

1. RESOLUTION APPROVING PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION UNDER ARTICLE 356 IN RELATION TO ASSAM

AND

2. MOTION RECOMMENDING REVOCATION OF THE PROCLAMATION—Contd.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Have I ten minutes, Madam?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Madam, I rise to support the Proclamation of President's rule in Assam. I have not been to Assam, I have never been to Assam, nor am I in any way an expert on the affairs of Assam. But, Madam, I rise to speak because I feel like one of the millions of our countrymen who are now watching the disintegration of our country. At some point the agony that we all feel about disintegration of the country before our eyes, has to be voiced. As somebody outside the State, who feels by watching, not just on behalf of those who actually live there, who are actually involved or concerned about the affairs of Assam, but those of us who are standing here helplessly watching disintegration of the State, I feel that on behalf of those people I have to say something

Madam, of course, I went through and I have heard with great attention my colleagues who spoke before me yesterday. Many reasons were given. Many reasons were given for the deterioration of the state of affairs in Assam. In my opinion, Madam, all these kinds of movements and these kinds of disturbances are usually brought about by socio-economic problems to start with until the alienation spreads, until the people of that State feel left out, certain people in the

State feel left out of the national mainstream, until the restless unemployed youth are drawn into the attractive promise of rebellion, feeling of the future which may or may not exist. So, the problem usually starts with socio-economic problems between that State and the rest of the country. To that extent, Madam, I feel that everyone of us here, I feel that everybody in the country, is to be blamed for the state of affairs in Assam, for the state of affairs in Punjab because we all have contributed to the feeling of alienation either by omission or by commission. This feeling of alienation is something that we all have contributed. And we all have to join together now, forgetting all affiliations and other commitments, to make the people who are at the forefront of the ULFA movement, to make the people of Assam who feel left out of the national mainstream confident, to give them a confidence that the people of the country care about them. I for my part want to say that I care about it. I will work with all my heart to see that all of us join together once again in the same manner, with the same inspiration that inspired all of us during the freedom movement.

Having said that, Madam, I also want to say that I was going through the various reports and also reading newspapers over the last few months. The reason why I wanted to participate in this particular debate was a sense of shock over a particular statement made by the then Assam Chief Minister, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mohanta. I do not know whether it is true. I sincerely hope that it is not. If the Chief Minister of a troubled State can make a statement like that, for that statement alone, I think, he should be called unfit to rule over the State, and President's rule should have been imposed. Madam, I read in the newspapers that when Mr. Mohanta was asked recently whether

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it was true that after 6-00 p.m. nobody dared to walk in the streets of Guwahati or in many other parts of the seven or eight districts of Assam because of the terrorists activity, because of lack of security to the people.. (*Interruptions*) he seems to have replied that the people of Assam do not go out at night because the wether is cold. If this is the kind of statement that the Chief Minister of the State can make in the background of the tremendously troubled conditions that are prevailing in Assam today, I think, for that reason alone we have well got rid of that Government

SHRI V GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Madam, the Government of Andhra Pradesh should be got rid of. If that is your argument, then, what about the Andhra Pardesh Government? Eleven districts there are under the control of Naxalites

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. I have not yet come to that argument

SHRI V NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry) Why have you forgotten Tamil Nadu, Mr. Gopalsamy?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think the discussion before the House is about Assam. We are not discussing each and every State. If the Members so wish, they can ask the Chairman to give permission to discuss each and every State in the country. But please confine to Assam and don't interrupt. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V GOPALSAMY: She has referred to a particular State

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. She is speaking on that particular State.

SHRI V GOPALSAMY. It should be applied to other States also

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. No, that cannot be. Mr. Gopalsamy, we are discussing Assam. I would

request the hon. Members to confine themselves to the parameters of the discussion before the House.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Assam) All Assam Members are listening to their speeches without interruption. I wish other Members will also listen to us without interruption. We have difference in views, but yet these differences be expressed

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. I wish you had been here yesterday, Madam, Mr. Gopalsamy's entire speech related to Tamil Nadu.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Because I was not in the Chair, he got the liberty (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. Madam, I will confine myself to Assam. I just want to dwell briefly on what I have understood from the situation. This was a Government that came into existence with such a tremendous fund of goodwill after the Assam Accord, when the Rajiv Gandhi Government held elections there. It was with such a great amount of goodwill and hope that the people of Assam installed this Government. It was not the Congress Government, but many of us in the Congress were proud that elections have been democratically held and that the people had elected them. This was exactly what Mr. Goswami said yesterday. I was reading his speech and I have heard part of it saying that people do not want the Congress Government. They want their own Government. This was the Government that the people wanted and how badly this Government has failed the people of Assam. As an outsider, who is not involved in the internal affairs of the State, to me a mere reading of the activities of this Cabinet sounds absolutely shocking. First of all, you have famous stories which have been written all over the Press about the fight between the Chief Minister and the Home Minister, which has been

so well publicised, when the Home Department was bifurcated and political affairs was taken over from the Home Department. I don't know how the administration of the State could have run on those lines. Then, you have the well-publicised story of how a Cabinet Minister beats up a passenger on an Indian Airlines plane and all the other Cabinet Ministers on the plane had to get down from there. Then you have another instance where you hear of a Cabinet Minister beating up an Opposition MLA. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY. In every political party it is common.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. Yes, in Tamil Nadu you beat up the Leader of the Opposition.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY. In the Government of* it was also going on

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Don't mention the names of the people who are not present in the House to defend themselves. That will not go in the record. Even in a lighter vein you should not do that.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY. It concerns your Maharashtra State

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. I am from Maharashtra and from India. Just now we are in Assam.

