

The fact is that some vested interests want the fall of the Mulayam Singh Government so as to carry out their designs in Kashi and Mathura and destabilise the nation. It is a B.J.P. conspiracy which is sought to be given effect to by raising this issue here time and again. Today, we appeal to the secular forces to understand the situation in true perspective. B.J.P. wanted to demolish Babri Masjid and Shri Mulayam Singh had prevented it and now similar situation is sought to be created in Kashi and Mathura, which Shri Mulayam Singh is trying to prevent. I appeal to all the people to thwart the designs of such forces in this hour of trial and give an opportunity to Shri Mulayam Singh to prove his majority in Vidhan Sabha on July 8.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastriji, I will give you the time after the Resolution is passed.

[Translation]

KESRIJI, DO YOU WANT TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAQF BOARD ? THE WELFARE MINISTER (SHRI SITA RAM KESRI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, here ...\*....Members of Parliament were consulted several times on this issue. This Bill has been passed unanimously in Rajya Sabha, with some amendments, which we have adopted. Now if the Bill is not passed in this session, then it will not be the responsibility of the Government. If it is proposed to take up the Bill in the next session, its responsibility will be with ...\*.... Members of Parliament.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, is there any convention to say ...\*... Members of Parliament. Some decorum should be observed in the House. Is there anything related to the minority Community, can this language be used ?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will remove that word from the record.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI EBRAHIM SULAIMAN SAIT (PONNANI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a serious and sensitive issue. This is a 1954 Act. An inquiry committee was set up which worked for 14-15 years and made some recommendation on the basis of which this Bill has been brought. Now this Bill is ready since 1993 and it has been discussed threadbare during these two years and is in final shape.

The Bill, in its final form, was circulated today only and we need time to study it. Shri Kesri has worked hard on this Bill and he is in a hurry to get it passed. But it must be studied thoroughly before it is passed. Today is the last day of session. It would be appropriate to discuss it in the next session and pass it because by that time Members will have sufficient time to study it.

MR. SPEAKER : I think the Minister is agreeing to

\*Explunged as ordered by the chair.

It. Now, let us take up the Resolution please. It is a little confusing and yet, we will understand the difficulties and overcome it. Let us not have the lunch hour also. We can have lunch, but not the lunch hour. May I request Shri Indrajit Gupta to sepak please.

AN HON. MEMBER : Sir, how much time has been allotted ?

MR. SPEAKER : I have the names of a few Members. If it is absolutely necessary, they may speak. Otherwise they can help the House to pass this Resolution by voting which is also a way of supporting and expressing the views.

13.16 hrs.

**STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE : APPROVAL  
OF CONTINUANCE IN FORCE OF THE PRO-  
CLAMATION IN RESPECT OF JAMMU AND  
KASHMIR— Contd.**

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (MIDNAPORE) : Sir, in deference to the spirit of your request, I will consciously make my observations as brief as possible.

The point is, this exercise is not a new exercise. This exercise of extending the period of President's Rule in Jammu and Kashmir is an exercise through which we have passed many times in the last five years. And during these five years, the political process in Kashmir has been completely stopped. There is no political process; this is the meaning of extending the President's Rule there for five times. There is no political input of any kind. I am not blaming only the Government. I know that the political parties, maybe for good reasons, have not been in a position to make any political contribution in Kashmir. But the fact remains that now, after so many years, and after all what is going on there, we were in a mood to welcome the idea of putting an end to this President's Rule moving towards the revival of the political process, and as far as possible, preparing the ground at least for holding the elections. Then, unfortunately, this Charar-e-Sharief episode has intervened. In a sense, I think the political process began with the visit of the MPs to Charar-a-Sharief. That is a political process. What else is it ? MPs belonging to all political parties in this House went together in one delegation to Charar-e-Sharief, spent some time there, were received there by a crowd of about 1,000 people, talked with them, gave them an opportunity to speak whatever they wanted to speak to us — whether we agree or do not agree with their views is a different matter. But this was a political process. Previous of this, Sir the complaint had been that there was no arrangement in Kashmir whereby the people could unburden themselves to the administration. There was no arrangement by which the administration could freely make people hear their grievances, their demands, their suggestions and interact with them.

