

English versions) giving reasons for immediate legislation by the Supreme Court and High Court Judges (Conditions of Service) Amendment Third Ordinance, 1996.

[Placed in Library See. No. LT. 35/96]

14.59 hrs.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP : I introduce the Bill.

15.00 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: CONTINUANCE OF PROCLAMATION BY PRESIDENT IN RELATION TO THE STATE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR—Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The next item is the Statutory Resolution moved by the hon. Prime Minister. Now, Mr. Jag Mohan will have to conclude.

SHRI P. NANGYAL (Ladakh) : No, Sir. I was on my legs yesterday. I think, because of the hue and cry it was not taken note of. ...*(Interruptions)* I had started my speech also. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAG MOHAN (New Delhi) : Sir, the hon. Speaker had signalled me to stop because he wanted to give his ruling. In the morning, I met him and he gave me two minutes more ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Namgyal, now he is going to conclude his speech in two minutes and then, I will leave the floor to you.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Sir, I was only on my last point. The last point that I wanted to make was that claims are being made about the conditions having been improved. I just want to say that this is not factually correct. You can, by all means, hold the elections, but the basic point is that so many other actions have to be taken along with that.

Now, if you see the data for the year 1995 - all these are based on question in Parliament, they are not newspaper data - you may kindly see that the highest number of killings have taken place in the year 1995; the highest number of attacks on the security forces have taken place in the year 1995; the longest hostage crisis has taken place in the year 1995; the largest number of cases of arson have taken place in 1995; the worst incidents of car bomb and land mine explosion have taken place in 1995; the most wanton destruction of holy shrines have taken place in 1995 and the most glaring cases of internal subversion have taken place in 1995. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Sir, I am on a point of order.

[English]

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Please let me explain...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The point is whether anybody is taking note of Shri Jag Mohan's statement or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, the Minister is present.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The Prime Minister is in-charge of Kashmir Affairs. Yesterday when the Kashmir issue was being discussed, the Prime Minister was present here. Today neither the Minister of Home Affairs nor the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs is present. This is a serious matter as nobody is present to take note of a sensitive subject like Kashmir...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not a matter of raising point of order. Shri Jag Mohan, please continue.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : This matter should be taken seriously...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : Sir, it is very much necessary. This House should know actually, who is taking note on behalf of the Home Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister is taking note of it. All the points are taken note of by the Minister, Mr. Yadav. The Prime Minister has introduced the Statutory Resolution and not the Home Minister. Let us, with the same seriousness, deliberate. Let us hear Mr. Jag Mohan. He is deliberating on a serious point. Let us be serious. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE (Thane) : He is deliberating on a serious point, but the Government is not taking it seriously. The concerned Minister is not present. Nobody is serious about it...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt Mr. Jag Mohan.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : The worst incidents have taken place in 1995 in regard to every aspect of internal security. Now, I would just give a few figures of 1995; 2768 persons were killed, the security forces were attacked 2570 times; the number of security personnel killed increased from 198 in 1994 to 234 in 1995 and 211 more civilians were killed in 1995 than 1994. I do not want to repeat all the other figures. But it shows that the condition has been worsening, whereas a rosy picture is being painted everyday. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : What was the situation when you were the Governor? You were the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir twice. What was the situation at that time?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The situation worsened only when he left the state.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : I am not yielding. In fact I thank them for proving me right because truth is bitter. They are only reacting to the truth. That is what the normal reaction of a person is. I am not yielding. I am not saying that let them say what they want. Truth will not be hidden by these slogans. I am giving the concrete figures. See the figures of the first four months of 1996. The number of persons killed in the first four months of 1996 is 1183 and the number of persons abducted is 302. In the first four months of 1996 the security forces have been attacked 775 times, 333 private houses have been burnt, 110 shops have been burnt, 317 bomb explosions and 25 rocket attacks have taken place and we have just been talking all the time. Even in the month of June, last month, five army personnel were killed on June 8th. In the Doda massacre, the point which I raised last time, another five persons were butchered. Everyday people are

getting killed and the number is much more than what it was earlier. Now, the point which I want to make is that it is not the election alone which is going to solve the problem. Elections may be held. That is good. But the question is, we have to take other measures to reconstruct the civil administration and to see that the people who are causing internal subversion from within the services are also eliminated. I have a 10-point strategy. Every action of that strategy has to be comprehensively looked into. The situation will not improve by a single-pronged action or double-pronged action. I have already made my points about Article 370 and autonomy and I do not want to say anything more on that.