SHRI S JAIPAL REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, a complimentary reference can be made.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Some people may not like the compliment.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. In Tamil Nadu, we had that proud privilege of having beaten up the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly itself. So, I don't know what Mr. Gopalsamy has to say on this.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY. This is another canard they are committing. (*Interruptions*)

DR. NAGEN SAIKIA (Assam): Madam, all the Members of the Congress from Tamil Nadu begin their journey in Assam and end it in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY. Let me take the story forward to Andhra. What about the problems between* and the dissidents, which led to communal conflagration.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. I am very sorry to say we are not discussing the confrontation between the people. We are discussing about Assam and the Statutory Resolution on Assam. So let us confine ourselves to it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY. Will Mr Jaipal Reddy resolve the dispute between.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Mr. Narayanasamy, my ruling includes you also. You are not above that. Please sit down. I want to be very serious. I don't want anybody to refer to any matter other than Assam. If any matter is referred, I will immediately call the Minister to finish the discussion. This is not the way to keep on wasting the time of the House. It is a serious discussion. Things are happening in Assam. You should confine yourselves to Assam. (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Order, please. No more of it. Please abide by my advice. It is in good faith because at 1.30 I will finish this Bill.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. Madam, I am faithfully sticking to Assam. Then we hear about an incident of how another Minister misbehaved with a lady from some other country. There was an incident how a Minister came drunk to a Cabinet meeting and misbehaved with a lady.

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colleague. The incidents go on *ad infinitum*. I do not want to bring all these incidents on the record of this House. This was a second sad reflection on them obviously. I just want to confine myself to this point. In the middle of all this they completely lost control over the administration of the State. There was totally no connection between the Cabinet and the administration of the State. More than half-a-dozen Chief Secretaries and Directors-General of Police were changed in 4 years and 9 months. There was no goal. There was no united goal for the people of Assam. There was no achievement that the Government was unitedly working for the people of Assam because all the Ministers were at cross-roads. It was because of this the then Chief Minister of Assam made another astounding remark that crime was negligible in Assam. Madam, I cannot understand whether he was living in a dream world or whether he was actually saying all these things in the hope that the people of the country would believe us if we make a remark that crime was negligible and tea gardens were functioning normally.

The other last reference I want to make is to the kindest statement that has been made which is the reason why I stand before you to speak. Another extremely shocking statement was made. I think it was "ULFA has the support of the people". Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta appeared to be an apologist to the ULFA activities. It is all right if certain people in Assam, if the political leaders of Assam, if they were trying to understand the working of the "ULFA has the support of the people" stand what the ULFA was trying to do, if they were trying to bring those people into the mainstream and make them subscribe to the Constitution of India, if people like that made a statement like that or even his colleagues—I do not want to keep extending the list—if certain people, if somebody made a statement then I

would have understood that this was the beginning of a dialogue and this was how the ULFA could be persuaded to join the mainstream. But when the then Chief Minister of Assam spreads his hands and says "ULFA has the support of the people," he sounds like an apologist. This is why I am not surprised over the allegation against the then Chief Minister and his Cabinet that they were extremely soft towards the ULFA. It holds a certain amount of water. I want to say something about the Government of Assam.

DR NAGEN SAIKIA: Is it permissible to refer to persons who are not present in the House?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When we discuss about the States, naturally, the House will have to discuss about the Government and the Heads of the States also come into the picture. She is referring to him when he was in his official capacity. It is not an allegation. It is about the functioning which she is referring to.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Madam, I want to refer to the attitude of the National Front Government. If the Government of Assam was responsible for the 50 per cent mess that the people of Assam and the country find themselves in the then National Front Government should take most of other responsibility. Most of the responsibility and the blame has to be laid at the door of the previous National Front Government. According to me the then Prime Minister, Mr. V. P. Singh was guilty of criminal negligence. I want to say that he actively turned a blind eye. (Time bell rings). Madam I will finish in two minutes. He turned a blind eye to the activities of the ULFA. I know that there will be an uproar and it will not be my intention to provoke any hon. Member and I am not going to refer to that old statement that it is AGP by morning, AASU by evening and ULFA by midnight. I am not subscribing to that

statement at all. But I do want to say that the then AGP Government was a part of the previous National Front Government. It was for that reason that Mr V P Singh has completely turned his head away from the people of Assam and denied them basic justice under the Constitution of India. Madam, today, Mr. V. P. Singh turns around and says that the imposition of President's rule in Assam is an undemocratic act. What was he doing at that time when his own Finance Minister, Prof Madhu Dandavate was making a statement about the AGP Government? Prof Madhu Dandavate clearly conceded that the atmosphere in the State of Assam was very bad and free and fair polls cannot be ensured. When the Reporters kept asking him that he took great pains to avoid the term "President's rule" while explaining his position, he admitted that his party was demanding President's rule without actually saying so. Prof Madhu Dandavate further said, I quote, "Our clear understanding was that the situation was going out of control of the State Government" What was the then Prime Minister, Mr V. P. Singh doing at that time? He did not listen. Then, Madam, when Mr. Mufti Mohammed Sayeed's meeting was disrupted, when Mr. Madhu Dandavate's meeting was disrupted what was the Prime Minister doing? Mr. Mufti Mohammed Sayeed blamed Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta. He actually went on record saying, as the Home Minister of India that in spite of repeated requests by the Centre, Mr Mahanta has failed to take effective steps against the ULFA. He stated that the AGP had not taken any action against the ULFA and in view of this, if the law and order situation of the State had not adequately improved, the holding of free and fair elections was impossible.