That is mainly because of the extremely bureaucratic structure of the Administration which has been prevailing

there under the present Governor also. So, I think the political process has begun, but it has been interrupted again and now we are back to this unfortunate situation where whether we like it or not, we cannot say that elections should be held within a short spell of time because this President's rule which is now in force will expire on the 17th of July and within that time-frame, we agree that it is not possible, not advisable, not feasible and not practicable to try to hold elections and, that is why, willy-nilly although it is a painful thing we have to go back again to considering this Resolution which has been brought before the House. I do not know that message it will send to the people. It will not send a very good message. It will send the message that we have nothing to offer them except another spell of President's rule. Now from the Government side, it has been said that 'As far as possible, we will try to see that the span of President's rule this time perhaps may not be required to extend right up to six months and we would like to even shorten it.' 'But here comes the question I want to raise today. That is the main question. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister is not here. A few days before Charar-e-Sharief, the Prime Minister has assured some of us that he was going to make a comprehensive statement in Parliament covering all aspects of this Kashmir problem and spelling out what exactly the Government intends to do by way of taking the people of Kashmir into confidence, giving them certain assurances, announcing some sort of a package, a political and economic package and preparing the ground for conduct of elections. I think he was quite frank about it that he was going to make a statement here. That could not be made ultimately because of what has happened. Now we have decided, whether we like it or not, that we have to adopt this Statutory Resolution.

I am not inclined to support it at all unless and until that postponed statement of the Prime Minister is made available to us in this House.

What are we going to do during this period of six months or five months or four months or whatever it is? Every time this has happened here, we were assured that this period of President's rule will be utilised for the purpose of starting a political process and trying to normalise, as far as possible, the situation in the Valley and every time, at the end of six months, it was found that nothing has been done and the situation is back to where it was and even worse than what it was. This time, if that kind of thing takes place again, I think the consequences will be extremely tragic. Therefore, the Government owes it to the country and to this House that now when we are again on opting for this President's rule, the Government should tell us clearly how they are going to utilise this time for the purpose of the political or the democratic process to be revived. Some concrete steps must be taken. Some specific measures must be taken. Otherwise, we do not want this President's rule. Just for the sake of President's rule. The people there must be made to feel that the Government is seriously preparing to give them the opportunity to elect their representatives.

There is no representative in the State Legislature. There is no representatives in Parliament. At least, this situation should change. It is a situation which cannot be tolerated now for any long spell of time. Therefore, how we propose to organise these elections must be told to us. There are many problems. It is bristling with problems. I do not want to under-estimate them.

Apart from political problems, and the fact that the people in the Valley are feeling alienated, this is a fact — whether we like it or not. At least, that is my impression when we went with that delegation, and what we, all of us, felt very much in that encounter we had with those people there was that they are certainly feeling very much bitter and very much alienated. That is a political side to it. They have to tell us what steps they propose to take. There are technical problems, practical problems also. To organise an election in Kashmir not, many things will be required to be done which are not very easy. First of all, your entire election staff, Polling Officers, Presiding Officer and all that, I doubt whether you will be able to get a single person from the Valley who is willing to come forward and undertake such a responsibility. Where will they come from? They will come from outside. Even now, many of the top officials and people who are running the show there are not from Kashmir. They are from outside. Anyway, sometimes that cannot be helped. But for the election purposes, you must make some arrangements as in the past. In the case of Assam, in the 1983 elections, the entire election staff had to be airlifted to Assam from Delhi. Even after that, the elections could not be held in the sense that they were boycotted. There was a call for boycott. Not a single person turned up to vote. This time, I also apprehend that there will be a call for boycott, perhaps, from the Hurriyat. The Hurriyat leaders have already said that they intend to boycott any elections. Of course, if we take certain steps before the elections, a part of the population, I do not say a major part but some part or a substantial part of the people, I think, can be persuaded to take part in the elections. After all, the elections will cover not only the Valley but they have to extend to Jammu; they have to extend to Ladakh. The situation is not the same in all these three regions. We know that. The headache is with the Valley. If there is a call for boycott given by the Hurriyat or by some other leaders, we should not have any illusion that there is going to be a massive turn out of voters. Nothing of that kind will happen. In fact, the Prime Minister had said the other day: "There may be a no-poll or a low-poll. Either a low-poll or a no-poll. Well, even a low-poll is better than a no-poll." At least let them feel that the Government and the people of this country are genuine and sincere in wanting to have an election so that they can have their own elected representatives. The people who are now very prominent inside the Valley, who were not like that earlier, count much. Earlier we used to know about the National Conference founded by Sheikh Abdullah, carried forward by his son. But that is not the position now, Sir. I am sorry to say that. Earlier, the National Conference used to have its cadres, its committees and its units in every village in the Valley. That is no longer the situation. The reasons for it, I am not going into.