About regional disparity, I have a lot of things to say about Jammu and Ladakh but I leave it to my distinguished friend. He wanted to speak. I am sure he will talk about Ladakh. Another distinguished friend Shri Chaman Lal will talk about Jammu and I will not touch this. I only want to say about Article 370. A lot of wrong things are being said with regard to Article 370 that 'We will strengthen this. We will do this'. Well, I just want to quote one line from Panditji's 1952 speech, where he himself has said about the Delhi Agreement of 24th July, 1952 to which I made a reference today. He said, "This is an unusual provision and by no means final". I am quoting from the statement made by him in this House. And in a letter written to Mr. Bazaz, he said that it is being gradually removed and whatever little remains, will also go with the passage of time. It is he who is saying so. Now, we are taking a ninety per cent overturn. We are going against what Panditji had said. So, these are the issues. Let us not us not complicate the problems. Let us not do that. These are the three points which I am making. Number one, do not make any commitment with regard to the autonomy which will create problems for the future; number two, election alone will not solve the problem; and number three, kindly take other corresponding action along with it. And do not forget what are the adverse implications of Article 370. Let us learn a lesson from history and ensure that we do not make the mistakes which we made in the past.

[Translation]

SHRI P. NAMGYAL (Ladakh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, on 18 July, 1990 the President had issued a proclamation regarding Jammu and Kashmir under Article 356 and now the proposal for its continuance for another six months has been brought in this House for sanction. I rise to support it.

Sir, Jammu and Kashmir state has been under the President Rule and the Governor rule for the last

six years and the administrative affairs of the state are being handled by this House. I believe that it would be the last extension of President Rule because the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda while moving the resolution in the House has given assurance that Assembly elections will be held in Jammu and Kashmir by the end of September. I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister for this announcement. I would also like to congratulate ex-Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao for having initiated the democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir and holding Parliamentary election. It would be unjust to leave out the name of General K.V. Krishna Rao at this juncture. I think that he has played a good role in this case. I would like to congratulate him for having normalised the situation and for getting conducted the Parliamentary elections in J and K. After a gap of five years, it is for the first time that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are being represented in the House and we are getting the opportunity to highlight the sufferings underwent by the people

Sir, people have faced a lot of problems during the last six years. Thousands of Pakistani's who were citizens of Azad Kashmir and also afghan citizens and other foreign mercenaries entered Kashmir in the guise of Mujahideens equipped with modern weapons. They created disturbances in the area during this period. These people have indulged in killing, looting, insulting women and kidnapping people in the name of Islam. You know that more than a year has passed since they abducted the four foreign nationals and they still haven't been released. I think that by now people have seen through the conspiracy of Pakistan and they have realised that their future is secure not with the theocratic Pakistan but with secular India.

During the past six years I had the opportunity to hear and see a lot of things on the future of Kashmir. When some people failed to govern Kashmir in a democratic secular system efficiently it gave rise to militancy and they have been saying different things at different times. For example they talk of reverting to pre-1953 situation and internal autonomy. These people have always blackmailed the Centre and even today they are trying to blackmail the Centre.