Then, Madam, out of interest I will say this Mr Jaipal Reddy is not here. It is the same schizophrenic attitude. As I do not want to pull any controversy, I will put it in another way. I think they are just having a

very political attitude over this. They are not being true. The National Front Government were not being true to the interests of the people of Assam. They were blowing hot and blowing cold at the same time. What they did when they were in Government landed the people of Assam in this mess and till today, the same thing is continuing.

And, the State Janata Dal President, Mr. Golap Borbora, makes a statement like this. He holds the Chief Minister, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta (Interruptions).

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE (West Bengal): He was not a member of the previous Government. How can he be referred to?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Jayanthi Natarajan, he says that you have referred to somebody who was not a member of the Government.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: I did not say he was a member of the Government.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: His objection is that nobody who was not a party should be referred to.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: I am not saying anything about him. I am quoting him. That is all.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: That was the ruling of the Chairperson. The ruling of the Chairperson was that nobody absent from the House should be referred to. That was, Madam, your ruling.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: I am not making any allegations.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a newspaper report.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Hiteswar Saikia was not allowed to be referred to.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. Madam, I am quoting him with approval.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a newspaper report, according to her. She is only referring to something which appeared in the newspaper.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE. Hiteswar Saikia was quoted from a paper.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. I do not know who objected to it.

DR G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh). She herself

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE. From that side

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. The State Janata Dal President himself welcomes President's rule in the State and blames the Chief Minister Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta and the AGP Government holding them responsible for the imposition of President's rule in the State. He also says that the AGP Government did not initiate any steps to strengthen the administration or to bring about an improvement in the law and order situation. (Interruptions)

Then, you have, Madam, the extremely eloquent spokesman of the Janata Dal at the Centre, Mr Jaipal Reddy. This is what Mr Jaipal Reddy says about it. He says that they are totally opposed to the sudden and unilateral decision of the Chandra Shekhar Government, both on Constitutional and on practical grounds. It is shocking that such a draconian step has been taken without consulting the Opposition parties. This is the Janata Dal's view. This is the way they speak with two voices. The State Janata Dal President says one thing. And Mr. Jaipal Reddy totally dissociates himself from the whole thing. This is the way the then Prime Minister of India Mr. V. P. Singh, had baptised. (Interruptions) and totally ignored the situation and abdicated his res-

pensibility of ensuring that the people of Assam had a proper and Constitutional Government functioning before them.

Madam, I just want to make one more pointed reference to the question of developmental activities.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Mrs Natarajan, I have many names. As I announced, at 1.15 p.m., I will call the Minister.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. In two sentences I will finish this and one more point and will sit down. (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Her party has got 40 minutes.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN. The reckless spending and financial (Interruptions) Madam, if everybody interrupts like this, how am I to finish quickly?

The reckless spending and mismanagement of the AGP Government has brought the State to a state of financial emergency. The funds which were allotted to the State under the scheme of Free-Medical Care up to 2000 A.D. Madam, then various funds which are allotted for development works, have been diverted for non-Plan expenditure, and except for the annual financial grants from the Centre, no other grants were obtained because no schemes were submitted by the Government of Assam. Madam, when a State like Gujarat spent Rs. 136 crores for housing, Assam spent Rs. 4 crores. Where Tamil Nadu spent Rs. 120 crores for Khadi and Village Industries, Assam could not even spend Rs. 1 crore. Therefore, there is no use in blaming any particular Government at the Centre to say that the economic problems of the people of Assam are due to lack of funds from the Centre. I think, the Government of Assam has been criminally negligent in using the funds which were already allotted. We have even the report that the para-military

forces which were sent by the Government to look to the safety of the people, even those forces were not used by the Government of Assam. Therefore, we cannot blame the Central Government totally for not sending enough funds. Madam, in the name of the financial emergency, the Government has taken a totally unconstitutional decision not to pay salaries to over 3 lakhs government employees.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN To conclude, Madam, in my opinion Article 356 should not always be looked upon only as a draconian step or as an undue and unwarranted interference by the Central Government. In this case, we now have to look upon Article 356 as a way—I plead with the Central Government to do this—by which assistance from the Centre and from the people of India will be extended to the people of Assam. President's rule should be used as an instrument of assistance rather than of intervention. To this end, the Central Government should strive to restore the political process, should strive to start a dialogue with all the people who are concerned and should in any case, eschew State repression because if President's rule is misused, if repression is brought about, then we are going to drive the people to the arms of the ULFA and this is something which has to be avoided at all costs. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr G Vijaya Mohan Reddy Now, I want to announce to the Members that very little time is left and by 1 15 PM, I am calling the Minister and by 1 30 P M (Interruptions)

DR. G VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Madam, my party time must be given to me.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Eight minutes have been allotted to you.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Madam, you will please consider that Assam is unrepresented in Lok Sabha today and the only House where Assam is represented is Rajya Sabha.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am allowing the Assam Members to speak. I would urge everyone to speak. But I am only reminding, let us be brief.

SHRI M. M JACOB (Kerala). Madam, your proposal seems to be incorrect. Of course, Assam Members have a right to speak more. We called this Session only for Assam and Goa and Assam is still pending.

