

Karunanidhi reiterates MPs' resignation threat

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi Wednesday reiterated an all-party ultimatum to the central government, saying all the state MPs, including those in the Rajya Sabha, will resign if the killings of Tamils allegedly by Sri Lankan Forces were not stopped. He, however, refused to comment on speculation that his daughter Kanimozhi had quit the upper house.

Kanimozhi too refused to confirm or deny the speculation.

An all-party meeting Tuesday night had decided that all MPs from the state would resign in two weeks if the central government did not end military aid to Sri Lanka and ensured the declaration of a ceasefire in the Sri Lankan civil war that has left over 70,000 dead since 1983.

The Congress, whose former president and late former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), also agreed to the resignation threat, the party's state unit president K.V. Thangabalu clarified Wednesday.

'The Congress is part of the Democratic Progressive Alliance led by the chief minister and all the parties that attended the meeting yesterday (Tuesday) have unanimously agreed to do our bit for alleviating the suffering of the Sri Lankan Tamils,' Thangabalu said.

The other parties with representation in parliament that attended the all-party meeting Tuesday include the two Left parties, the PMK and the MDMK led by Vaiko which are arrayed against the state's ruling alliance.

Political observers, however, did not attach much significance to the threat.

'The whole thing is a ruse to strengthen the weakened base of the ruling DMK following the exit of the PMK and the Left from the DPA coalition and nothing more. One can safely expect the extension of the two-week deadline next,' political commentator Cho S. Ramaswamy told IANS.

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