

## INDO-SRI LANKA MARITIME AGREEMENT

It is an unwritten law of international relations that barring a few exceptions, neighbours are enemies. Disputes over boundary, control of resources, inter-State waters, violation of air-space and fishing rights provide ever-widening areas of conflict. The collective wisdom of the world has not been able to find a solution to the conflicting claims over the sea and the Conference on the Law of Seas is no nearer agreement in spite of several meetings than when it started several years ago. While maritime Powers have been grudging with the limit of national sovereignty over the sea and insisting on a three-mile and six-mile limit, others have pleaded for a 200-mile economic jurisdiction over the resources under the sea. The conflict between Iceland and Britain over fishing rights in the North Sea has been raging for a number of years and the relationship has been seriously damaged.

In the welter of conflicting claims, a solution of the sea boundary between two countries as close as 18 miles of each other is no easy matter. Even if the 12-



mile jurisdiction generally accepted were to be applied to the Indo-Sri Lanka area, there will be overlapping and conflict. The foundation for improvement in the relations between the two countries was laid when Prime Minister Lal Bahadur agreed to the repatriation of persons of Indian origin on a phased programme under certain conditions. The next major step was taken when, in accordance with a line drawn from an agreed meridian, the tiny uninhabited island of Kachathivu fell within Sri Lanka zone, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, gracefully conceded the island reserving the right of Indian people to visit the island during the annual festival. With the signing of the present

agreement, the maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka stands settled along the entire length. Henceforth, the two countries will be entitled to exercise the fullest sovereignty over their side of the boundaries including fishing, oil exploration, etc. However, as a gesture of goodwill to Sri Lanka, the Government of India has agreed to allow fishing rights at the existing level in the area within India's jurisdiction, for a period of three years.

The Indo-Sri Lanka agreement marks the triumph of bilateral negotiations over multi-lateral conventions sought to be forged under international auspices. It should, therefore, lead to many such mutual agreements narrowing down the differences and conflicts to the extent possible. It also proves that given goodwill on both sides, no international problem is beyond bilateral solution. India has demonstrated her willingness to solve the outstanding problems with her neighbours and to build harmonious relations with them. Will other neighbours seize the opportunity and emulate the example set by the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement?

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last hydro power unit was commissioned at Kodayar in 1971. In the last few years, there has been a lull in hydro resources development, as several of the sanctioned hydro power plants have not been taken up. In the last four decades we were able to set up only 17 conventional hydro stations totalling 1,224 M.W. and so setting up another 1,000 M.W. in conventional firm hydro capacity in this State will take a few more decades. A large peaking capacity can be quickly set up only by pumped storage stations.

There is an unfortunate controversy and re-thinking on the sanctioned Kadambarai pumped storage project. In the coming years, including the coming summer months of this year, the State would be suffering from serious shortage of peaking capacity, and it is necessary that all the sanc-

tioned hydro and pumped storage peaking stations are taken up for execution and completed as urgently as feasible.

### LARGE STORAGE PLANTS

Even with the grouping restrictions on agricultural pumpsets and various other peak hour restrictions on industries, the minimum night demand is going down to about 50 per cent of the day peak demand with a load factor varying between 70 and 75 per cent. Due to relatively higher cost of power in Tamil Nadu compared with the neighbouring States, power intensive industries will not come up in large numbers in this State. The largest possible employment and economic potential has to be developed with the available power. Engineering type of Industries suited to such needs necessarily create a larger day peak and have a greater future in this State. The State is

also devoid of large surface water potential and subsoil underground water have to be tapped for meeting the irrigation and drinking water needs. Several more lakhs of pumpsets creating the problem of high day peak will be coming up in the State in the coming years. All these situations point to the fact that we not only need to develop the balance of smaller hydro resources, but also put up a few large pumped storage hydro plants to meet the peaking needs.

The Southern Regional Electricity Board is the best operating Regional Board in India doing considerable inter-change of power between the constituent States. The power generation programmes are capital intensive with long gestation periods. Electricity is also a State subject. Hence, we cannot expect the States to put up power plants to meet the permanent needs of