उपसभापति : विजय मोहन रेड्डी जी, आप के 8 मिनट हैं, आप जरूर बोलिए ।

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY. Madam Deputy Chairman, 27th November, 1990 will go down as a black day in the history of the democratic movement of our country. Article 356 has been blatantly misused. I vehemently oppose the declaration of President's rule in Assam, declaring the entire State of Assam as a disturbed area and calling army to take control over the area, invoking Armed Forces Special Powers Act. This is something unheard of in the history of free India. This could be only by an irresponsible Government, who have to totally depend upon the Congress (I) for its very survival. Madam, it was only the Congress (I) that has constantly been demanding the imposition of President's rule. To justify their argument, they have been saying that AGP and AASU are one with ULFA as a separatist force. Such a statement could only come from the most selfish group which wants to come back to power through the backdoor. To call AGP and AASU one with ULFA is to cast a slur on the patriotism of the Assam people who have thrown up AASU, AGP, in their glorious struggle for

[Dr. G Vijaya Mohan Reddy]

six long years, sacrificing thousands of lives to overthrow the obdurate and most reactionary rule of the Congress (I). After so many years of their rule, they had done nothing for the people of Assam except that of dividing the people of Assam and suppressing them, for whom the profits of a few handful business houses is much more important than the interest of the people of Assam

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE. He can lay it on the Table of the House

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY. The Congress Party was not interested in the welfare of lakhs of tea plantation workers who are the lowest paid in the country. A handful of businessmen are earning maximum profits. Here I quote Shri Darbari Seth who is the Chairman of Tata Tea:

"Yes, we are guilty of everything they have said. We owe Assam a debt of gratitude. From there we take away so much and give back so little."

This is the Chairman of the Tata Tea Board. These big businessmen are understanding the problem, but the Congress Party can never understand. My party strongly opposes separatist groups like ULFA but the method to combat is through having faith in the people of Assam, by allowing the election process when the elections were due and the Election Commission had made all the necessary preparations for it. I know Assam as a WHO Epidemiologist. In 1973-74 I was in-charge of Assam and North-Eastern States for Smallpox Eradication Programme. I visited all the districts and many villages in Assam. Nature has gifted Assam with bountiful rains, forest wealth and all other resources, but the people were exploited to the hilt. They were very poor. When I was going round, I was told that the cinema houses were not owned by the As-

samese. The plantations were owned by the Britishers who later sold them to business houses. Therefore, all the people of Assam were left out of the economic planning and its implementation. (Interruption) . . . After visiting the towns and villages in Assam I wondered if it was the fate of the Assam people. Could they not rise and take destiny in their own hands? This resulted in the Assam Accord of 1985 but to the disappointment of the Congress Party, the AGP Government came into power. Rajiv Gandhi Government had put the Accord in cold storage. They did not do anything. Setting up of a refinery: no progress; increasing the oil royalty: no progress; gas cracker project: no progress; setting up IIT: no progress; sealing of border: no action. This is the fate of the Accord. . . (Interruption) Employment opportunities are nil. Does the Centre have no responsibility towards Assam? This party Congress Party, was interested in pulling down the Opposition Governments. What more can they do? Madam, hon. Gurupadaswamy stated yesterday that so many projects were given, but today they are getting nullified. Royalty is being reduced from 374 to 314. (Interruption) . They are not issuing the letter of intent to the gas cracker project. It is now six weeks that Operation Bajrang has been in action. Governor was very much pleased in his latest interview that they succeeded in eliminating ULFA training camps, arresting their leaders, seizing huge dumps of arms and ammunition and unearthing of Rs. 2.75 crores of money from their camps. In my opinion six weeks is a fairly long period for this type of army action and it is time to call the army back to the barracks to protect the fair name of the army. The atrocities committed by the army are being reported in sizable space in the local newspapers, according to the Times of India News Service. Even if a fraction of the news is correct, then it is not good for the army and the country. Every one says that the democratic process should be started

and elections should be conducted in March. We welcome such a stand. But will the forces of reaction behind this whole exercise allow sanity to prevail in Assam? Will business circles whose interests are at stake allow it? Will the Congress-I who always thinks that it can come to power only if the problem continues as in Tripura, allow it? I ask the Home Minister why the non-official chairmen of all the corporations and boards are being removed as if another political party has come into power in Assam? Why should they be removed? Is it not a political game being played in Assam? I ask of the Home Minister, There are reports that the carrot and stick policy will continue in Assam as has happened in Manipur and Nagaland. If this is true, then it is a very sad day for the unity and integrity of our country. I ask the Home Minister: Is the situation in Assam worse than the situation in Punjab and Kashmir? I give here information as given by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Disturbed Areas Act is in force in Punjab in Amritsar, Ferozepur and Gurdaspur. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act is also in force in these areas. In Jammu and Kashmir the whole of Anantnag, Baramulla, Badgam, Kupwara, Pulwara and Srinagar and areas 20 kms within the line of control of Rajouri-Punch are brought under the Disturbed Areas Act. Of course, under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act there is no area. This is the information. I do not know how some of these people think that the whole of Assam is a disturbed area where the army has to make a sweep. What is their reasoning? In Punjab in these places while thousands have been killed, only 113 have been mentioned in the Governor's report. Extortions and kidnappings have taken place on a bigger scale in Punjab. If the Government thinks that the situation in Assam is improving then it is time to take a decision to send back the army to the barracks. You must immediately start the election process

and hold free and fair elections in March 1991. If the Government does not respond to this, the people of Assam will give a fitting reply as they have done during the six years of their glorious struggle. Thank you.