Sir, now new forces have emerged. Many new, young leaders have come up through the process of the last few years. Some of them begun with siding with the militants. They were arrested, put in jail and later on released. When they indicated that they were prepared to give up the cult of the gun and were open for negotiations, they were released from jail. They received a tumultuous welcome from the people of Kashmir. I am referring to all these people like Shabir Shah, Yasin Malik and these people. They have declared openly that they do not believe that the gun can solve the problem of Kashmir. There have to be talks. There have to be negotiations. There has to be consultation, which also is one of my charges against the Government that this opportunity is being lost. There is no talking with these people. Nobody talks to them. Nobody meets them. Nobody tries to understand what they actually feel, what they want to do. Nobody argues with them, discusses with them.

But anyway they are there. And I believe that if they are properly handled, they are capable of mobilising quite a section of people in favour of elections. But the idea now is, the Prime Minister has also said it and when we met Shabbir Shah, he also said the same thing, that the people who will be elected in any future elections, they will not necessarily be in a position to run a Government. But if they can at least claim that they have the status of elected representatives, they should be utilised for purposes of further negotiations. The Prime Minister has also told me and he told it to many Members that after these people are elected, we will sit down and discuss with them further details about the future of Kashmir particularly the question of autonomy. What is the meaning of autonomy? Ten people can now have ten different definitions of autonomy. What do you mean when you say that Kashmir should be given as much autonomy as possible within the framework of the Constitution of India? They are saying that they want Azadi. What is Azadi? What is autonomy? Can the two be reconciled? Or are they irreconcilable? We never hear any call for Azadi across the border in that part of Kashmir which is under Pakistani occupation, that means, Azadi from Pakistan. Nobody on that side ever raises a slogan. I asked Shabbir Shah, "are they not your brothers also - the Kashmiris living across the border?" He said, 'yes, of course'. I said, 'you are shouting for AZADI but how is that they never demand AZADI?' He said, 'that is why, I want to go there and talk to them. But I am not being allowed to go. I am not being given permission to go to Kashmir.' I do not know whether all this is correct or not. The Home Minister can tell us about it.

Anyway, somebody has an idea that election may lead to a Government being installed which can function. Somebody may have a different idea that some representatives will be elected with whom we can have more meaningful discussions and detailed negotiations regarding the quantum of autonomy, the definition of autonomy and so on. But there must be people who are elected representatives. We cannot go on treating the Kashmiris in this way. We cannot go on treating the

Kashmiris as though they are some kind of subject people. This is my point on which I feel very strongly. I do not go into all that background of what kind of experience of election and all that they had. It is not proper to talk about it. Everybody knows about it. They know about it. Anyway, we cannot hide it from them. And I want to know and I have made a proposal whether this time the Government of India and all the major parties in this House together not separately, or jointly are prepared to make a public announcement that they will take the responsibility jointly to see that future elections will not be rigged, will be conducted in a free and fair manner. That will entail certain responsibility on all of us which we must discharge. But the people must feel that it is not only the Government which is talking about free and fair elections. We have heard it many times before we know what it is. All the parties here together with the Government should jointly give this guarantee to the people and see that it is carried out.