Sir, regarding this suggestion we, the people of Ladakh... (Interruptions)

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am an a point of information. Did they not get the support of the then Government to which they have mentioned here? How could the Government run without their support... (Interruptions)

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : I will reply to that also. At that time you were kowtowing to them... (Interruptions) Sir, we, the people, of Ladakh have been opposing to such proposal and will continue to do so. I am sure the people of Jammu will not accept such a proposal. If the Government intends to consider any such proposal, then, I think, its result would not be very good for India. It will lead to disintegration of India. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent the disintegration of India. And if you will consider or discuss such proposal, or if you intend to pursue it, then its repercussion may reflect in other parts of the country also. Therefore, I strongly oppose it. This would mean that barring the three subjects i.e., Defence, External Affairs and Communication, all other subjects would be looked after by the local administration and as a result thereof, life would become miserable for the minorities there. We have been tolerating their excesses for a long time. And this is the reason why protests have been voiced in our region also. The people voiced their demand either for an autonomous state or for the status of Union Territory. In Ladakh, there was a demand for Autonomous Hill Council and we achieved it. Therefore, if all the subjects, except these three subjects are not in the lands of the Centre it would mean that Election Commission, Supreme Court, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Census Commission etc. would have no jurisdiction in Kashmir. Then the minorities there would have no existence. Therefore the people of Ladakh forcefully oppose this.

Sir, recently the hon'ble Defence Minister had said in a statement that full autonomy would be given to Kashmir. The present Government, in its common minimum programme spoke of granting greater autonomy to Kashmir. Later it was also said that it would be decided by the elected representatives of Kashmir after the assembly elections. But, it is view that it is not clear what the Government has in their mind. Therefore, you will have to ponder over it seriously. Suppose we expect that free and fair elections are held there tomorrow. As free and fair General Elections were held, we expect the Assembly Elections would also be free and fair. But in case, if secessionist elements, such as Hurriyat Conference-which advocates Kashmir's merger with Pakistan-comes to power, and passes a resolution to this effect, with two-thirds majority, what would be the result then? You will have to think over this seriously and also find a way out as to whether any changes should be brought about in the present system there or not. Hence, I request that this issue may be taken seriously.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. There are three or four other Members from your party to speak and you have already taken about 12 minutes.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : I will try to finish at the earliest. Jammu and Kashmir is divided into three parts: Jammu, Kashmir Valley and Ladakh. The people of these three parts have different culture and language. And there are different ethnic groups. In spite of having three different cultures, and speaking three different languages, we all are living in a united Jammu and Kashmir. If we want to take any decision regarding Jammu and Kashmir, then, we will have to keep in mind the interests of the people of the three regions and have consultations with the representatives of the regions before arriving at a decision. If you take a decision by consulting only the people of the Kashmir Valley, it would have far reaching consequences. The people of Ladakh would not accept any decision that would go against their interests.

You must know that on 16th March 1846, the 'Treaty of Amritsar' was signed between the British Government and the then Maharaja Gulab Singh. Consequently, Kashmir Valley was bought for 75 lakh Nanakshahi—the Sikh currency and Ladakh was not included in it. Therefore, I said that the historical perspective should be taken into consideration, while taking a decision. In 1834, Ladakh was occupied by the Dogra forces and it was made a part of Jammu State. This does not mean that we want to secede. Please remove any such thoughts from your mind. We believe that the three parts of Jammu and Kashmir are integral parts of India and we want its unity. If you want to give anything to Kashmir Valley, then all the three parts would have to be treated equally, while taking any decision. I believe that if you want any solution to the Kashmir problem, then you should consider for providing an autonomous Hill Council within the State Constitution, as has been provided for Ladakh. I think, the powers that should have been given under the agreement to the Autonomous Hill Council are yet to be given. The bureaucrats of the state are creating a lot of hurdles for us. What was agreed in the agreement, is yet to materialise. There are problems in framing rules and meeting cash flow. If you want to take any action, then keeping all these facts in view, if more power is given to them, I think, it would be more beneficial for the state and thus the state will remain under Indian Union.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI P. NAMGYAL : I would like to bring it to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister that the status that was agreed to be given to the Chief Executive Counsellor of the Autonomous Hill Council, is yet to be given. We had to frame certain rules for the state that is also not being done. What their projection and protocol should be, also remain undone. The people of the state are saying that the issue is pending with the Central Government. I would like to request hon'ble Prime Minister to look into this issue is pending with the Central Government. I would like to request hon'ble Prime Minister to look into this issue as well as the problems exist there.

