

The problem should be solved in some easy way.

Earlier peace-marchers have been going to Punjab but now I have heard that a peace-march is being organised from Punjab to Delhi. This development has taken place after the imposition of the Governor's rule. The people have taken steps to change the Governor's rule and also to tell the Central Government as to what political initiative it should take. Those measures should be accepted. When hon. Shri Narasimha Rao had visited Amritsar on 14th April, he had himself said that they would start reviewing the cases of the persons detained in Jodhpur jails within 2 to 4 days but it has not been started so far. When a person of such a status makes a statement but no further action is taken on that, then it is very disappointing and also becomes a matter of much discussion. You should give some thought to this matter. In view of these facts, Government should withdraw the resolution to extend further the President's Rule in Punjab. You have not yet dissolved the Assembly in Punjab. Therefore, let those who can form the Government go ahead with it and perhaps by being out of power for 6 months they might have realised the mistakes which they had committed earlier. They may now be afforded an opportunity to run the administration in the light of the new experience they might have gained in the changed atmosphere.

With these words, I oppose this resolution and appeal for the restoration of popular Government in Punjab.

16.12 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) :

Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform the House about progress on the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, including the background to the operations of the Indian Peace Keeping force (IPKF) in the Jaffna peninsula.

The Agreement has been acclaimed internationally. There is a widespread consensus that the full implementation of the Agreement will be of universal benefit. Tamil aspirations would be met, the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka preserved, and peace and stability restored to the region. Some of our important security concerns would also be met. Therefore, the Government of India are, committed to the full implementation of this Agreement. We believe that this resolve is shared by the Government of Sri Lanka.

In the three months since the Agreement was signed, we have made satisfactory progress on many fronts. The Sri Lankan security personnel have stayed in their barracks. Home Guards in the Eastern Province have been disarmed and the Special Task Force has been largely withdrawn. Over 3300 Tamil detenus have been released under an amnesty, and the rate would have been freed if the LTTE had not disrupted the return to normalcy.

The contours of civil administration in the North and the East were being drawn on lines suggested by Tamil representatives ranging from the LTTE to the TULF. The interim Administrative Council had been announced, with the LTTE given a decisive majority share. The return of the refugees from India had been planned in consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka. We had identified priority areas for rehabilitation, to be financed through a grant of Rs 25 crore announced by India. Peace had been established in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The return to normalcy was imminent.

It is a matter of great regret that the LTTE threw all this away. They went back on every commitment that they had given us. They deliberately set out to wreck the Agreement, because they were unable or unwilling to make the transition from militancy to the democratic political process. The LTTE were given every possible encouragement and opportunity to join the political mainstream and even to play a leading role in the process. The LTTE leadership, which had masterminded the killings of

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over 600 rival Tamil militant cadres, were permitted to retain their personal arms for their security. They were allowed to hand over their arms at their own pace, even though this enabled motivated parties to question our resolve to implement the Agreement. Our High Commissioner flew to Jaffna several times to find out what the LTTE leadership wanted. On September 28, an agreement was reached. The minutes signed conceded every single demand of the LTTE concerning the composition and functioning of the Interim Administrative Council. In return, the LTTE reiterated their support to the Agreement and once again promised to lay down arms. The establishment of the Interim Administrative Council was announced in accordance with this agreement. But within hours, the LTTE went back on their commitment.

The LTTE chose to adopt a course of violence. While they promised us support to the Agreement, they started a propaganda campaign against India and the Agreement through meetings and through their illegal broadcasting facilities. They organised disturbances in Jaffna, disrupting normal life and the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation. They threatened all Tamil civilians who disagreed with them. They hunted down and massacred about a 100 members of other Tamil militant groups. They tried to inflame Tamil opinion in Jaffna by imposing an unnecessary and tragic fast unto death by one of their cadres to demand concessions that were already under discussion and were resolved to their satisfaction.

At this stage the unfortunate suicide of 12 LTTE cadres took place. The LTTE killed the eight Sri Lankan soldiers in their custody and massacred over 200 civilians in the Eastern Province. They publicly repudiated the Agreement and started armed attacks on the IPKF.

The LTTE's repudiation of the Agreement, their attacks on Sinhals and Muslims in the East and their murder of Sri Lankan soldiers threatened to produce a Sinhala backlash that would have destroyed the Agreement and produced a

cycle of violence worse than any the island had so far seen. The victims would have been mainly Tamils, especially in the South and the Central Highlands.

The House will appreciate that this could not have been allowed to happen. In these circumstances: the, IPKF were given instructions to apprehend anyone carrying arms or involved in the massacre of civilians. At this point, the LTTE launched attacks on the IPKF. There was than no alternative to disarming the LTTE.

The IPKF were given strict instructions not to use tactics or weapons that could cause major casualties among the civilian population of Jaffna, who were hostages to the LTTE. The Indian Army have carried out these instructions with outstanding discipline and courage, accepting, in the process, a high level of sacrifices for protecting the Tamil civilians. I place on record Government's very deep appreciation of the dedication and high moral standards with which the Indian Armed Forces have conducted operations in Jaffna, against a group that flouts every norm of civilised behaviour, coercing old men, women and children to act as shields, using innocent children as human bombs, murdering prisoners, and booby-trapping houses of the people of Jaffna one whose behalf they claim to be fighting. We wish a speedy recovery to our wounded soliders. I pay homage to the soldiers who have layed down their lives. I am sure the entire House will join me in conveying our tribute to our gallant armed forces and our deepest sympathies to the bereaved families.