Then the question will arise about Jammu and Ladakh which are two separate regions. One is a Hindu dominated and the other is a Buddhist, by and large. Elections have to be held in all the three regions. What about all the people who have been forced to leave the Valley and come out and who have practically become refugees outside their own homeland. They are not all Hindus. A big number of majority of them must be Kashmiri pandits. There are Muslims also who have been forced to leave. They are outside Kashmir. Many of them are lying in refugee camps all over the place. But what will happen to their vote, their right to vote? Some arrangement has to be made. It is not something which is beyond the ingenuity of the Government to think of. They must not be made to feel that they are being left out.

People do vote even if they are not physically always able to be present where their homes are. Some arrangements will have to be made, so that they can cast their votes. Some atmosphere must be created in which they can also feel that the way is being paved in which it may be possible for us to return back to our homes ultimately. Maybe, just now they do not want to go. So, I want to know that from the Government.

You are asking for our support to this Resolution. I am prepared to support it, provided you kindly tell us what you propose to do from tomorrow, after this Statutory Resolution is passed. I do not want that after four or five or six months we find that we are back to square one again; nothing has been done; the situation has not improved at all. Those people there are determined to resist any kind of understanding with India. Now the situation has got worse. So many of these people, including the foreign mercenaries are reportedly roaming about in the Valley. They are armed people. The Chrare-Sharief incident has shown that they are very well organised, better organised than our people.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack) : Mast Ful is also there.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Mast Gul may be there also. Their intelligence services seem to be much better than ours. We do not have coordination between our different agencies which operate in such situations. If the Government goes on saying 'what we can do, these people enter these shrines disguised as ordinary pilgrims, we cannot identify them, they get into the shrine and then they stay there, do not move for another few months'. It is true. But any modern intelligence service has ways of tackling such situations also. Our people also can be disguised as pilgrims, not just the people who come from across the border. Our people also can enter those shrines if they know that these people are hiding, taking refuge there. According to the tenets of their religion, they are not supposed to utilise the shrines for these purposes. But they have been doing it repeatedly. It began with the Golden Temple in Amritsar. No tenet of the Sikh religion ever countenance the presence of armed people with their weapons inside that holy shrine for so many months. But they got away with it until forces had to be used to get them out and then there was a political fall out which was tragic for the whole country. We cannot forget these things.

Now we have not had a very satisfactory explanation. I do not ask for it also now as to what actually happened at Char-e-Sharif. We have got so many conflicting stories and so many conflicting versions and the International Press also is going to town on this whole matter. This Mast Gul also was holding Press Conferences there which were attended by media, even the foreign media people who came and met him there and sat in his Press Conference in the place called Groom Mosque. There was a Green Mosque there and that was his headquarters. From there he was transmitting messages. Wireless messages were being received and our people have claimed to have intercepted some of those messages including the one in which he had expressed the desire to go back. There was some pressure from the local people that 'you have been here for two-and-a-half months, three months. Now Baba, it is enough. For God's sake you go now'. He was wanting to go. But it appears that a message came from across the border by the wireless saying that you are not to go, you are to remain there, you stay there till the job which you were sent to do is completed. I do not know whether these messages are authentic or not. After that, this arson and burning took place. Maybe, one thousand or two thousand houses were burnt down and then the shrine was burnt. We went there. We have seen this with our own eyes. There were so many Urdu slogans written on the walls. Fateh ya Shahadat, which means victory or martyrdom. Pakistani flag was also painted on some of these walls. They were there for a long time. The local people told us, 'yes, they were here, we know it, we admit it'.