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL (Gujarat): Madam Deputy Chairperson I congratulate the Government for bringing Assam under President's rule because subversive activities were going on in Assam. The activities of ULFA are anti-national. The previous Government, even when it knew that the situation was becoming worse in Assam, did not take any action. Yesterday Shri Gurupadaswamy said we were discussing, we had discussions, there. Then why was no action taken? The Governor's report was that the situation was becoming worse day by day. Even yesterday the seniormost Member, Shri Dinesh Goswami, was speaking as if he was addressing a public meeting in Guwahati and not Parliament. He did not say a word about ULFA activities. He only wanted that elections should be held. If they felt that the agitations in Assam were becoming worse, they should have said something about the law and order situation also. The majority of the Members of the Opposition did not say anything about the law and order situation. Some spoke about development. Yesterday Shri Gurupadaswamy said that all top people were not non-Assamese. If the top people are non-Assamese, is it the crime of those people? They have no courage to come forward. Even my State is being ruled by non-Gujaratis. Ninety-nine per cent of officers in Gujarat are non-Gujaratis. But we do not feel and we do not say that we are being ruled by the other people.

Then, with regard to development, just now Dr. Vijaya Mohan Reddy said that there is no development in Assam. How will development take

[Shri Vithalbhair M. Patel]

place in Assam if the law and order situation is very bad? If the law and order situation is very bad, no industrialist will put up industries there. Even when the Government of India is prepared to give gas free to the industrialists, they are not prepared to go there and put up industries. You should think about it first. When the Government is prepared to give gas free to industries, the industrialists are not willing to go to Assam. Why? It is for the Assamese to think over this question. They should think about it and create a situation there in which the industrialists would willingly go there. It is for the Assamese people to do this so that the industrialists would be able to go to Assam and start industries there.

Then, Madam, Mr. Dinesh Goswami said yesterday that the Assamese are nationalists. Who challenged it? Nobody says that they are not nationalists. Why are you giving such a certificate when nobody challenged it and nobody criticised them in this regard?

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY (Assam). Do you know how many industries have been started in Assam?

DR G VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY
Zero!

SHRI VITHALBHAI M PATEL
No tea was being produced there because of the activities of the ULFA. No tea could go out of Assam and exports were totally stopped. Yet you say that everything was all right in Assam? If you have no control over the ULFA, then you should admit it and say that it is not possible for you to control the ULFA. The former Chief Minister was briefed by the central Government, when he came to Delhi last year, about the proposed move of the Central Government. Only the Chief Minister and the Home Minister of Assam knew about it, about the proposed operation. But how did the news reach the ULFA acti-

vists? The ULFA militants left Assam before the Army started its operation there! How did they come to know about this? There were 600 trained guerrillas and 4,000 trainees and all of them had sneaked into the jungle and hill areas of Burma!

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY. How can you say that? ..
(Interruptions) .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not permitting you because your name is there and when you speak, you can refute it. (Interruptions)... I am not permitting you. Your name is there after him. While you make your submissions, you can repudiate what he says. Now do not interrupt, because we do not have enough time. If you interrupt, he will get more and you will get less!... (Interruptions)

SHRI VITHALBHAI M PATEL
Mr. Home Minister, you should not hide anything. Whatever secret information the Army had supplied you, you should produce before the House. The Army and the security forces had said that even the former Chief Minister and the former Home Minister of Assam were involved in the ULFA activities. If this is so, the Government should take action against the former Chief Minister and the former Home Minister of Assam for their active involvement in the ULFA activities. It is also the duty of the Government to find out whether this information is right or wrong.

There is another thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the House. Mr. Kamal Morarka, the Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister, has said:

"I cannot say certain things about Assam. I know that, because I am under oath. But I can safely say that Assam's law and order situation had reached its peak. It was farly out of the control of the Assam Government."

He has also said.

"Assam would have seceded if the President's Rule had not been imposed. After all, there is the Central Government and there is article 356. We ourselves have been saying that article 356 should not be misused. But what was happening in Assam was a fit case for using article 356 because there was a positive indication of a part of the country going out of control. There was the secessionist movement which was going on and nobody bothered about what was going on."

So, if the Government has more information besides the report of the Governor, it should also be brought to light.

Lt Gen Baljit Singh, the Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, who is currently supervising the counter-insurgency operations against the ULFAs said "All such army actions have to be backed by solid intelligence, which was clearly lacking in this case", because the State Government has not taken any interest in use of intelligence to curb the activities in that area.

Now it has come to light that the ULFAs have linked with the LTTE tigers of Tamil Nadu. Some of the weapons used by ULFAs were the same which were used by LTTE tigers. The GOC-in-C, Eastern Command Lt Gen K. S. Brar had said "Improvised explosive devices used by ULFAs were very similar to those used against the Indian Peace Keeping Force by the LTTE in Sri Lanka." It is said that LTTE commandos had imparted training to select ULFA hit-squad. Recently it has come to light that six camps were running in Tamil Nadu itself by LTTE (Interruptions).

AN HON MEMBER, I object to it (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do not make a reference to any other

State. Confine yourself to the subject matter (Interruptions). I am doing it. I am protecting you (Interruptions). Please take your seat. No mention of any other State. You speak about Assam (Interruptions). Do not interrupt. Please sit down.

