

Extension of President's rule in Assam okayed

NEW DELHI, Dec. 24 (UNI).

THE minister of state for home, Mr. Yogendra Makwana said today that the government would not tolerate the atmosphere of violence and secession being created in Assam.

Replying to a discussion in the Rajya Sabha on a statutory resolution seeking continuance of President's rule in the state for six more months from December 30, Mr. Makwana said certain literature was being distributed in the state misleading

the people of Assam and 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 authorising payment of about Rs. 55 lakhs from the consolidated fund to the state for certain services in 1981-82.

Discussion on the two resolutions and the appropriation bill was held together.

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

The minister said that after the agitation was resumed last November, 27 bombs had been recovered, 18 of which had exploded.

AGITATORS ASSAILED

Mr. Makwana wondered why the agitators were launching 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 formation of a non-Congress (I) ministry in the state, he said if the opposition parties could show majority, no body could prevent them from forming a government.

When Mr. Makwana alleged that the agitation leaders agreed to certain points during the talks and later changed, Mr. Nirit demanded a white paper so that the truth could be brought out.

In his reply to the discussion on 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 on the issue.

'NO AMBIGUITY'

He wondered why the government had talked to the agitators 14 times if it considered their demands unjust. He wanted the government to clearly say "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 per capita assistance to Assam was Rs. 791 against Rs. 750 to Uttar Pradesh and Rs. 645 to Bihar.

Assam agitation fallout: Twenty civilians and one CRPF personnel were killed and 367 civilians and 52 CRPF personnel were injured in action by security forces in the Assam agitation in the last three years. Mr. Yogendra Makwana, minister of state of home affairs, informed the house.

In a written reply to Mr. Ajit Kumar Sharma, he said the total strength of CRPF, BSF and army personnel employed in the state has been varying depending on the requirement projected by the state from time to time.

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