



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

I have sent the following message to the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi:

"On behalf of the Government and people of Australia, I extend to you our deepest sympathy on the tragic death of your mother.

In the very sad circumstances in which you assume your high office, I am sure you will be able to draw inspiration from Indira Gandhi's courage, strong leadership and statemanship. India's firm democratic traditions and the high regard in which it is held around the world will also prove sources of strength in these difficult times.

Australia and India are linked in many ways, including through the Commonwealth, and I look forward to working with you to strengthen further the friendly and constructive relations our countries enjoy.

Shortly before yesterday's appalling act of terrorism, I extended an invitation to Mrs Gandhi to visit Australia. I very much hope that you will find an opportunity to take up the invitation.

On behalf of all Australians, I congratulate you and wish you well as you assume your new responsibilities as Prime Minister of India."

1 November 1984