SHRI S K T RAMACHANDRAN (Tamil Nadu). It is operating from Tamil Nadu in connivance with the Tamil Nadu Government. When a similar statement was made by the Prime Minister in the House, the DMK members did not raise any objection. (Interruptions)

SHRI T R BALU (Tamil Nadu): There is no evidence about the camps. Let the hon Member substantiate his charge. Otherwise he should withdraw his statement. (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One person I cannot understand if two people are speaking together (Interruptions). Just a minute. Please do not interrupt. Please take your seat. (Interruptions). I will ask them to substantiate. You sit down. (Interruptions). I request hon Members not to bring Tamil Nadu into it. (Interruptions). Please sit down. Please take your seat. (Interruptions). Be cool. Sit down (Interruptions). Please sit down. Nothing will go on record if unnecessarily the Member speaks. I said, if he has made any allegation, he will substantiate it. He is capable. He is as good a Member as you are. And he protects everybody's right as you would. Let him speak. I have identified him, not you, neither them. So, please do not interrupt.

SHRI VITHALBHAI M PATEL. Madam, the AGP Transport Minister, Mr Bharat Chandra Narang openly said that the ULFA cause is justified because the people have genuine grievances against Delhi, but we do not support its method of armed struggle or its goal of secession. The Minister is knowing the activities of the secessionists. The Minister himself says

[Shri Vithalbhai M. Patel]

that. Even then, they have not taken action. Then, what should the Central Government do? Should they allow such secessionist activities? Are you in support of secessionist activities?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude. I have three more speakers from the Congress side

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Therefore, Madam, action taken by the Central Government is justified. And now, Madam, what is going on in Assam? They have prepared false cassettes against the Army that Army has raped the women and this and that. The cassettes are full of falsehood. Not a single woman is raped by the Army. To give a bad name to the Army, they are doing this propaganda. And the Government of India should stop such type of propaganda or enquire whether any such incident has taken place. And if it has not taken place, then such cassettes should be burnt in Assam. Thank you Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Smt Bijoya Chakravarty She is a Member from Assam. I request the Members to hear her in peace.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Madam, I consider the President's Rule in Assam as completely unnecessary and unwise and an immature decision of an irresponsible Government. And I feel pity for some of the Members who want to speak about Assam but have got no knowledge about the topography of Assam.

Madam, Assam is languishing all these years and 40 years of Congress rule led Assam to a path of complete devastation and destruction, and that is why there is insurgency not in Assam alone, but in the entire North-Eastern region. And I sound this warning in this House that if you want to pursue such type of policy, it will be

disastrous. You want to say that the President's Rule can contain everything, it cannot control any problem whatever it might be. Moreover, the declaration of entire Assam as a Disturbed Area and giving the Armed Forces special power entrusting more power to the Army is disastrous. We come to know from the hon. Home Minister that the Governor said in his Report that only three districts of Upper Assam -- Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Lakhimpur -- have got some ULFA elements and disturbance from ULFA. Then, why the entire 24 districts of Assam have been brought under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act and the Disturbed Areas Act? What is the reason for declaring the entire State of Assam as a Disturbed Area? What is the reason behind it? Is it a fact that the present Government wants to give lever to the Congress (I) people? Is it a fact that the Congress(I) wants to rule Assam in a proxy way?

Madam, because of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, it is free for all in Assam. The Army can kill in Assam at will. Actually they are killing people. We are getting reports everyday. The innocent people who are killed are the old people, young boys and girls. Just now my colleague, Shri Chaturanan Mishra read out a report. So, all these are students. These are college-going students, school-going students who are rounded up and tortured like anything.

Madam, I want to say here that giving too much power to the Army is dangerous. It is true in Assam. It is true in Punjab, and it is true in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country. So, I tell you here that in Assam the Civil administration is completely collapsed. In fact, some of the Thanas are captured by the Army, and through the Thanas, the Army is ruling Assam. Madam, I give you a few examples. DCs and SPs of

Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Sibsagar were arrested by the Army and kept in the Army camps for more than ten hours. This is what has happened in Assam. And one Circle Inspector of Barpeta has been tortured like anything although that person was in full uniform. Madam, if we do not win the confidence of the civil authorities and the civilian population, we cannot control the State and cannot solve the problems of the State. As unlimited power has been entrusted to the army, there have been wide-ranging ramifications, which is evident in many cases. The good name of the army has already been tarnished with several rape cases. I myself, with hon. Member Dr Nagen Saikia and Mr David Ledger visited certain parts of Assam in the first week of December. Madam, Assam women are by nature very shy; but they openly showed their bodies and marks of brutality committed on them. They were college-going girls of a Dibrugarh college and the college-going girls of Tinsukia. I can give you the names if you want. I can show you the pictures. These are the pictures with names, and they were gangraped; they were brutally tortured. (Interruptions).

SOME HON MEMBERS: Shame, shame.

DR. G VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: We request the Home Minister to investigate.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: For your information I want to tell you, Madam, . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may send the information to the Home Minister and I am sure he will look into it.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: And even a ten-year old girl has not been spared by the

army personnel. I have got the photograph. I have got the record and I have got the evidence. These army personnel should be arrested. Somehow, the army behaves there as if they are behaving in a vanquished territory, as if they are the alien forces and they consider Assam as a foreign territory and they are committing every sort of torture in parts of the State. I want some Members of the House comprising representatives from all parties should visit that State and see for themselves what happened there. It is really unfortunate that you think that every Assamese is an extremist.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh). Madam, hon Member is saying about the State of Assam and she is saying something about the personnel of the Indian army. Madam, India houses, clothes and feeds one of the largest armies in the world today. We are, of course, concerned. Madam, army has been overused in our country for the past so many years. We are misusing them. Therefore, an allegation like this has been made that army is raping children and women. It is a serious charge and this leaves me totally shaken, and if we are going to make such serious charges on the floor of the House, shock waves are going to go down to all the rank and personnel and further demoralise our armed services. However, we cannot afford an atrocity like this to be committed by people in uniform. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI VITHALBHAI M PATEL: We don't know whether. . . (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: You are committing atrocities on women even in this House. . . . (Interruptions).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. She is trying to ask the Government to find out. It is a point of order. Why do you react to it? She is protecting the army.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Don't generalise it.

