The mean life span was less than a year.

Similarly, the number of ministry expansions indicates the instability, misdemeanour and confusion prevailing during this period. The first UB Ministry was expanded five times in 11 months, the Shoshit Dal Ministry was expanded four times in 47 days, the second UF Ministry was expanded three times in 10 days, the SSP-led SVD Ministry was expanded eight times in 161 days and the Kedar Pandey Ministry was expanded three times in 15 months. Apart from the merits of the claims of the leaders, the sheer number of expansions indicates that emphasis was more on distribution of spoils of office rather than on stability and performance by the governments.

The 1974-75 protest movement did not succeed in getting rid of the ills present in Bihar politics. The reform movement, notwithstanding its marginal salutary effects as indicated in Chapter VII, was itself re-formed in the vast quagmire of Bihar politics. This became evident
| Name of Ministry                               | Number of Expansion | Life in Months | Upper Castes | Backward Castes | Advance Castes | Scheduled Castes | Tribes | Muslim Cabinet | Women Cabinet | Rural Cabinet | Urban Cabinet | No.% | No.% | No.% | No.% | No.% | No.% | No.% | No.% |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| First UF Ministry (1967/34)                    | 5                   | 11             | 20           | 16            | 10            | 9              | 1      | 4              | 3             | 1            | 24            | 6     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|                                               |                     |                |              | (47.05)       | (29.41)       | (26.47)        | (29.41) | (11.76)        | (8.82)        | (2.94)       | (80.58)      | (17.64) |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Shoshit Dal Ministry (1967/61)                 | 4                   | 47             | 14           | 12            | 3             | 6              | 4      | -              | 33            | 2            | (91.66)      | (5.55) |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Second UF Ministry (1968/13)                   | 4                   | 95             | 2            | 15.38         | 1              | 7.69           | 7.69   | 7.69           | -             | 9            | (69.20)      | (23.07) |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Congress-Led Coalition (1969/33)               | 4                   | 115            | 8            | 15.38         | 1              | 7.69           | 7.69   | 7.69           | -             | 3            | (75.75)      | (15.15) |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Third UF Ministry (1969/19)                    | 3                   | 10             | 6            | 6              | 6              | 2              | 2      | 2              | 3             | -            | (93.33)      | (15.7)  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Congress(R)-Led Coalition (1970/31)            | 6                   | 10             | 8            | 12            | 11             | 4              | 5      | 2              | -             | 27           | (87.09)      | (9.67)   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| SSP-Led SVD Ministry (1970/53)                 | 8                   | 161            | 20           | 19            | 15             | 5              | 5      | 4              | -             | 41           | (77.35)      | (15.09) |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Congress(R)-Led PVD Ministry (1971/35)         | 6                   | 198            | 15           | 8             | 7              | 6              | 3      | 3              | 1             | 29           | 6            | (42.95) | (22.85) | (20.00) | (17.14) | (8.57) | (8.57) | (2.85) | (82.85) | (17.14) |
| Kedar Pandey Ministry (1972/35)                | 3                   | 15             | 14           | 10            | 8              | 4              | 4      | 2              | 3             | 28           | 5            | (40.00) | (28.57) | (22.85) | (11.42) | (5.71) | (8.57) | (80.00) | (14.28) |
| Abdul Ghafoor Ministry (1973/46)               | 3                   | 20             | 21           | 9             | 8              | 6              | 5      | 5              | 4             | 36           | 5            | (45.65) | (19.56) | (17.39) | (13.04) | (10.86) | (10.86) | (8.69) | (78.26) | (10.86) |
| Jagannath Mishra Ministry (1975/16)            | 24                  | 20             | 6            | 3             | 3              | 3              | 2      | 2              | 1             | 12           | 1            | (37.5)  | (18.75) | (18.75) | (18.75) | (12.5) | (12.5) | (6.25) | (75.00) | (6.25)  |
when the new youth leaders of the protest movement, winning the 1977 Assembly elections on the Janata Party tickets, disillusioned their voters by following in the footsteps of the earlier MLAs.

It is, thus, evident that without basic changes in the socio-economic infrastructure of the society in favour of the depressed sections of the society, no superficial political changes were going to bring about an improvement in their lives. Political institutions could be misused by unprincipled and unscrupulous practitioners. Mere form of democracy without democratic spirit was no guarantee in a backward, elite-ridden society that institutions and political processes would not be subverted for sectional, group or personal ends. This state of affairs in Bihar may be explained by the traditional passivity of the people arising out of their indigence, illiteracy, broken-down health, helplessness in the face of autocratic police and bureaucracy and their apathy towards their political masters. The advantages of economic and social changes brought into motion since 1947 reached only the upper strata creating new political and social elites. The bunches of these elites, the new rich, caste leaders or leaders of political parties played the game of power.

Opinions may differ as to what extent and how well the political system performed its functions of interest
articulation and aggregation, rule making, application, and adjudication and of communication. The results of the present study indicate, however, shortcomings in the functioning of the system, producing a series of failures discussed in earlier chapters. We can, on this basis, identify the functioning of the Bihar political system during this period as undemocratic. However, as between the political system being undemocratic or pre-democratic, we would rather call it pre-democratic in the light of the constitution of India, the basic law of the State, the declared aims and objectives of political parties and the aspirations and struggles of the people. Bihar was moving away, albeit slowly, from an autocratic, exploitative, and repressive system in the direction of a participatory, responsible and democratic system.

There was instability, poor performance and corruption leading to doubts about legitimacy, but the basic framework of periodic elections, the existence of opposition parties and freedom of speech did not break up. Jaya Prakash's right to recall, for instance, had to give way to the Prime Minister's insistence on waiting till the next elections. The system swayed but missed a basic change which might have been premature. There was mal-functioning followed by upheavals but they were finally contained within the perimeters of a pre-democratic political system which gave hope for the future.
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Karpoorl Thakur, Deputy Chief Minister in the first UF Government and Chief Minister of the SSP-led SVD Government.

Krishna Kant Singh, a Cabinet Minister in the Second, Third and SSP-led SVD Governments.

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