

I am sure that the whole House will join me in expressing our relief and happiness that the Prime Minister is safe and is back amidst us.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

Re: Indo-Sri Lanka agreement

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI): Madam Deputy Chairman, yesterday I returned from a brief but momentous visit to Colombo and I would like to take the House into confidence about the outcome. I consider the visit momentous because His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka and I signed an Agreement on the 29th of July, which aims at bringing to an end the difficult conflict which has afflicted our friendly neighbour Sri Lanka for years. The House is aware of the background of the ethnic conflict between the citizens of Sri Lanka which has its roots in complex historical and socio-economic practices. The conflict assumed acute dimensions over the last four years endangering the very stability, unity and integrity of Sri Lanka.

Things reached a low with the outbreak of unprecedented violence against Tamils in Sri Lanka in 1983. I do not wish to go into the details of the large scale killings and the extensive sufferings which affected the Sri Lankan people. The period between July 1983 and May 1987 was a particularly tragic chapter in Sri Lankan history. Thousands of civilians were killed — Tamils, Sinhalese, women and children, even monks, priests. Thousands were rendered homeless and became refugees, as it were within Sri Lanka itself. India received nearly 150 thousands Sri Lankan Tamil refugees.

India has a deep interest in Sri Lanka's unity, integrity and stability. The entire country has felt concerned at the strife in Sri Lanka. President Jayawardane sought our good offices in finding an equitable and enduring

solution to the crisis. We agreed to help. Our efforts were directed towards getting the difficulties and apprehensions of Sri Lanka's Tamil citizens removed, so that Sri Lanka could preserve its unity and integrity as well as its multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multi-religious plural character. Four years of patient and unremitting dialogue culminated in the Agreement signed in Colombo on 29th of July. President Jayawardane and I have also exchanged letters agreeing on measures to meet our mutual concerns and to strengthen our bilateral relations.

We have structured a framework for a durable solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem. The Agreement meets the basic aspirations which animated the Tamils' struggle, namely, the desire to be recognised as a distinct ethnic entity; political autonomy for managing their political future; an appropriate devolution of governmental power to meet this objective, the recognition of the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka as areas of historical habitation of the Tamils, and the acknowledgement and designation of Tamil as an official language of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The Agreement constitutes the Eastern and Northern Provinces of Sri Lanka into one administrative unit with an elected Provincial Council and a Chief Minister. Powers would be devolved to the Provincial Council within the framework of the proposals finalised between May to December 1986 to ensure a full measure of autonomy to the Provinces in Sri Lanka.

The Emergency in Sri Lanka is to be lifted in the near future. The cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms is to take place within a defined time frame. A general amnesty is to be granted to all militant cadres. Elections to the Provincial Councils are to be held within three months.

[Shri Rajiv Gandhi]

The Agreement suggests the holding of a referendum on the basic issue of the link between the Northern and Eastern Provinces by the end of 1988, which the President has the discretion to postpone.

The President of Sri Lanka and I have also exchanged letters in which Sri Lanka has agreed to be responsive to India's political and security concerns. The Agreement and the letters detail the obligations which India has undertaken on its part to ensure the unity, territorial integrity and stability of Sri Lanka. We shall meet these obligations faithfully and in full.

The President of Sri Lanka informed me that he felt that the outbreak of violence in Colombo and other parts of Sri Lanka over the last few days was the work of the Sinhala terrorist organization the JVP. He felt that some members of religious organizations and opposition parties had allowed themselves to be used as tools by the JVP. But none of the parties representing trade unions and workers had supported the violence.

Hon'ble Members would recall that the same organization had engineered a large-scale insurrection in Sri Lanka in 1971. The then Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, had asked for our assistance to put down the insurgency, and we had given prompt and full assistance.

President Jayewardene explained that because of the deteriorating situation as a result of these disturbances and the increasing demands that this puts on the Sri Lankan security forces, his Government would need assistance to implement the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement for ending the ethnic crisis. For this purpose the Government of Sri Lanka made a formal request for appropriate Indian military assistance to ensure the cessation of hostilities and surrender of arms in the Jaffna Peninsula and, if required, in the

Eastern Province. He also requested for air transport to move some of the Sri Lanka troops from Jaffna to points in the South.

In response to this formal request from the Government of Sri Lanka, and in terms of our obligations under the just signed Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement units of the Armed Forces of India landed in the Jaffna Peninsula yesterday. Let me repeat that our troops have landed in Sri Lanka in response to a specific and formal request of the Government of Sri Lanka who have invoked our obligations and commitments under the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. Our troops have gone there to help implement the Agreement to end the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka and their despatch underlines our firm commitment to the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. We are in continuous touch with the Government of Sri Lanka at various levels.

The conclusion of this Agreement has not been an easy exercise for the Sri Lankan Government and Sri Lankan leadership. I wish to pay tribute to President Jayewardene's wisdom, courage and statesmanship.

