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CLARK CONCERNED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN KASHMIR

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, responding to the recent application of the Jammu and Kashmir Disturbed Areas Act, has called on the Government of India to exercise restraint in the administration of this extraordinary authority.

The Act has been applied to all districts of the Kashmir valley and to an area twenty kilometres wide along the Line of Control between India and Pakistan. It delegates authority to chief constable level, or equivalent, to shoot to kill those violating a ban on assembly of five or more persons, those carrying firearms and ammunition, and those engaged in acts which may be in breach of public order.

While recognizing the desirability of securing civil peace in Kashmir Mr. Clark stressed the importance of respecting human rights and of ensuring the safety of civilians.

Mr. Clark reiterated his view that both countries must pursue peaceful means to resolve their differences over Kashmir.

"Canada has consistently urged India and Pakistan to exercise moderation and restraint on the issue of Kashmir to avoid the risk of miscalculation or accident that could lead to a military clash. We urge both countries to pursue a dialogue on the basis of the Simla Accords," said Mr. Clark.

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