DR. NAGEN SAIKIA. You are most welcome to go there and see the victims.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Please sit down. It is unfortunate. The hon. Member is raising a serious point. Serious allegations have been made against the army. We hold our army in great esteem. Now if these charges are being levelled, then the Government must find out and let the people know. That is what she is saying. Why should you react to it? It is absolutely a very valid point.

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL. She has already said it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Then don't object. If the Member wants to say, she is free to say it.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY. Please bear with me a little more. You know that I am the daughter of a serviceman. Services are truly in the secular spirit in the country that is left today. Please don't distract if we are trying to convey something serious of this nature and if we are going to accuse the army, which is the last thing that is left for us, then we are in serious trouble. It is not just Assam alone. It is the entire nation which must be seized of this matter. Therefore, I am saying—I plead with the Government, through you, Madam—that we cannot view this issue in isolation, in relation to only Assam. I beg of you. I have repeatedly raised this on the floor of the House. We have not looked into what is happening with our armed

services ever since 'Operation Blue Star'. I had raised this question with the last Government, asking 'Was there a drop in army recruitment?' They said 'No', which is a lie. It is an untruth. I would not like to use the word 'lie'. It is an untruth or misconception. We have used the Army at so many levels that the concept of allegiance of the men in uniform to the nation is gone. For me, sentimental as I am, it is terrible. It is a terrible atrocity on my sensibility to think that the Army is indulging in rape, rape of children in particular. Therefore, we cannot ignore this. I am sure, hon. Members across are going to ask the Home Minister to look into this. I say, 'Please look into this with utmost speed'. Please look into this and if the Army has to be notified, if the Armed Forces have to be notified, it should be done so that they start reviewing and reorienting their services towards the service of the nation.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. You have made your point, a very valid point. If an allegation is levelled against our Army personnel, it has to be looked into because we all have great respect for our Army and we hold it in great esteem. Therefore, Members should be careful even while levelling allegations.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI. Madam, may I point out that it is not our intention to decry the Army? But these instances have come to our notice. If you see a report which has appeared in today's 'Indian Express', it would show that, today, the situation in Assam is extremely fluid. The danger as I see today is the development of an atmosphere of antagonism against the Army and these activities in such an important border State have tremendous and dangerous consequences. Therefore, we are raising it and I would request the Government to look into it and see that these things do not happen. She has visited those places and she is speaking with all responsibility.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have said that if she has got any evidence, she can pass it on to the Minister and I am sure, he will look into it. Now, Mrs Bijoya Chakravarty, will you please keep in mind the limited time at our disposal and conclude early?

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Madam, I say that branding the entire Assamese people as militants or extremists is very unfair. I strongly demand here that the Government should withdraw the Army from the soil of Assam. They should also withdraw the Armed Force (Special Powers) Act and the Disturbed Areas Act in relation to Assam. Through you, Madam, I would warn the Home Minister. If you do not do it, if you do not withdraw these draconian Acts, if you do not ask the Army to stop the killing and harassing of the civilian population and the raping of women and children, the consequences will be terrible and dangerous. Assam will give you a fitting reply as it has given in the past.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: These things will increase the sense of alienation in Assam. The sense of alienation is already there. These things will only increase it and whatever thin link is there between the North-Eastern Region and the rest of the country will be snapped.

I don't stand here to extol extremism to the sky. I stand here to condemn those who are responsible for creating the kind of organised extremism that we see in that part of the country. Today, the Army is not able to contain the situation in Punjab as well as in Jammu and Kashmir. Even in Andhra Pradesh, which is run by the Congress Party, 11 districts are under the control of Naxalites. Decades of discontent, exploitation and a sort of colonial expansion have sown the seeds of frustration among the young people. By killing people, you cannot stop all these things. Even Hitler could not liquidate the entire Jewish community.