I also want to mention that when the Congress was in power, at that time the Prime Minister, during his meeting with a delegation of the council of that state had decided to send a high powered team there. That team had visited Ladakh. But it was our misfortune that the flight was cancelled twice and they failed to visit there. Thereafter elections were announced and this issue could not be solved. I want that the powered team that was to look into the problems of the Autonomous Hill Council of Ladakh, should be sent again by the Prime Minister. With these words, I support the resolution seeking extension of the President's rule, with the hope of early Assembly elections and early restoration of normalcy.

[English]

SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN (Trichur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Resolution moved by our hon. Prime Minister on Kashmir. I congratulate our beloved Prime Minister for his bold initiative in instilling new hope and confidence in the people of Kashmir Valley. His visit to the State, I suppose, has opened a new chapter.

Sir, keeping in view the limited time at my disposal, I do not want to go to the various points which have been placed before us by Shri Jag Mohan. I do not agree with his contention that the people of Jammu and Kashmir would not be won over by a concerted effort. That is what the United Front Government under the leadership of our Prime Minister is trying to do now.

Sir, I want to confine myself to just one point, that is, whenever we think of elections in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, suddenly the issue of autonomy, the parameters of autonomy comes up. The respected hon. Member has cautioned us about giving autonomy to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The danger lies in it.

That is quite true. I should say that the question of autonomy should not be discussed in isolation with the State of Jammu and Kashmir. I think the historical task before the United Front Government should be to review and reforms the Centre-State relationship. It is high time that we bring in some fundamental changes in the Centre-State relations. We have to take into confidence our great people with their diversity and unity. We must take some lesson from our past experiences. No doubt, hostile forces are working on our borders. They are being openly and hiddenly helped by the imperialists and new-colonialists. They try to destabilise our great country. This is quite true. How should we face them? In my humble opinion, we have to mobilise the patriotic people of different States. We have seen the harm that we have done to the great Sikh community. We had just antagonised them and the separatist forces had capitalised from our mistakes. What price do we have to pay for our mistakes! We are not trying to win over them and we must win over all of them. I would say that we should apply the same criteria for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

I remember the Lion of Kashmir. He was second to none in patriotism, secularism and in holding the democratic values. He was a great Indian. Let us go through the pages of the history. Have we not committed mistakes in the past? Have we not upheld the democratic rights of the people? Have we not done things which should not have been done? I pay homage to our *jawans*. They are sacrificing their lives in order to preserve the unity and integrity of the country. We salute them. But their sacrifices, the might of the gun, the might of the armed forces will not and should not suffice to protect the unity and integrity of our great motherland. For this important task we have to face some naked facts.

I come from Kerala. About 38 million people live there. They have their feelings and aspirations. There is sometimes bitterness among them. There are ample reasons for that. The Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government aims at growth with social justice. How can we achieve that with the present rotten Centre-States relations?

Could you plan, could you work out an economic programme for this vast subcontinent unless you make some urgent fundamental reforms? You can take the people into confidence. They are great patriotic people. They love India. They are second to none in patriotism. See the great people of Tamil Nadu. You have heard of the Telugu *Swabhimani*. They want to develop, they want to go forward, they want to plan for themselves. I can say this from my experience in Kerala. We have vast resources of wealth, we have the most educated and intelligent

manpower and get, we are lagging behind. Unemployment is acute. Everything we are lagging behind. We are lagging behind in infrastructure in the industry and in everything. Why? Because Kerala is farther away, if some people think that it is a scar on the map of India on the shores of the Arabian Sea, that is an aberration. We have 30 million mighty people. Ours is the land of Adi Shankara. We have supplied towering personalities to Indian nation. But this system of Centre-State relations, this system where everything is centralised has to be changed.