Despite grave risk to IAF helicopters, emergency food supplies were air-dropped over the city even during the fighting. The IPKF shared their rations with the refugees in Jaffna, cooked food was sent to refugee camps as soon as these came under the IPKF's protection. We have made a major effort to restore civil supplies, amenities and administration to Jaffna. Simultaneously, shiploads of essential food and other supplies have been sent to the port of Karkesanthurai. Relief convoys are being sent to Jaffna,

even though the LTTE continues to attack these humanitarian missions. Electricity and telephone communications, which had been sabotaged by the LTTE, have been partially restored with equipment flown out from India to replace what had been damaged. A small team of civil administrators has been sent out to advise and assist the IPKF in relief and rehabilitation work. The Indian Red Cross have sent over there personnel, and, in cooperation with the local Red Cross, they are doing a remarkable job of providing relief and medical assistance in the city.

The unfortunate developments in Jaffna were not of our making. We reacted with a heavy heart when there was no alternative. We got the LTTE everything they wanted, disregarding the cost to our credibility with other militant groups and all communities including the Tamils. We overlooked the LTTE's vicious propaganda even before the outbreak of hostilities, not just against the Agreement but against India and the IPKF. In the Interim Administrative Council, they were given a clear majority of seven out of twelve, including a Chairman of their choice. Other Tamil militant groups were excluded at their insistence. While the Government of India have accommodated every concern of the LTTE, the LTTE have not honoured any of their commitments.

Even after they attacked the IPKF and precipitated the hostilities, we have repeatedly said that if the LTTE hand over their arms, support the Agreement and renounce the path of violence, they can still play an important role in the future democratic set up. President Jayewardene has already promised them amnesty again if they surrender their weapons and support the Agreement. The LTTE have responded only with ultimatums and renewed propaganda, spreading misinformation and lies aimed at tarnishing the image of India and our armed forces. We still hope that better sense will prevail.

Throughout we have worked towards ensuring an early and effective devolution

of powers so that the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils are met and they can live in security, with dignity and honour as equal citizens of Sri Lanka. Even while trying to control the violence unleashed by the LTTE, we have been mindful of the need to ensure an early return of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from India and the need to ensure that fresh colonisation of Tamil areas does not take place.

There were reports of Sinhala colonisation in the East even after the Agreement was signed. This naturally caused concern to the Tamils, particularly since large numbers of Tamils of the Province are still refugees, either in India or in the North. We have taken this up strongly with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that this does not happen. The Sri Lankan Government have agreed to the formation of a Monitoring Committee, consisting of all communities, to investigate complaints of fresh colonisation.

We are keen to ensure an early return of Sri Lankan refugees in India to their homes. The Government of Sri Lanka have also agreed to cooperate with us to facilitate the early return to their homes of Tamils who have been internally displaced. We hope the process will start soon.

Long-term peace in Sri Lanka will hinge on the devolution package. The Sri Lankan Government have already introduced legislation in their Parliament to amend their Constitution to provide for the creation of Provincial Councils and the devolution of powers to them. The legislation also provides for the creation of a single Tamil province in the North and the East. In the light of Sri Lanka's unitary constitution, this legislation is unprecedented. The powers it seeks to devolve to the Provincial Councils are considerable. However, some of its provisions do not fully meet Tamil expectations.

This matter was discussed extensively with President Jayewardene in Kathmandu and during his three day working visit to Delhi. We have received firm assurance that if, over the coming months, difficulties arise, the Sri Lanka Government will make such changes as are found necessary.

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The Government of India believe that, despite some problems and delays, many of which were foreseen but unavoidable in the resolution of an issue of this magnitude and complexity, this Agreement represents the only way of safeguarding legitimate Tamil interests and ensuring a durable peace in Sri Lanka. Some have chosen to criticise the Agreement. None has shown a better way to meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, restoring peace in that country and of meeting our own security concerns in the region. We have accepted a role which is difficult, but which is in our national interest to discharge. We shall not shirk our obligations and commitments. This is a national endeavour. I am confident our efforts will have the full support of this House.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobichettipalayam): Why do you not announce ceasefire for 48 hours or 72 hours? It has been requested by my hon. Chief Minister.

SHRI N. V. N. SOMU (Madras North): Why don't you stop the killings and call the LTTE for negotiation?

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow we shall discuss it. We are going to have a discussion tomorrow.

Shri Mewa Singh Gill.
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No question. Tomorrow we shall allow discussion. Please sit down.

SHRI N. V. N. SOMU: Hundreds of people may be killed overnight.
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No. Sit down. Please take your seat now. No rules allow it. No question. We shall have discussion tomorrow. That is what I have said.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down. It is all right. It cannot be done now.

16.28 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE. APPROVAL OF CONTINUANCE IN FORCE OF PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION IN RESPECT OF PUNJAB — *Contd.*

[*English*]

SHRI M.S. GILL (Ludhiana): Mr. Speaker, Sir, as a believer in the basic principles of parliamentary democracy and basic ethical values of the institution I would not have supported the imposition or extension of President's rule in Punjab but for certain reasons which are compelling and the circumstances are such that I have no option except to support the present resolution seeking to extend the President's rule in Punjab for another six months.

16.29 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

At the time when the promulgation of the President's rule was sought in May, 1987, I supported the motion for those very reasons and those very reasons are still existing there. Therefore, I am supporting this Motion. I am giving the reasons for the same and please listen to these reasons.

SHRI CHARANJIT SINGH WALIA: United Akali Dal can never support President's rule or extension of the President's rule through this resolution which has been brought in the House. Shri M. S. Gill's views are his personal views, not the views of the United Akali Dal.

SHRI M. S. GILL: Now the people will know whether I am speaking on behalf of my party and my own self because they know the real position.

There were compelling reasons when the legislation for imposition of President's rule was made and those reasons are still existing in Punjab and that is why the period of extension is mentioned for a period of six months. Now, what are the reasons?

The reason is, there is no single party in Punjab which alone could form