But what could we do? We had an assurance that the shrine would be protected and these people who are inside will be caught. And what happened? Eventually, the shrine was burnt to ashes and not a single fellow was caught. Is this good for our prestige? Is it good for the prestige of the administration or the Army? The people

were asking us, 'why did not you catch them when they tried to escape and go away from here?' If it is not a question to be answered by us, how can we say?

But the fact of the matter is the Army, of course in my opinion, quite correctly had been given orders not to storm the Shrine. They could have stormed the shrine but the results would have been pretty disastrous for everybody concerned. The Shrine in any case could not have been protected. Even if the Army had tried to go in, it would have been blown up or burnt and some civilian casualties would have been caused. So, they did not go. They were outside at cordon round the place, some distance away. Later, when the houses started burning on the night of 8th and 9th, the Army went closer, they moved in. By that time the Shrine was also set on fire. But these people have got away. The shrine could not be saved.

Some people — I believe it is interested propaganda on which they have been fed or they have been tutored were telling us that this is all being done by the Army, it is the Army which set fire and burnt down all this. Do you like to hear all these things? I was certainly very much upset by the whole experience of this thing, people shouting, shouting like mad people, frenzied people that the Army has burnt down all the houses and the Shrine. Why should they do such a thing? There is no logic behind it. As it is, India is having quite a bad name throughout the world because of our so called Kashmir policy. Why should we do a stupid thing like this to add to our own bad name? But they said, 'no, these fellows have burnt it down'. They pointed out some officers and said, 'these are the fellows who have done it'. I do not believe all these. But, this propaganda, I am sure has spread quite widely throughout the Valley, if not to the other parts of Kashmir also.

We have to move our propaganda machinery. And our propaganda is so ineffective, our side does not say anything. It does not contradict anything. It does not come out with its own version. It just keeps quiet while the other side is broadcasting and propagandizing whatever. It wants throughout the world. So, I only wish to say that now we have got an opportunity, this spell of six months or as Chavanji and the Prime Minister hope it may not require six months there. In my opinion, they are quite optimistic people. But they must tell us what steps they propose to take and whether it is a question of autonomy or whether it is a question of political and economic package.

It is not only the people at Char-e-Sharif, the Governor had arranged a meeting for us also with some so called public men, important people who belong to various parties and so on, who live there. The thing is, they live in the Valley, they are not people based in Delhi or in Jammu. They live there. They also said that the administration and the Army have been thoroughly discredited by what has happened here because they failed, they could not protect the place of religious worship. And you know all this. I do not want to go into all that that Noor-ud-din Noorani's shrine, what it means to the

people of Kashmir, Muslims and Hindus alike. He was a Sufi saint, who was so much revered and so much worshipped by all the people. We could not save it, we could not arrest these people, we could not catch them. So, the prestige is not very high. And therefore, these public men were saying, 'please do not talk about elections until the Government of India is ready to come forward with some political and economic package which is credible and which will at least win over some people to our side'.

Sir, I do not want to take more time. I think it is a very very serious situation. So, we have to make some atonement for our faults. Some scenes of omissions and commissions have been committed over the years. I do not want to go into all that. But there is a good reason, why the Kashmiri people feel so piqued.

But we have no choice. We cannot say, 'no, no, you must hold elections immediately'. It is not possible. But it also does not mean that the President's Rule should go on to the end and nothing will be done. Then we will be in a very bad order, not only here but throughout the world. It is quite true that every time when we talk of elections, they will do something from that side. They are mortally afraid of elections being held in the Valley. Every time we talk of elections, some more people will come across the border, get into some shrines as hundreds of shrines are there. They can get into any shrine, sit there and create a crisis. It is lucky that we got out of the Hazratbal without there being damage and loss of life, and all that. All the credit goes to the people who handled that Hazratbal crisis and managed, to negotiate, talk with those people, tired them out and finally managed to make them come out. Of course, they had no food also. With that one reason, they had to come out. But at least, it was done. So, that was a successful operation.

