

PRESIDENT'S RULE EXTENDED

'ASSAM VIOLENCE NOT TO BE TOLERATED'

NEW DELHI, Dec. 24.—The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr Yogendra Makwana, said today that the Government would not tolerate the atmosphere of violence and secession in Assam, reports UNI.

Replying to a discussion on a statutory resolution seeking continuance of President's rule in the State for another six months from December 30, Mr Makwana said pamphlets were being distributed in the State to mislead the people. The Government would have to take action.

The House later approved the resolution by a voice vote after rejecting a resolution of Mr Ladli Mohan Nigam (Lok Dal) seeking to revoke the proclamation of June 30, 1981 placing the State under President's rule for six months.

The House also returned the Assam Appropriation Bill as passed by the Lok Sabha authorizing payment of about Rs 55 lakhs from the Consolidated Fund to the State for certain services in 1981-82.

Mr Makwana did not agree with Mr Nigam and some members from Assam that the agitation was non-violent and peaceful. "it was no longer Gandhian", he asserted and reeled out statistics to show that 209 people had died and 139 were missing in the State since the agitation began two years ago.

Mr Makwana wondered why the agitators were planning a fresh programme of action while expressing willingness to participate in the proposed tripartite talks.

Referring to the allegation made by some members that the Government was not allowing the formation of a non-Congress (I) Ministry in the State, he said if the opposition parties could demonstrate a majority, nobody could prevent them from forming a Government.

In his reply to the discussion of his resolution, Mr Nigam urged the

Government not to break off the proposed tripartite talks as it afforded the last opportunity for a negotiated settlement.

He wondered why the Government had talked to the agitators on 14 occasions if it considered their demands unjust. He wanted the Government to say clearly "Thus far and no further", there should be no ambiguity in its stand.

The Deputy Finance Minister, Mr Maganbhai Barot, who replied to the discussion on his Bill, said the per capita assistance to Assam was Rs 791, against Rs 750 to Uttar Pradesh and Rs 645 to Bihar.

*The Statesman,
25/Dec/1981*