Madam, I am happy over what the Prime Minister said yesterday. I am happy that he has agreed for a dialogue. This is the best way to bring these young people to the national mainstream. Of course, I do not support these people who are taking a different path. But there are some reasons behind it. Yesterday, my colleague Gurupadaswamy said that during his Ministership he could not give prominent post to the Assamese people because they were not efficient. I challenge the hon Member, though I said not because both of us belong to the National Front. When he was the Minister, we repeatedly requested him to give a post to a particular person, but unfortunately, he belonged to the Assamese community. Though he had all the qualifications, he had been denied the opportunity. So today there are 20 lakh unemployed young people in Assam. Out of them 5000 are engineer graduates. Hardly 2 per cent Assamese people are employed in oil concerns, like ONGC, Indian Oil, tea concerns and postal or railway departments. What will these 20 lakh unemployed people do? (Time bell rings). I am concluding. I welcome the move of the Prime Minister. He wants to have a dialogue with ULFA people. That is a good move. He also wants to hold election. Through you, Madam, I want to make one demand that the President's rule should be withdrawn as early as possible, democratic process should be started and before holding election the two draconian Acts should be withdrawn. My another appeal is that more than one designated courts should be set up in every district because from remotest corners and different parts of the district they have to come 500 kilometres away to Gauhati. If this is done, the Assamese people will think good of the people. Otherwise, the consequences will be dangerous. I already sounded you about this. So, please withdraw the two draconian laws and hold election.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Thank you Madam Deputy Chairman. At the very outset I am being reminded of Dr Vijaya Mohan Reddy who called 27th November a black day. I would only tell him that the history of independent India is full of black acts and it is very difficult to distinguish the day. Madam, before going into discussion within my limited time I would first refer to a speech of Mr. K. C. Pant, the former Defence Minister of the country and hon Member of this House, which he gave in Orissa. He gave a very salutary advice that army should not be called in too often to confront the civilian population. The fact is, we do not like to weaken the morale of the army, but when the people are confronted by the army, the Government does make them to confront with each other and this does not augur well for the country. At the same time, it does not speak well of the police forces, including the paramilitary forces. If they are not able to deal with the situation, what is the use of continuing with them? The other question is with regard to the code name given to the army operation in Assam. What does Operation 'Bajrang' mean? Already the country is witnessing communal disturbances. There is the controversy of Ram Janambhoomi and Babri Masjid. Bajrang is associated with those who are engaged in communal activities. If we do not take into account that, at least Bajrang Bali is associated with a particular religion, and army, as Mrs Renuka Chowdhury said, is perhaps the only secular force in the country today. Why should our army be heaped upon with such a parochial name? Why could not their inventiveness find out some other, more acceptable, term? The operation itself is unacceptable and, on the back of it, this particular naming reveals a mind which, if not taken care of immediately by the Government, may lead to danger, may shake the confidence of the people even in the army. Therefore, there should be clear instructions that this type of code name should never be used by the army. To me

it seems to be atrocious from the day I happened to hear of it and it offends all my rational senses, all my nationalist senses and all my secular senses.

Now, I should say, the left parties are all opposed to article 356 of our Constitution which authorizes the Central Government to impose, in the name of President's Rule, a rule by the Government at the Centre. It is strange that the present Government, whose many frailties and many weaknesses are known, even to them should have initiated this as their first major act, the President's rule in Assam, where election would have been due by December and where there was an elected Government, as Mrs. Natarajan has acknowledged, in spite of all her plans against the AGP Government, which was returned with a vast majority. So, a Government with a vast majority was dismissed, on which ground it is not very clear. Even the Governor who made the report, Mr. D. D. Thakur, in respect of the proclamation of President's rule there, had to admit in Delhi that at least so far he had nothing against the AGP, but to save his face he had to say, "There are many papers which have been received and we are just sorting them out to find out if there is anything." Such a tenuous plea just to supersede a popularly elected Government is ingredient enough to give rise to a situation where even insurgence may take place. I don't like that such threats should be given, but the Government must keep this in mind.

Madam, I should say that Assam is the mother of six States now. Undivided Assam has been divided into six States, barring Tripura, the seventh sister. Now, perhaps, the Bodos may agitate, Kabri-Anglongs may agitate, yet it is difficult for Assam to accept further vivisection, further reduction in their area which will affect their economy, which will affect their continuity, which will affect the prospects of employment

there, all of which together, perhaps, have been responsible for the ULFA movement. The reasons for that have to be gone into and it is not to be suppressed just with the help of the army.

But what has been done, really, in Assam? I should say that the AGP has demonstrated the utmost restraint. We have our own differences with the AGP. Such differences are there with many. But their forbearance, their patience, in the face of the gravest provocation, of over-effort, by the Government of the country, that patience cannot be under-valued when we consider their organizational capacity in the whole of Assam, their appeal to the people and their command over the people. Therefore, I would tell

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Prof Bhattacharjee, finish

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Yes, just one minute

I support Mr Goswami's Resolution. But Mr Goswami himself has suggested March or April, not really the restoration of the AGP Government. So, the earliest election is the only way out by which this Government can save its face and can also respond to the democratic opinion of the people of the State.

Thank you, Madam

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: After the lunch, we would have further discussion and reply on the Statutory Resolution on Assam (*Interruptions*) पहले बैठिए । Just a minute

मेरी बात पूरी होने से पहले आप कैसे खड़े हो रहे हैं । अब यह डिस्कशन लंच के बाद होगा । उसके बाद एक छोटा सा बिल है, उसे क्लॉक करने के बाद रीजल मेशन होंगे ।

The House is adjourned till 2-30 P.M for lunch.

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty-one minutes past one of the clock

The House re-assembled after lunch at thirty-three minutes past two of the clock, The Vice-Chairman (Shri M. A. BABY) in the Chair

- 1 Resolution approving President's Proclamation under Article 356 in relation to Assam, and
- 2 Motion recommending revocation of the Proclamation—contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY): Shri Khyomo Lotha Absent

SHRI HIPHEI (Mizoram): I rise with a very happy mood to give my support to the motion moved by the hon. Minister of State for Home, Mr Subodh Kant Sahai.

While sitting on that side, we supported another motion like the Constitutional Amendment for extension of President's Rule in Punjab. Now, sitting this side, we support this President's Rule imposed in the State of Assam. We do not change our mind, we do not change our principles, we do not change our thoughts with the change of four seats and division numbers

It is obvious whenever important issues are taken up, there are at least two opinions. Today also we have two opinions. One is for the motion and the other is against the motion. I would like to mention here that in this world everything is imperfect. It has its own merits and demerits. So also is the imposition of President's rule in the State of Assam. It has good points and it has bad points. It has its own merits and it has also demerits. We have to think what is more. To me the merit is more. I am from the State of Mizoram which is one of the most sensitive border States in India. It was a part of Assam till 1972. We all know what a