Maybe our leaders were quite right in 1940s when they adopted the Constitution, but fifty years have passed. Things have changed in these past fifty years. People are urging forward. We cannot ignore the global developments. Considering all these things, it is essential and urgent now to recast the Centre-State relations. Do not hesitate to devolve powers. By doing that you are strengthening this great country and the unity and integrity of the nation will be preserved. That is the only way to preserve the unity and integrity of this great nation. See Kashmir election in this perspective.

I once again congratulate our Prime Minister for taking the initiative to mingle with the people, to hear them, to know their aspirations, and to know their bitterness to see as to how to tackle it in the people's way, and not in the way, as somebody has put, which would drag us into war. In that way the country will disintegrate. That is why this perspective has to be changed.

Dear Prime Minister, have no illusion about the many things that have to be done during the five year term. We could do nothing perhaps, but if you do one thing, that is reforming the Centre-State relations to devolve powers, if you can do that one thing, history will claim that you have done a good thing in the right time.

If the United Front Government can do that, that will be a historical task. In that context, we must win over the people of Kashmir. They are our brothers. The imperialists, the neo-colonialists and the hostile forces on the border can be exposed. So, love the people of Kashmir, mingle with them and win over them. When the elections are held and the elections are over, please deliberate, deal the Centre State relationship as entirely as a national task, not merely through an isolated discussion about the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to make one point. The hon Member has mentioned that I have said that the people of Kashmir cannot be won over by concerted efforts. I never said so...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : Mr. Chairman, the Government has sought the extension of the Presidential Rule and I do not think there is any difference of opinion about supporting the extension of the Presidential Rule. It is good that while this Statutory Motion for the extension of the Presidential Rule has come, at the same time there is a ray of hope that Kashmir is heading towards the restoration of a civil Government.

The hon Prime Minister has been very categorical in his statement that the elections to Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will be held in September or at the most by the first week of October. We wish him well.

While we are sorry that Kashmir has been under the Presidential Rule for the last six years, we are happy that the United Front's Common Minimum Programme has brought about a new enthusiasm and I must congratulate the Government for that particular enthusiasm, which has been created.

Sir, I may be permitted to read out, from the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front, these very fine words which have created enthusiasm not only among the people of Jammu and Kashmir but also everywhere. With respect to Jammu and Kashmir, the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front says

"The resolution of the problem of Jammu and Kashmir can only be through consulting the wishes of the people. Respecting Article 370 of the Constitution as well the wishes of the people. The problems of Jammu and Kashmir will be resolved through giving the people of that State the maximum degree of autonomy."

Sir, these are the words, I would say, which have generated a great enthusiasm. I must appeal here to every section of this House and through you, Sir, I must appeal to the entire country to see that we do not now do this great disservice to the country by quibbling and quarrelling with these noble sentiments which have been expressed in the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front.

The question about autonomy is being raised, a quarrel is being created with respect to the term 'maximum autonomy' but then we will be doing the greatest disservice to the country and to Jammu and Kashmir itself by raising such questions at this present juncture. Let us, therefore, move unitedly and see to it that Kashmir receives our undivided attention. A civil Government in Jammu and Kashmir is a necessity in the interests of Jammu and Kashmir itself and the matter cannot be overemphasised. The civil Government in Jammu and Kashmir is necessary

so that the people of Kashmir themselves run their own administration and also, have control over the security forces over there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, elections are to be held as we are told, latest by the first week of October. Here, however, I must point out and emphasise upon the fact that in these elections every attempt and every effort must be made in order to see that the elections are fair and impartial. They must be just and fair.

About the last parliamentary elections there are a number of allegations. I do not want to go into the details of those allegations. There are allegations of rigging, there are allegations that there was forced franchise, and there are allegations of malpractices. We have several reports with us.

Here, I have the magazine *Mainstream* dated June 8, 1996, Volume 34, Issue No 27. Then we have two articles here by a four-member team that visited Jammu and Kashmir during the elections and was eye-witness to the situation over there. The reports that are there are very shocking. They cannot be simply brushed aside. I must especially prevail upon the Prime Minister and the Government to study these things and to see that proper adequate steps are taken in order to have just and fair elections.

