

## SANKAT – CRISIS

*(Four people are busy working and talking about the king at the same time.)*

One : I heard that the country is in crisis.  
Two : I have heard that the king is in crisis.  
Three : If the king is in crisis it implies that the country is in crisis. If the country is in crisis then automatically the people are also in crisis!  
Four : The king is in crisis.  
All : Yes, yes he is in crisis.  
Four : He is very worried.  
All : Yes, yes he is very worried.  
Four : The king is in crisis.  
All : Let it be.  
Four : The king is very worried.  
All : Let it be.  
Four : Right, we don't have anything to do with it.  
One : But there is one question.  
Two : What?  
Three : Are we really in crisis?  
One : Has a new crisis fallen on us?  
Two : Do you ever get a square meal?  
One : Never.  
Two : Do your children ever get good clothes to wear?  
Three : Never.  
Four : Then what new crisis has befallen on you?  
All : None.  
Four : This means that we are not in crisis, only the king is.  
One : They say that the king won the voting by deceit.  
Four : All the kings are deceitful.  
Two : He pushed a bundle of votes in the ballot box.  
Three : So that means that the king is dishonest.  
Four : All the kings are dishonest.  
One : The king's court gave a verdict against him.  
Two : What?  
One : The king has indulged in corruption.  
Three : Is the king corrupt?  
Four : All the kings are corrupt – but I heard that the king is in crisis.  
All : Yes, yes he is in crisis.  
Four : He is very annoyed.  
All : Yes, yes he is annoyed.  
Four : He is very worried.  
All : Yes, yes he is worried.  
Four : The king is in crisis.  
All : Let it be.  
Four : He is very annoyed.  
All : Let it be.  
Four : He is very worried.  
All : Let it be.  
Four : But how does it matter to us, grass cutters sons will remain grass cutters.

*(At this time a proclamation announcer enters.)*

One : What say, is there a fire somewhere?  
Two : Is there a storm somewhere?  
Three : Is there a flood somewhere?  
Four : Is there a gale somewhere?  
Announcer : Nothing is on fire.  
All : Thank God.  
Announcer : No storm has come.  
All : The God is merciful.  
Announcer : There is no flood anywhere.  
All : The Almighty is kind.  
Announcer : There is no gale.  
All : Allah is merciful.  
Announcer : Yes, yes Allah is merciful.  
Four : So why in you a devil so frightful?  
Announcer : This is kings announcement, the nation is in crisis, anti-nationals have encircled the country, the nation is in danger.  
Four : So find a scapegoat, even a stranger.  
Announcer : The nation is in state of emergency, this is today's announcement – Gatherings banned, processions banned.  
Four : Colleges shut, schools shut.  
Announcer : Strike banned, news banned.  
Four : Eyes shut, mouth shut.  
Announcer : The nation is in state of emergency, this is king's announcement.

*(Announcer exits. Two yes-men bring the king on stage.)*

King : How is the nation doing?  
One yes-man : Sir, the nation is in crisis and downward going.  
Two yes-man : Twenty point program and all it's doing.  
King : Any trouble anywhere?  
One yes-man : All the troubles are being choked unprecedented.  
Two yes-man : All the troubles are crying & being tormented.  
One yes-man : Trouble is under control.  
Two yes-man : Trouble is in jail under strict patrol.  
King : What is trouble doing there?  
One yes-man : All the troubles are at the grinding mill.  
Two yes-man : All the troubles are counting days, a task uphill.  
One yes-man : All the troubles are crying and continue it will.  
Two yes-man : All the troubles are screaming hoarse and shrill.  
King : Any other news?  
One yes-man : The King is being hailed all around.  
Two yes-man : The Prince is intelligent and very sound.  
One yes-man : Is brainy in the head and is profound.  
Two yes-man : Runs a small car to go around.  
One yes-man : Is a friends' friend like none to be found.  
Two yes-man : Is a lover boy with girls abound.  
One yes-man : Great is his contribution, shinning bright.  
Two yes-man : Five point program is his highlight.  
One yes-man : Hail the trouble times and their plight.

Two yes-man : The nation is in pink of health and everything all right.  
One yes-man : All the news are similar and nothing to worry.  
Two yes-man : Every newspaper and in each of their story.  
King : What is the status of the 'Garibi Hatao'<sup>1</sup> slogan?  
One yes-man : It's in good shape,  
But when will they get food people ask in gape.  
King : So then make an announcement, the King will give an important message to the nation.

*(The yes-men escort the king out with respect.)*

Announcer : Hear you every sister and brother  
Hear you every father and mother  
Hear you every young and old  
Hear you everyone what's being told  
The King will deliver an important message.

*(The King arrives, followed by his yes-men. He makes a pose of delivering a speech from the Red Fort.)*

King : Countrymen, Our country is very poor because the population is high. This is the twentieth century and we are in the machine age. Switch off the machine for whatever production has to be stopped. So from today onwards I order that we stop the machine that produces children.

*(The King exits.)*

Both yes-men : Emergency – shut the machine  
Emergency – ban talking to the press  
Emergency – ban the newspapers  
Emergency, emergency.

