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## Rajiv Gandhi calls for single parliament in SA

"NOTHING short of a single parliament with every adult having the vote will satisfy India that South Africa has changed", said Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the South African delegation visiting India.

The delegation - on an official visit - included Cassim Saloojee (TIC president), Reggie Vandeyar (TIC vice president), Fred Gona (COSATU vice president) and Yunus Carrim and Charm Govender of the Natal Indian Congress.

The Indian Premier made it clear that unless every South African has the vote, there will be no peace in SA. He reaffirmed India's commitment to the international campaign against apartheid and said that India was prepared to do everything possible to bring a peaceful resolution to South Africa's problems.

He emphasized that the people of India owed a debt to the struggle against apartheid: The struggle for independence in India was born in South Africa. "Who knows that if (Mahatma) Gandhiji had not been exposed to the shock of apartheid, India's history might have taken a very different course".



The South African delegation, face to face with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi:

He also focussed on the position of the Indian community in SA and said that they should participate in the "great South African liberation struggle".

In India the delegation was accorded the status of a foreign government and was enthusiastically received by government officials, anti-apartheid solidarity groups, trade unions and a host of other

organisations. Press and television crews trailed the delegates throughout the visit.

During a meeting with the Minister of External Affairs (Foreign Minister), Mr PN Naharisma Rao, the delegation was told that the government of India rejects participation in the House of Delegates. He referred to those who participate in the HoD and similar structures as "collabo-

rators" and said: "You cannot change the system from within. There is nothing there to change".

Mr Alfred Gonsalves, the first secretary for Africa, stated that India had drawn up a blacklist of those who had participated in the 1984 tri-cameral elections, to deny them entry into that country.

In a moving ceremony, Mr Cassim Saloojee and Mr Fred

Gona placed a wreath on behalf of the delegation at the graveside of Mahatma Gandhi. The site of the grave was closed to the public for an hour to allow the ceremony to take place in peace - an honour usually reserved for presidents, foreign ministers and other dignitaries.

They also went to the gravesides of Pundit Nehru and Indhira Gandhi.

## Why the TIC is building links with India

IN 1947, Dr Yusuf Dadoo of the TIC and Dr Monty Naicker of the NIC visited India where they met Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Moreover the recent official visit to India by representatives of the Mass Democratic Movement in South Africa marks over four decades by India of strong opposition to South Africa's apartheid policies.

The trip is part of the overall efforts to solidify the link

### EDITORIAL

between the oppressed people of SA and an anti-apartheid country such as India. India has historically played a key role in exposing the excesses of the apartheid system in international forums such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. It was India who first raised concern at the treat-

ment meted out to Indian South Africans as well as the Apartheid Question in general. Hence it is important to encourage India to continue its efforts to isolate the racist South African government politically, economically and socially, while simultaneously maintaining close links with the oppressed people of South Africa. But the links between India and South Africa is more than just an anti-apartheid alliance. The

histories of both India and South Africa are profoundly interlinked and intertwined. Indeed, it was Rajiv Gandhi who declared to the visiting delegation that "Who knows if (Mahatma) Gandhiji had not been exposed to the shock of apartheid, Indian history might have taken a different course". Indian South Africans hold India dear to themselves as the country of their origin and as the source of their culture and for many

the source of their religious convictions. For others, the link is perhaps closer, in that they still have living relatives and property.

This raises two important questions. Firstly, the application of the international cultural boycott of South Africa with regard to India and Indian South Africans, India has always maintained a clear

Please turn to Page 2

# Why we're building contact with India

From Page 1  
position vis-a-vis the cultural boycott: no links between South Africa and India whatsoever. In the light of recent flexibility in respect of the cultural boycott, the TIC articulated the following position in India. That apartheid South Africa be isolated, but the victims of apartheid be allowed to foster cultural exchange.

This leads us to the second important point. India's view is that Indian South Africans throw themselves firmly behind the African majority and fully participate in the liberation struggle. It is not insignificant that the Indian government facilitated the meeting in October 1988 between a delegation of Indian South Africans, led by the TIC and NIC, to the African National Congress in Lusaka. That meeting recognised the historical contribution of the Indian community in the struggle and reaffirmed a common future between the Indian people and the African people.

But India believes that those who choose to shamelessly collaborate with the apartheid system must be treated with the greatest contempt. It has therefore advocated the establishment of a "Blacklist", which would deny all collaborators the opportunity to visit India. Some of the collaborators have responded by saying that the TIC and NIC are consequently denying them the right to pilgrimage. We believe that they are in fact hypocritical. All religions do not condone the propagation and support of a racist ideology. We say to them, the ball is in their court: let them renounce apartheid and collaboration first.

The TIC believes that the views expressed by the Indian government with regard to the cultural boycott and the "Blacklist" is consistent with the views of both the people of India as well as the Indian community in South Africa.

The TIC and NIC preceded the trip with extensive consultations among religious, cultural, sporting, civic, youth, and welfare organisations in respect of the issues to be discussed and raised with the Indian government.



## Youth action against apartheid

World Youth Action Against Apartheid (WYAAA) is an important organisation with structures throughout India engaged in mobilising youth (which includes anyone under 40).

One of WYAAA's affiliates is Bluebells School in Delhi, where the children staged a touching and impressive concert for the visiting South African delegation. Included in the programme was a rendition of Nkosi Sikelel i'Afrika and dance and poetry based on the theme of freedom in South Africa, with Nelson Mandela as its symbol.