I am confident that the Agreement which we have signed with Sri Lanka brings to an end a tragic chapter of Sri Lanka's recent history and marks the beginning of a new chapter in Indo-Sri Lanka relations. I am equally confident that the Agreement will remove past tensions and mistrust and consolidate and strengthen the friendship between the peoples of Sri Lanka and India dating back to more than two thousand five hundred years of shared history and heritage.

The text of the Agreement signed between His Excellency President Jayewardene and myself and the letters exchanged between us at Colombo are placed on the Table of the House. Thank you.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM (Tamil Nadu): Madam, at the outset I wholeheartedly thank our Prime Minister and his Government for reaching this accord with the Government of Sri Lanka to protect the interests of the three million Tamils who were fighting for their legitimate rights and liberty for the last 30 years. The great Tamil poet, Mr. Tiruvelluvar said:

"Great things are done by great men".

This maxim has been proved by our hon. Prime Minister by this accord. It is a historic accord, no doubt putting an end to the state terrorism against the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. It is an accord which protects, preserves and defends the rights of our Tamil brothers within the Union of Sri Lanka. It is an accord which fulfills the aspirations of the people, not only those who are living in Sri Lanka but also those who are living in other parts of the world. So, the entire population of 70 million Tamils who live in various parts of the world, are much indebted to our Prime Minister and his Government for this historical achievement. Therefore, once again I take this opportunity to record my thanks to our Prime Minister and his Government.

When I extend my thanks to our Prime Minister and his Government, it is unfair on my part if I fail to mention or to extend thanks to our Chief Minister, Dr. MGR and his Government, even though, unfortunately, our Prime Minister has failed to mention about the tireless service of our Chief Minister for this accord, in his statement. This Government was kind enough to mention the service of Mr. Barnala in the Presidential speech. Unfortunately, I do not know the reason why this Government was so unkind not to pay any tribute to our hon. Chief Minister in the statement of the Prime Minister. The accord has

been achieved not only because of our sincere efforts but because of the sacrifice of the Tamils who have sacrificed their lives for 30 years. Since 1956, nearly 16,000 people have lost their lives for this cause. This is the first time in modern history that for the establishment of the minority right within a country, we had to sacrifice nearly 16,000 people. We are very pleased to see in this Accord: (1) The recognition of the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka as areas of historical habitation of the Tamils. (2) Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka will form one administrative unit with an elected Provincial Council, with one Governor, one Chief Minister and one Board of Ministers. (3) Tamil has been accepted as one of the official languages of the Sri Lanka Union alongwith Sinhalese and English even though it has not been accepted in the Indian Union. (4) The acceptance of Sri Lankan Government to disband the Home Guards.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are seeking a clarification. Please don't make a speech.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: I am touching only the main features. There are no other Members from this side to seek clarification, so you must give me more time.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please be brief.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: The provision for allowing our observers during the election to the provincial council of North and East, we welcome all these important features. We are quite satisfied with these arrangements. No doubt the Accord is a bulwark to safeguard the interest of the Tamils against the aggressive attitude of the Sri Lankan Government. Unfortunately, some of the provisions in the Accord cause concern and are quite contrary to the very objective

[Shri Aladi Aruna alias V. Arunachalam]

stated in the Accord itself. In the objective part of the Accord it has been stated...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please be brief.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: I have to mention the contradictions. In the objective part of the Accord, it has been recognised...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is seeking clarifications.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: If this is your attitude how can you expect co-operation? You always expect me to praise using honey words for Govt. What is this?

Northern and Eastern Provinces have been the area of the historical habitation of the Sri Lankan Tamil speaking people who have all the times hitherto lived together in the territory with other ethnic groups. I support this objective clause. When you include this objective in the Accord, what is the need of adding referendum clause in the pact? It is like making the marriage arrangements with a divorce clause. It is unholy, unwarranted and obnoxious to the interest of the Tamils because it paves the way... (*Time bell rings*) to the communal forces or religious fanatics to rebel against the...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please don't raise any discussion on this. I just allowed you because you wanted to seek some clarifications. You are making a speech on this statement. You have to be very brief.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: What is the need of adding referendum clause?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please try to be brief.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: I will try to be as brief as possible.

Another important thing under this Accord has been that the President has been entrusted with the unlimited powers in nominating the members for monitoring the elections. I have no objection. But, at the same time, before the referendum, we have failed to think that the State Government comes into existence. No representation has been given to the members of the Council or State Government to monitor their referendum. Do you think is it not necessary? All are President's men. No man is there to monitor from the State Government. This is one thing.