Now, here we do not talk to anybody. My first and foremost complaint is that the Government and its people — whoever they want to depute, whoever they want to depute as their representatives — do not talk to the people. The Governor does not talk. Every Member who went in that delegation — I do not have their written authority or anything to say — but I am confidently saying it that every Member, whichever party he belongs to who went and had an encounter with the Governor had a feeling that this Governor is not fitted for this job. And, the sooner he is changed, better it is. He does not meet anybody; he does not talk to anybody. He may have been a very good soldier, of course, in his days I do not know. He must have been so, because he was the Chief of the Army Staff at one time. He is a very solidly looking fine figure of a man, all suited and booted, and all that. But he has no reproachment with the people at all. You cannot do anything in Kashmir if you go on like that.

Therefore, I do request the Government to think seriously about appointment of a new Governor, a competent Governor, a political-minded Governor who has a political approach to problems and political approach to the people. It is very essential.

It is very good that you have given them help, financial assistance. Thanks to the hon. Speaker also who had put in his strong word for this that there should be a time-bound programme for helping them to rebuild their destroyed houses and all that. We are told that something is going on, something is being done. There is no way of monitoring as to what is being done. But I take the Government at its word.

There is always a voice saying "we do not want money from the Government, we would not take money from the Government; we will collect our own money and build it". That kind of thing does not last. The houses of poor people are destroyed. So, they would welcome getting financial help, I am sure. So, let them go on. Let the Government if it really wants our sincere support and not just technical support for this Resolution — please tell us what they propose to do, once this Resolution is adopted, so that in two, three, four, five or six months, a situation arises where we can take the risk — it is a risk. But nevertheless, we should take a risk of going for elections in the Valley so that a new chapter can be opened in the history of Kashmir.

13.50 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR)

SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK (Phulbani) : Sir, I rise to support the Resolution for the extension of President's Rule in Jammu & Kashmir for a further period of six months with effect from 18th July 1995. Sir, Kashmir has become a phenomenon in national and international arena. If Delhi happens to be the heart of the country, Kashmir is the head and crowning glory of the country.

As regards the situation in Kashmir, there has been criticism and there have also been suggestions of various types from the Members of both Treasury Benches and Opposition. But it is important to remember that Kashmir involves a serious and sensitive thinking. It should be handled very carefully and in a very delicate fashion.

Yesterday Shri Jaswant Singh expressed certain apprehensions that elections could not be held in Jammu & Kashmir because of so many reasons. Of course, I do admit that the Charar-e-Sharief shrine was burnt down. But prior to that, there was no doubt that we could achieve a lot of success in improving the law and order situation in Jammu & Kashmir. We all remember very well that the Hazratbal incident was handled very successfully for which our beloved Prime Minister deserves praise and admiration. But the Charar-e-Sharief Shrine was burnt down due to a deep, pre-planned conspiracy by Pakistan and other international agencies who do not want that a democratic process should start in Jammu & Kashmir. But our Government has got a very strong conviction and we are deeply committed to start the democratic process and see that elections for the Assembly are held in that State.

Time and again, we have been demanding in this House that a JPC should go and see what is actually happening in Jammu & Kashmir. A Parliamentary

Delegation should go and see the ground realities. At a point of time when the law and order was really in great jeopardy, Government felt that it should be dealt with sternly and strongly. Jaswantji's apprehension is that there are so many migrants who belong to Kashmir and who are forced to live outside Kashmir and they would not be able to participate in the democratic process. It is true. But for that reason alone, we cannot postpone elections because we have to fulfil our promise and our commitment. We have to ensure that the law and order situation improves in Jammu & Kashmir. And the only way to ensure normalcy is to allow the democratic process to start.

Sir, we are hopeful that the situation will definitely improve and a sense of optimism can definitely be imbibed in the minds of the Kashmiri people. This is the assurance given by our Prime Minister very recently. All sorts of support in the form of infrastructure, investment, employment and so on should be given to the people of Jammu & Kashmir. Our Government is very strongly inclined to extend all support to the people of Jammu & Kashmir so that the democratic process can be started as early as possible.