Sir, in the parliamentary elections, I am constrained to say that our Press was perhaps the first casualty. A circular, for example, was issued, I believe, on or about the 17th of April and that Government circular instructed the editors of the Press, of the dailies over there, not to publish the viewpoints of the extremists. There was a reaction by the extremists and the extremists threatened that if their point of view was not expressed and if they carry only the viewpoints of the Government, then they, the extremists, would not allow them to continue. The result was that the local dailies helplessly suspended the publication of the papers for days together. Not only that : The plight of the Press was very appalling. On the polling day itself, we have the shocking report that in Srinagar, thirty Press persons covering the elections were assaulted by certain *jawans* of our security forces.

Now, what I want to say is that a great care will have to be taken, an undivided attention will have to be given to the question of Kashmir in order to see that the things are properly attended to and corrective steps must be taken. We have to win the confidence of the people and assure them just and fair elections. There have been several Parties which did not participate in the Parliamentary elections. That is a challenge to us and I must urge upon the hon Prime Minister to have a dialogue with them in

order to persuade them to participate in the elections. Let each and every Party participate in the elections so that it may have the legitimacy and the full democratic value.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please conclude.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Sir, the moment you ring the bell, I shall resume my seat within twenty minutes. So, you need not be very impatient about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I thought you will finish in twenty seconds and not in twenty minutes.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Sir, I know your limitations and the difficulties. I shall not try to exploit your patience with me. I must conclude by saying that it is necessary for the Government to rethink the plans, the plans of how and in what manner are we going to hold the just and fair elections. Let the riggings, the malpractices which came up during the Parliamentary elections be corrected and let every Party be persuaded to participate in this democratic process. Otherwise, we have shocking reports of the last Parliamentary elections even being described as most undemocratic elections. These are shocking reports. Let the Government take note of that and let us proceed with confidence within and the *Allah* overhead. I wish the Government well.

[Translation]

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA (Jammu) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Motion for extending President's Rule in Jammu and Kashmir for further six months is before the House. Different Members of the House have expressed their views on this issue. I understand that for the last six-seven years bureaucrats are ruling in Jammu and Kashmir in the name of President's Rule. What to talk of Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, even elections to Panchayats and Local Bodies have not been held for a long time. No system in Jammu and Kashmir is functioning in a democratic manner. I think that people of Jammu and Kashmir have been curiously waiting for the last six years for the elections and formation of a popular Government. I feel pleasure in saying that it was Congress Party which started political process first during President's Rule. Militant forces quit the ground.

They did not dare, even in militant affected area, to show off their power. Likewise, many other parties, on one pretext or other, seemed to be restless to show their presence in the valley but the workers of the Congress Party started political process not only in Kashmir valley but in militant affected areas also, endangering their lives and made people mentally prepared for participating in the election. It is a

matter of great happiness that our ex-Prime Minister had planned to hold Assembly election in December and it was to be announced but some parties boycotted it and the elections were postponed. But the people of the valley participated in the recently held Lok Sabha election on non-religion basis and in many areas specially Kashmir Valley and militancy dominated areas of Jammu, the percentage of voting was far more than in normal conditions. I would like to thank the people of Jammu and Kashmir, specially my Muslim brethren, for their valour shown in casting votes inspite of Pakistani and Militancy threat. To say that elections were not held there, in an impartial manner, is one's individual opinion but I am fully assured that our armed forces have honestly discharged their duties and have given protection to the people who were willing to use their right of franchise. It was result of this protection that men as well as women came in large number to cast their votes in their respective areas. It is also a matter of pleasure that Members of Parliament from all the three regions are present today in the House. I think that when the hon. Prime Minister visited Srinagar recently, he held a meeting with the leaders of different parties and that he had assured us that no such steps would be taken in Jammu and Kashmir. No such steps should be taken which may cause a rift among people having faith in different religions. I would like to promise the hon. Prime Minister for giving us such an assurance and I would also like to appreciate the statement made by Shri Mohd. Maqbool Dar who has recently been made Minister in regard to the discussion going on autonomy in which he stated that wherever he went to campaign, no voter in any area had made a demand for autonomy instead the voters had expressed their grievance that backwardness and unemployment prevalent in their areas should be removed, there should be peace and the development of the area should be given thrust. The issue of autonomy has been raised by the people who could not participate in the election and now they want to rehabilitate themselves. They want to base themselves on such issues which can rehabilitate themselves. They want to base themselves on such issues which can rehabilitate them and by doing so they want to destabilise the country. I would like to request you not to destabilise the country by rehabilitating some parties and some persons. Do not come under any pressure which may further worsen the situation of the valley.