*(A scene of vasectomy camp. People are being brought in, dragged. The King and his yes-men enter again.)*

King : Is everything all right?  
Both yes-men : Yes everything is all right.  
King : I have thought of something.  
Both yes-men : You have thought of a great thing.  
King : But what have I thought?  
Both yes-men : Don't know.  
King : Then why did you say that I have thought of a great thing?  
Both yes-men : Because whenever you think it is always great.  
King : The world says that this country has a dictatorship.  
Both yes-men : The world tells a lie, spreads disbelief on the sly.  
King : But we have to stop this and not let it fly.  
Both yes-men : Yes Sir, shut their mouth, let it not go awry.  
King : So then make an announcement.  
Both yes-men : What should be the announcement?

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<sup>1</sup> Garibi Hatao' means remove poverty. This was the theme and slogan of Indira Gandhi's 1971 election bid and later also used by Rajiv Gandhi.

King : Votes will be cast, elections will be held.

*(The King exits.)*

Announcer : Hear you all, hear you everyone  
Every man and every woman  
Having children or married none  
Sulking with a dear one or having fun  
Votes will be cast, elections will be held again  
Tighten your pants and do not abstain  
Get ready for the election campaign  
Tell the world the love for the King you maintain  
The Prince is the apple of our eyes, it's so plain.

*(People enter.)*

People : Votes will be cast, elections will be held  
Yes, yes elections will be held  
Now is the chance so get ready  
Raise your arms, raise the flags, pick up the cudgels and be steady  
Tell the world we don't love the King no more  
Prince is no apple of our eye, rather an eyesore.

*(Scene of the elections.)*

People : Down down with the King with no credo  
Down down with the King with a big ego  
He killed people  
Innocent people  
Down down with the King with no credo  
Down down with the Prince with superego  
The son, burden on the people  
Unnecessary burden pure and simple  
Houses he broke, bulldozed them to the ground  
Forced vasectomy on people old, single and sound  
The King & the Prince lost, got a thrashing resound.

*(People bring the new King carrying him on their shoulders. The two yes-men are also with them.)*

Both yes-men : Long live the new King.  
Rest : Long live, long live.  
One yes-man : The new King here he arrives.  
Two yes-man : Hear his message, will change your lives.  
One yes-man : Long live the new King.  
Two yes-man : Long live, long live.  
King : Emergency has ended.  
Both yes-men : Censorship has been lifted – long live, long live.  
King : Atrocities during the emergency....  
One yes-man : Have been accounted – long live, long live.  
King : An inquiry commission has been established.

One yes-man : They have been given the directives – long live, long live.  
King : Go home one by one.  
One yes-man : Resume reproduction one by one – long live, long live.  
King : Your fate is in our hands, all you agree.  
One yes-man : We are now the powers that be – long live, long live.

*(The King exits followed by the people. The stage is empty for some time. Some hardworking people are now in action as if they are turning a wheel. And a voice comes – the wheel of time is rolling, a year has passed. The King and his yes-men enter from one side of the stage and people from the other side.)*

People : People chanting the King's name,  
When will everyone get food to eat?  
When will everyone get employment?  
When will everyone get clothes to wear?  
When will everyone get houses to live?  
King : In 10 years everyone will get food to eat.  
In 20 years everyone will get employment.  
In 30 years everyone will get clothes to wear.  
In 40 years everyone will get houses to live.  
Both yes-men : Yes, yes in 40 years everyone will get houses to live.  
People : People chanting the King's name, what is your plan?

*(The King thinks a bit.)*

Both yes-men : Will tell you what we have planned.  
King : Break the bottles,  
Smash the bottles,  
Don't drink liquor which is banned,  
This is my order you better understand,  
This is what we have planned.  
Both yes-men : Yes, yes this is what we have planned.  
One : Will this give us food to eat?  
Two : Will this give us employment?  
Three : Will this give us clothes to wear?  
Four : Will this give us houses to live?  
People's leader : Is this governance good you say?  
The world goes hungry, everyday  
The world has no clothes to wear, dare I say  
The world is unemployed, by the way  
Is this the solution for all these ills?  
King : This is the solution for all the ills  
Every morn drink urine to blow away all the evils.  
Both yes-men : Yes, yes drink urine to blow away all the evils.  
One : This King is also good at mere sloganeering.  
Two : This King is also good at bum steering.  
Three : This King is also good for nothing.  
People's leader : Ask for food you get urine instead  
Give him a kick in the butt, this blockhead  
Pleas and appeals fall on their ears dead.  
All : Yes, yes requests fall on their ears dead.

People's leader : Raise your arms, raise the flags, pick up the cudgels, a fight beckons,  
To win against hunger will require you to pick up the weapons.

King : Peace, peace...don't take law into your hands,  
It helps run the country as it stands,  
He is flaring you with suspect intention,  
Leading you in the wrong direction,  
He is agent of foreign hand,  
Think nationalism, this is our homeland.

Both yes-men : Yes, yes think nationalism, you better understand.

People's leader : No, no...

King : With all your might, with all the noise,  
Topsy turvy or stand in a poise,  
Will rule for years five do what you may,  
What you are today, that's the way you will stay.

Both yes-men : That's the way you will stay.

People : No way.

Both yes-men : That's the way you will stay.

People : No way.

*(Both yes-men get down on all fours to become a horse. The King mounts the horse.)*

Both yes-men : See the King's seat, the shining throne,  
Higher than any that came to be known.

*(People pick up their leader on their shoulder.)*

Both yes-men : People's power is power of the youth,  
In today's generation this is the truth.