I would like to mention one important aspect. The Opposition alleges that it is not treated properly with due respect and regard. It is not correct. This Government, under the leadership of our beloved Prime Minister is very benign and democratic. Our Prime Minister did not hesitate to send the leader of the Opposition, Shri Vajpayee to Geneva to discuss matters relating to human rights.

That shows the sportiveness of our Government and our leader. We have seen that though the shrine of Charar-e-Sharief was burnt down, yet there has not been much reaction from the Islamic countries. They understand as to why it happened; it was because of a conspiracy hatched by certain agencies. Therefore, it was nothing unusual. But what is really a matter of regret and remorse is that when a MOSQUE at Ayodhya was pulled down, some political party of our country was involved in it. Naturally, it has hurt the sentiments of the MUSLIM people and the minority community. As a result of this, on the one hand, and apprehension is being expressed by the minority community that we do not bother to care about their sentiments and on the other hand, certain agencies of the enemy country from across the border are trying to hatch a conspiracy in order not to allow political stability in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sir, we have seen that apart from the Islamic world, we have also been to gain support from other parts of the world. During the last visit of our Prime Minister to the United States of America, our stand on Jammu and Kashmir as well as our efforts on human rights received a majority support from the American Senators. So, we need to be very careful when debating on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sir, something should be done by which we can have the participation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and initiate the process of holding elections in the State. Then

only there could be some solution. Shri Indrajit Gupta has very rightly held out the view that peoples' participation in the Panchayat and other local bodies is required in order to, at least, pave the way for a better interaction between the Government and the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sir, I am at times really surprised to see that whenever the Prime Minister says something about Kashmir, there is some misrepresentation and misunderstanding amongst the Members of the Opposition. From different places from within the country, there is some demand for certain amount of autonomy that is for some statutory body with some statutory power. In response to that demand the Prime Minister rightly said that we are going to give some autonomy within the framework of the Constitution.

On the one hand, we are criticised because the Governor being an army personnel is unable to soothe and sustain the sentiments of the people in the State. Again on the other hand, we were faced with the law and order situation in the Valley. The State is very sensitive and delicate because it is situated in the border area. Therefore, sometimes we are required to deal with the situation with the help of the military. So, before criticising the Governor on the issue of burning down of the Charar-e-Sharief, we must also see under what circumstances, the shrine was burnt down. Of course, we should also be ready to confess that the law and order situation could well have been improved before the burning down of the Charar-e-Sharief which could have paved the way for holding elections in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

14.00 hrs.

Sir, I am very optimistic that if more time is allowed to pass, we could restore peace in the Valley, and take the State of Jammu and Kashmir into conducive and congenial atmosphere where election could be held and a democratic process could be started. Sir, as I have already said, Kashmir is as important to the country as the head is to a human body. If anything happens in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, that reflects in the other parts of the country similarly and simultaneously. I say that we must be ready to accept whatever the Government decides to do in the interest of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sir, I am very thankful to you that you allowed me to speak. Though I had some more points to express my concern on Jammu and Kashmir, while not prolonging my speech, I would just like to say that this Resolution should be supported wholeheartedly and elections should be immediately held in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

[Translation]

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH (Sheohar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for permitting me to speak on this subject. Every Six months, a Resolution is brought in the House to extend President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir and is passed by the House. Today also, there is unanimity on the Resolution moved by the Home Minister for extending President's rule in Jammu and

Kashmir. There is also unanimity that the present Governor in Jammu and Kashmir should be replaced by another Governor, in case we want to start political process there. It is not the first time that a Governor has been shifted from Jammu and Kashmir, earlier also a Governor was shifted from Srinagar to Ahmedabad because the suggestions given by him were not to the liking of the ruling party. The Governor was shifted from Jaipur to Madras, and also from Lucknow to Bhubaneswar. There is a general consensus in the House today on this issue. We are not making any allegation or casting any aspersion on his other qualities or competence. If we want to start the political process there, we must take into confidence those people who are opposing the political process.

