

make a statement regarding communal disturbances in Palghat in Kerala on 13-15 December, 1991.

17.51 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*English*]

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Communal Disturbances in Palghat in Kerala on 13-15 December, 1991

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): According to the information received from the Government of Kerala, the BJP wanted to hold a public meeting on 14th December, 1991 at Mepparamba within town North P.S. Limits, Palghat to protest against the action of some persons belonging to the minority community in causing injury to a BJP worker by throwing stones on 13th December, 1991. The police gave permission to hold the meeting in Saddam Road Junction in Mepparamba. At about 5.00 P.M., the BJP jatha consisting of about 300 persons reached Melmuri. In the meanwhile, a group of about 300 persons belonging to the minority community assembled in Mepparamba Mosque armed with sticks, choppers, etc. and proceeded towards Melmuri Junction. Strong police-bandobust had already been arranged at Mepparamba to avert a law & order situation. The police stopped both the processions at a fair distance and tried to persuade the persons belong to the minority community to disperse but they did not pay any attention a blocked the entire traffic from Shornur side. The police tried to arrest and remove the BJP volunteers and persons belonging to the minority community but failed and the Dy. Superintendent of Police, Palghat fired three rounds in the air to disperse the minority crowd who were pel-

ing stones at the police. The District Collector and S.P., Palghat who reached the spot held discussions with both the groups. They allowed the BJP group to move a few meters ahead where leaders of BJP/BMS/RSS spoke on the occasion. The BJP crowd had swelled to about 1,000. They were arrested by the police in the evening and were let off and both the groups then dispersed. During the night of 14th December, 1991 strong police patrol was arranged in Mepparamba and Melmuri.

On 15th December, 1991 in the morning when BJP/RSS sympathisers went to take bath in Kalpathy river near Jainmedu it is alleged that they were attacked by a group of persons belonging to the minority community. In retaliation, the BJP workers also attacked and assaulted a person belonging to the minority community. Thereafter sporadic incidents of communal violence continued to occur throughout the day in which several houses/shops of rival groups were damaged/destroyed especially in Melmuri, Mepparamba, Venakkara, Firayiri etc. Some vehicles were also set on fire. When the situation could not be controlled, the police had to open fire in which three persons sustained injuries who were later immediately removed to hospital. Also, the police had to fire two rounds at the crowd at about 3.00 P.M. at Puddupally Street in East Venakkara within North Town Police Station limits. As a result of the firing, one girl aged eleven years died on the way to District Hospital, Palghat. In all the police had to open fire on six occasions.

As a result of the stone throwing and other acts of violence by the crowds, seven policemen received injuries who have been admitted in the District Hospital, Palghat, 12 civilians also sustained injuries in the clashes.

The State Government have further reported that a Peace Conference was convened by the Hon'ble Minister of Kerala Government, Shri T.M. Jacob. The Inspector General of Police, Headquarters, and the Deputy Inspector General of Police, North-

ern Range, Kozhikode are camping at Palghat. The State Government have stated that the situation is now under control and police patrolling has been intensified in the areas affected by the communal clash and the situation is being closely watched.

The Central Government is determined to maintain communal peace and harmony in the country. Law and order is a State subject; however, the Centre has from time to time issued guidelines to the States for the promotion of communal harmony. It also shares its intelligence with the States and provides Central forces when necessary. It has also been alerting the States about the possibility of communal violence in different places. Before the BJP started its 'Ekta Yatra' on 11th December, 1991 Ministry of Home advised all the State Governments/UTs to issue strict instructions to the concerned authorities to be more vigilant and keep close watch over the activities of all communal and anti-social elements. A meeting was also convened by the Prime Minister with the leaders of different political parties on 10th December, 1991 to share their considered views in relation to the "Ekta Yatra". Thereafter, I also wrote to the Governors and Chief Ministers of the concerned States and the Lt. Governor of Delhi pointing out that the Yatra could have various implications including those on the law & order front and hoping that a close watch will be kept on the situation arising out of the Yatra and all necessary steps will be taken for the maintenance of security and law and order.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: (Bolpur) Our apprehension is justified. Therefore, what is their reaction and what is to be done? Will the Central Government remain as spectators? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH: (Adoor) Sir, this is a very serious matter.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri G. Venkat Swamy.

17.56 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (SEVENTY-SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL, 1991
(Insertion of new part IX and addition of Eleventh Schedule) Motion to refer to a joint committee.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, viz., the Constitution (Seventy-second Amendment) Bill, 1991 (Insertion of new part IX and addition of Eleventh Schedule) be referred to a Joint Committee of the House consisting of 30 members, 20 from this House, namely:-

1. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar
2. Shri Lal Jan S.M. Basha
3. Shri H.D. Devegowda
4. Shri Digvijaya Singh
5. Shri Bhogendra Jha
6. Shri D.D. Khanoria
7. Shri M.Krishnaswamy
8. Shri Nathuram Mirdha
9. Shri Nitish Kumar
10. Shri Remeshwar Patidar
11. Smt. Suryakanta Patil
12. Shri R. Ramasamy
13. Dr. Sudhir Ray