Another important thing I have to mention. In the clause you have stated... (*Time bell rings*)... Kindly permit me only three minutes. The Government of India will utilise for the purpose of law enforcement...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are going into all the details of each provision. This is not the time to go into all the details. You can broadly seek some clarifications. You are taking a lot of time. I am very sorry to say this.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: Despite these lapses or other defects in the pact, we extend support to this Government wholeheartedly for this historical achievement. Of course, I am aware in compromise no party is going to get absolute success and no party is going to be defeated as has been stated by Sherton. This is the love of compromise. That is why considering other aspects of the pact I support this. Before I conclude, I have to mention that the patriotic Poet, Mr. Subramania Bharati in his poem has stated: let us form a bridge to the island of Sri Lanka. That bridge has been formed by our dynamic Prime Minister by his diplomacy, by his determination and prudence. With these words I conclude.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam Deputy Chairman, I rise to welcome the Accord which is hailed as a historical Accord, which not only fulfils the tryst with destiny but has gone one step further to vindicate the principles of Ahimsa and Non-alignment that this country has stood for for the last forty years and more. Madam, the hon. Member who spoke just before me expressed certain reservations. Perhaps, he spoke as a Tamilian, Madam, as a Tamilian and as an Indian, I welcome this Accord because this is a matter of vital concern not only to the people of Tamil Nadu, the State to which I belong, as one who has watched with anguish the genocide that is being conducted in a neighbouring country, neighbouring island but the entire country has watched with anguish the genocide and the entire people of India have shared this anguish. This Accord is a historical Accord because it recognises that the neighbouring island's President Jayawardene have recognised our legitimate security perceptions in the environment. It is the vindication of great international diplomacy because it is a vindication of persuasive diplomacy because we have finally shown that the Indian Ocean will remain a zone of peace and this Accord has gone a long way in ensuring that undesirable presences are removed from the Indian Ocean and to this extent, it is a vindication not only of this entire country's aspirations and security but also a vindication of international diplomacy. I have just two clarifications. Under clause 14 of the Accord, certain areas have been identified as residual areas that have to be sorted out between various parties, the Tamil moderates, the Indian Government and the Sri Lankan Government. I would like to know as to what these residual areas are and what is the status of these talks?

Second, regarding cessation of hostilities, for which a definite time frame of 72 hours has been prescribed, there is also a reservation that the LTTE may not lay down their

arms because they are apprehensive about their own security and President Jayewardene has gone on record on Wednesday in a press conference saying that there might be a delay in the cessation of hostilities so that a practical solution can be found to protect the interests and the lives of innocent people of Sri Lanka. What are the efforts that are being taken and what are the steps that our Government is taking to ensure this practical solution? These are the two clarifications that I would wish to seek.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEP-TULLA (Maharashtra): Madam, I don't want any clarification because I think, our Prime Minister has taken all precautions and he has cleared the way for peace.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You wanted to recite some couplet.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEP-TULLA: Yes, I want to recite one couplet for his coming back safely. Only to that much I will restrict myself.

मुझे सिर्फ यह कहना है :

फानूस बनकर जिस की हिफाजत हुवा करे
वह शमा क्या बुझे जिसे रोशन हिफाजत खुदा करे

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Prime Minister, will you like to give some clarification?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Thank you, Madam Deputy Chairman. I would like to thank the Members for the sentiments that they have expressed. Only two points have been raised. One referred to a marriage with a built-in divorce clause. I would like to just say in the same idiom that the marriage has taken place without the consent of a particular party and democratically, we feel, it is only right to give the bride a democratic option at the appropriate time. The other question has been raised on whether the ceasefire and surrender of arms will take place as scheduled. The agreement says, not 72 hours but 72 hours after 48 hours. So, it is

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actually 120 hours in the agreement. We are optimistic that it will take place. At the same time, I think we have to be realistic and I did talk about this in Sri Lanka. While the major exercise could be over in this time, there may be pockets and there may be aspects which may take a longer time to do and we have discussed this with President Jayewardene and both of us feel that as long as the main thrust is moving well and the implementation is going on properly, we should not fuss too much about whether it is one hour this side or one hour that side and whether one little pocket has been left out here where some problem may occur. There should be really a practical view of it. With these deadlines, we will try our very best. Now that there are Indian forces also in the peninsula, I believe it would be much easier to go through with this exercise of bringing about peace and harmony. I have no doubt that the agreement will go through well in the time frames that are mentioned in the agreement and that it will strengthen Indo-Sri Lankan friendship and strengthen our region tremendously. Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS DURING THE WEEK COMMENCING THE 3RD AUGUST, 1987

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): Madam, with your permission, I rise to announce that Government Business in this House during the week commencing Monday, the 3rd August, 1987, will consist of:—

(1) Further consideration and passing of the Prevention of Corruption Bill, 1987.

(2) Consideration and passing of:—

(a) The Atomic Energy (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

(b) The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences and Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

(c) The Parsi Marriage and Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 1986.

(d) The Navy (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

(e) The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

(f) The Equal Remuneration (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

(g) The Cine-Workers Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill, 1987, as passed by Lok Sabha.

II. re. Drought situation in the country

II. STATEMENT BY MINISTER —

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): Madam, I seek leave of the House to make a statement on the behaviour of the South-West monsoon and its impact on the kharif crop production. I am aware that Hon'ble Members are very much concerned about the abnormal behaviour of South-West monsoon.

Monsoon set over South Kerala in time and gradually advanced northward satisfactorily till the middle of June. Thereafter, its progress was slow; and only on 23rd June, it advanced to Bihar. It was inactive for the next 12 days. Only by 8th July, it advanced to Himachal Pradesh hills and Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir even though it should have covered almost the entire country except West Rajasthan by 1st July. Rains did not arrive in West Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi till 26th