15.59 hrs.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In think that we feel ourselves safe under article 370 and if the status of this article is maintained the

people of Kashmir will feel themselves safe and secured. I would like to state that the people in the valley want at this juncture that there should be peace, brotherhood should strengthen and the attention should be paid towards the development of the areas which have come to a standstill for the last 5-6 years. I would also like to state that there is no demand of autonomy by the people especially of Pansufi area of my Parliamentary Constituency which is a Muslim dominated area instead they want that the construction of Mughal Road should be given concrete shape quickly. The People of Jammu want that a separate Agriculture University should be opened immediately there. Dogri language should be included in the eighth Schedule and the Jammu City should be awarded the status

16.00 hrs.

of class B city. So far as the issue of permanent settlement of refugees of 1947 is concerned, people of the valley want that the Government of India should fulfil its promise of providing Rs. 25 thousand to each refugee - family and rehabilitating them. There is issue of rehabilitating the refugees of Chhamb area of 1971 and giving right to some persons who have come from Pakistan and who are still living in dormitory. I would like that these problems should be solved. Another issue is about the unemployment. There are lakhs of educated unemployed persons in the valley. I would like to appeal the Government of India that it should ask the Foreign Companies and NRIs, who are investing in other States, to invest in Jammu and Kashmir. The labourers and technicians who are sent abroad by the Government of India should also include the labourers and technicians from Jammu and Kashmir. I would also like to appeal the Government of India to simplify procedure for passport and visa so that the unemployed persons may also go abroad and find job for themselves. I shall conclude my speech after one point.

I keep Shri Jagmohan ji in a high esteem. But we feel that by dissolving Assembly during his tenure, he had committed a blunder otherwise condition would have been better there before 2-4 years. By dissolving the Assembly in the beginning itself, he has incurred great harm to democracy. Had this not been done, a popular Government would have taken charge of the affairs and this situation would not have emerged. (Interruptions) Now, if the Assembly elections are held there the condition of the State would improve fast and due to normalcy, Jammu and Kashmir will be greatly benefitted. The people of the State will get facilities and assistance. With these words, I support the resolution.

16.02 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Steep Pre-Budget Hike in Administered Prices of Petrol, LPG, Diesel and other Petroleum products

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we shall take up the discussion under Rule 193 regarding hike in the prices of petroleum products. I have received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition requesting me to permit Shri Jaswant Singh to initiate the debate, even though the discussion stands in the name of the Leader of the Opposition and Dr. Laxminarain Pandey. The discussion having been admitted already, we shall start the discussion now and Shri Jaswant Singh will initiate the debate.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : So, you have permitted Shri Jaswant Singh to initiate the debate.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, I have permitted him. I have consented to the request in consultation with your leader. The time allotted for this discussion is two hours.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : Let the House continue. Two hours time is not sufficient.

MR. SPEAKER : I am bound to make you aware about the BAC decision.

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I shall try and abide by your time restriction. I find it necessary at the very beginning to reiterate some important aspects of the objections that we had raised about the methodology of the debate proper. This is not to be repetitive, this is only to emphasize. We have accepted the situation as it is.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : We have accepted it, Sir, because we are seeking the substance of our concern. The substance of our concern relates to the price rise proper, the quantum of the hike and I shall be detailing the substance of it. We had made our point about the methodology and about our wish to censure the Government. It is now upto those who pretend to be in the Opposition while actually being the side-kicks of the Government, like my good friend, the eminent barrister, to establish their *bona fides*.