

CONCLUDING STATEMENT OF THE HOME MINISTER
SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM
AT THE
CONFERENCE OF CHIEF MINISTERS ON INTERNAL SECURITY
ON MONDAY, 17TH AUGUST 2009
AT
NEW DELHI

I am grateful to the Governors, Chief Ministers and other Heads of Delegation who have responded to our invitation and participated in the deliberations today. In my opening statement I had, towards the end, listed a number of key issues on which I requested you to make your observations. In addition, I wish to remind the Chief Ministers that only 12 State Governments/UTs have sent their responses to the questionnaire sent to them in preparation for this conference. Many Chief Ministers have, in their intervention, responded to these issues, and I thank them for expressing their views. The matters enumerated by me, among others, are important and deserve to be addressed with a sense of urgency. I, therefore, crave your indulgence to write to you on these matters so that we could have your responses in writing. Once we have your responses to the questionnaire and to the new issues, it would facilitate the formulation of policy, the allocation of funds and the monitoring of progress in strengthening the internal security system. I therefore request Chief Ministers to kindly give their personal attention to this matter.

2. As all of you are aware, every month since January 1, 2009, I have made a report to the people of India on the work done in the Ministry of Home Affairs during the previous month. Those reports contain an account of the implementation of Action Plan I for the period January 20, 2009 to May 31, 2009. After the formation of the new

Central Government, the Ministry of Home Affairs adopted Action Plan II for the period June 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009, and that Plan is being implemented. There will be Action Plan III for the last six months of the current financial year. The monthly reports and the Action Plans are in the public domain. I would be happy to have your comments and criticism, if any, on the measures taken by the Central Government.

3. I wish to make a brief reference to the communal situation. While there is a vast improvement in the situation, there are still pockets of strife and disharmony. If numbers can tell a story – or at least point to trends – it appears that five States are rather sensitive. I intend to write to the Chief Ministers of these five States and request them to pay special attention to this matter.

4. On the basis of the observations made by you during the forenoon and afternoon sessions, I have culled out a number of issues on which we need to reflect and take further steps. Among these are –

- i. While recruitment is the responsibility of the State Governments, the Central Government should step in, in a big way, to augment training capacity, especially for counter terrorism and jungle warfare;
- ii. In order to quicken the procurement of weapons, the Central Government may consider central procurement of weapons on behalf of the States;
- iii. While some States have set up a separate intelligence cadre, there are inadequate training facilities for intelligence gathering and intelligence analysis. The Central Government may consider setting up Regional Intelligence Centres to train State intelligence personnel in intelligence gathering and intelligence analysis.

- iv. While I had indicated the vacancy position as on 1.1.2008 as 2,30,567 posts in all ranks, it appears that the vacancy level may have declined to about 1,50,000. Even this is too large, and State Governments must make every effort to recruit and begin training of police personnel at least to the extent of 1,50,000 vacancies before 31st March 2010;
- v. There is a unanimous demand that the Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) scheme should be continued for another 5 to 10 years and more funds should be allocated to this scheme;
- vi. The strength of police stations, especially in rural and remote areas, ranges between 1 + 8 and 1 + 12. This is totally inadequate. For a police station to be effective, its strength should be at least 1 + 40. State Governments may augment the strength of police stations;
- vii. Find a more effective instrument to expedite the road building programme both in border areas as well as in naxal affected areas;
- viii. Address the issue of the porous nature of the India-Nepal border;
- ix. There is a need to discuss megacity policing and desert policing and work out measures to improve policing in these areas;
- x. The surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy is also some years old. In order to make it attractive in the present conditions, it may be necessary to review and improve upon the policy;

- xi. The norms for financial assistance to establish coastal police stations are outdated and they need to be revised;
- xii. Since the supply of high speed interceptor boats from the two ship building yards is limited, the Central Government may consider importing such boats;
- xiii. The Centre may consider imparting territorial army training for a period of 4 months to fishermen during the period when they do not engage in fishing. These trained fishermen could be kept as reserve and summoned in case of need;
- xiv. While laws may be passed by State Legislatures according to need, the State Government has the power to make Executive Orders pending enactment of laws. Such Executive Orders are as effective and enforceable as legislation as long as they do not interfere with the fundamental rights of any person. Hence, States may examine this option whenever it is necessary to put in place certain security arrangements, especially in order to provide security to places of historical importance, heritage sites, places of religious worship, iconic establishments etc.

I urge Chief Ministers to address these issues. On our part, I shall examine them and convey to you our views or decisions on these matters.

5. In my opening statement, I had pointed to the central role of the police in meeting the challenges to internal security. The police forces require strong leadership. How can an officer provide

leadership if his or her tenure is precarious and uncertain? I urge States that have not yet established a Police Establishment Board to do so immediately. The Police Establishment Board will, in no way, diminish the authority of the Chief Minister or the Home Minister. On the contrary, it will greatly help the Chief Minister and the Home Minister in conveying the message of fairness and non-discrimination, and they can always intervene in exceptional situations.

6. In conclusion, I wish to assure you, once again, that it is my intention to work closely with State Governments and acknowledging the primacy of the State Governments in maintaining public order. I propose to resume my visits to the States so that the Chief Minister of the State and I could jointly review the security situation in that State and examine State-specific needs and issues in some detail and take many decisions on the spot. I have found this exercise useful and highly instructive and I seek your co-operation in making this exercise successful.

7. I thank you for your participation and wish you the very best in the discharge of your responsibilities.