It has been observed that the nation is taken into confidence only when the President's rule is proposed to be extended in Jammu and Kashmir and we also support the measure as a patriotic gesture. The Prime Minister had said 'short of independence' in a very hasty manner. It has sent wrong signals. He must clarify Government's policy. It is being rumoured in Delhi and other capitals of the world that the solution sought to be made of the problem will harm the national interest in the long run. It is, of course, heartening that contradictory statements are not being made on behalf of the Government of India. In the meanwhile, a statement was made by Railway Minister that we should attack Pakistan. The P.M. may not take a serious note of the statements made by the members of his cabinet but at the international level, they are taken seriously. The way international media has highlighted this statement, has done no good to the interest or prestige of the country. Neither have Government clarified its stand on the issue. It has, therefore, become imperative for the Government to spell out a time bound programme to find political solution to the problem and also to take the Opposition in confidence in this respect. We hope the need to extend President's rule for another six months will not arise. That Resolution would of course be passed by this House as well as by successive Lok Sabha. But Government must realise the incalculable harm being done to the national interest.

There is another aspect of the Kashmir problem i.e. the international aspect which concerns Pakistan. It is the political compulsion of the Pakistani politicians to keep alive the Kashmir issue in order to stay in power and once they are out of power, there is a healthy and positive change in their views. There is no dearth of intelligentsia in Pakistan, be it in media, colleges or universities or in other fields who want a solution to the Kashmir problem.

I would, therefore, urge the Government to accelerate the process, and initiate exchange of views. For this purpose, Government must ensure that the Pakistani nationals who want to visit India should be issued visas without delay and hassles. Pakistan has closed the Indian consulate in Karachi which is creating difficulty in issuing visas. Government should, therefore, make alternative arrangements in Islamabad. If there is greater interaction between the people of the two countries, it would help

to remove the divide between the two nations sought to be created through an international conspiracy.

There is a third ramification of the Kashmir problem i.e. the international ramification. How is it that our Government is always on the defensive in this regard? Have we taken steps to remove the shortcomings of our administration there? We will have to take these steps to facilitate the solution of this problem. There has been an offer of economic package for Kashmir. Why such offers are made when militants intensify their activities? Why should we not take steps from today itself to solve their economic problems?

A delegation of M.Ps of the House had visited Kashmir. We would like to know the difficulties being encountered in the rehabilitation work there and whether the pace of rehabilitation is being maintained or not? I do not agree with Shri Indrajit Gupta that people of Charar-e-Sharief will not get funds for rebuilding their houses and Charar-e-Sharief. But funds will be made available in abundance by foreign countries who want to create disaffection and chaos in the country. What is being done to comply with the direction of the hon. Speaker given to the Government to complete the work of reconstruction at Charar-e-Sharief at the earliest? I would suggest that a committee of Members of Parliament should be constituted by the hon. Speaker to monitor the work of rebuilding of the Charar-e-Sharief because people have no faith in the Government machinery.

During the days of cold war in the World, we had friends who helped us at the national and at the Security Council Level about the Kashmir problem, they were sympathetic to us and used to appreciate our stand. But, unfortunately, today we are under pressure. Intelligentsia are invited to the capitals of various countries where they give their suggestions regarding a solution to the Kashmir problem and impress on those countries to advocate that solution. I want to warn Shri Chidambaram in this respect. Government must take into confidence all the political parties. Had the Sarkaria Commission report been implemented, perhaps the present situation would not have arisen. This is the reason that doubts regarding the intentions of the Government arise in our minds. With these words I support the Resolution.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We shall continue the Resolution after the Statements by the Ministers.

14.11 hrs.

### STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

(i) TRAIN ACCIDENTS INVOLVING SEALDAH-JAMMU TAWI EXPRESS AND BKSC GOODS TRAIN AND THE DERAILMENT OF HIRAKHAND EXPRESS.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFAR SHARIEF) : It is with deep anguish that I apprise the