

Secondly, if we give the benefit of irrigation in rural areas and if round the year we have crops one after another, that also keeps a large number of people engaged. The uneducated youth can then find employment near their homes in their own areas.

Thirdly, due to poverty, the people in their old age are not taken care of by their children. So, there should be old-age homes for these poor people and also orphanages for the children. For that, adequate financial provision should be made and some assistance should be given to the States ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Are you concluding or will you take some more time?

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: I am concluding, Sir ...*(Interruptions)*. I have to bring about some more points but for today I conclude here.

18.01 hrs.

[English]

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

NAGALAND PEACE TALKS

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): Sir, this august House is aware of the history of insurgency in Nagaland.

The fratricidal confrontations amongst the various Naga groups and the State authorities have led to loss of life, seriously disturbed the public order and thwarted the economic development of the State. The people are fed up with the violence and yearn for peace.

Soon after assuming office, I had visited Nagaland and other States in the North-East. I had reiterated Government's willingness to hold talks without any prior conditions with the underground elements.

In talks with the Isaac-Muivah group of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, it has now been agreed to cease fire for three months with effect from 1st August, 1997 and initiate discussions at political levels.

Government are also in touch with the other insurgent Naga groups which also have committed to suspend their activities.

MR. SPEAKER: Let me congratulate the Prime Minister, The Government of India, the Government of Nagaland and also the leadership of the NSCN for the positive steps being taken for restoring permanent peace in Nagaland and the North-East.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT (DAUSA): Sir, let me share your feelings that you have conveyed to the hon. Prime Minister but let me also put on record that such channels had been open earlier also. Whatever channels we had to be in touch with some of these people, they had a feeling that there is no sincerity in the follow up action ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I think we need not discuss it now. It is a positive thing and I think let us not...

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: So, I request the Prime Minister to do it with sincerity. I congratulate the Prime Minister for a very positive step.

There are two special things that have happened, hon. Prime Minister, during your regime today. First, a very good news that you have given about Nagaland and, second, a very hurting news. At six o'clock, the Bihar Government is being sworn in, which is very hurting for a democracy. I think it has hurt every democratic person. So, this also I thought I should point out here.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (MANDSAUR): The Statement given by Hon'ble Prime Minister is very encouraging and it will definitely go a long way in solving this problem. The Nagas considered themselves alienated due to the feelings of mistrust. I had an occasion to go there. They say that you are Indians. They think that we are Indians and they are different. I think that there are many problems, the study of these show that they are not ready for infrastructure even. We said that if rail lines were laid, there would be development. They said that they did not require these and that they were all right without them, in their present condition. I think that the Prime Minister had himself gone there and after that an agreement was signed. That is good for us. I thank the Prime Minister for that.

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (MUMBAI NORTH-WEST): Sir, I thank you very much for giving the opportunity. I congratulate the hon. Prime Minister for having initiated the talks with the Naga people. I hope that whatever arrangements that have been made by the hon. Prime Minister will continue and whatever understanding that has been reached will be honoured by all concerned and peace will prevail out of this understanding. Thank you.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (DIBRUGARH): I congratulate the hon. Prime Minister for the step he has taken for bringing back peace in the North Eastern region. In Assam also there are lots of killings in the recent weeks. There are so many killings of military and paramilitary personnel and civilians also. I will request and urge upon the hon. Prime Minister to initiate the same thing in Assam also so that peace and tranquillity come and people can breathe peacefully.

MR. SPEAKER: The House now stands adjourned till 11 A.M. on Monday, July 28, 1997.

18.06 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, July 28, 1997/Sharavana 6, 1919 (Saka)