

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER****Situation in Sri Lanka**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform hon. Members that we have a very heavy business today, and so we will be dispensing with the lunch hour, not lunch.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shrimati Kanak Mukherjee) in the Chair.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): Madam Vice-Chairman, PM had instructed the Foreign Secretary to visit Sri Lanka. He returned from Colombo yesterday.

As Hon. Members are deeply concerned in regard to the situation in Sri Lanka, I am giving details of his visit and its outcome. I may mention that the Sri Lankan authorities put out a press release, extracts of which appeared in our press yesterday. It was not a joint statement or a communiqué.

The President of Sri Lanka received him on the first day of his visit for a preliminary exchange of views. Prior to his departure from Colombo, the Foreign Secretary was again received by the President for a more detailed discussion.

The Foreign Secretary was received amongst others by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Minister for National Security, the Minister for Home Affairs, and the Minister for Rural and Industrial Development. He also took the opportunity of meeting several prominent personalities. This afforded him an opportunity for a frank exchange of views. These were conducted in an atmosphere of cordiality.

The objective of the visit was to have an exchange of views on both international and bilateral issues. In the course of his meetings the ethnic

problem in Sri Lanka was discussed in all its aspects. There was a shared anxiety and concern over the continuing violence and unsettled situation in Sri Lanka. The Foreign Secretary, conveyed to Sri Lankan leaders our anxiety, in so far as aspects of the situation in Sri Lanka that have repercussions in India. These include the question of refugees and the latest influx, and the plight of fishermen. He emphasized what our Prime Minister has repeatedly stressed that conditions must be created for refugees to go back to Sri Lanka in safety and with honour. He also raised other matters such as that of stateless individual of Indian origin.

The Foreign Secretary urged that an immediate solution must be found to the ethnic problem, acceptable to all concerned and with a view to redressing the legitimate grievances of the Tamil community. This should be achieved through negotiations. The existing conditions of hostility, tension, suspicion and distrust were working against this objective.

The objective in Sri Lanka is now to defuse the situation, bring an end to violence, the withdrawal of security forces and the restoration of normalcy. This would pave the way for a political dialogue.

On our part, we reaffirm our support to the independence, integrity, unity and non-aligned status of Sri Lanka. We would like to cooperate in any way we can towards Sri Lanka's development and progress.

We hope that Sri Lanka will recover quickly from the trauma of the last few years, and that it will resume the progress towards stability and prosperity that has been interrupted by the ethnic crisis. It was stressed that resumption of peaceful economic development will be possible only after normalcy returns to that Island State. The meeting of the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils is obviously the responsibility of the Sri Lankan

[Shri Kurshid Alam Khan]

leadership. They have assured us that they are more keenly aware of this than anyone as also of the gravity of the challenge and their responsibility to meet it. As a concerned and friendly neighbour, we offer them our sincere hand of friendship. We have been assured of reciprocal goodwill towards India from Sri Lankan leaders.

Normal • commerce between our countries is being strengthened and where this has been disrupted, links are being restored. It has been agreed that a shipping service will start soon between Colombo and Tuticorin, and this should be of benefit to the nationals of both countries. It has also been agreed that there will be regular consultation and contacts at official level on a wide spectrum of issues including the present problem to maintain and consolidate our traditional and friendly relationship.

The next opportunity of a further exchange of views will be provided when the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka comes to New Delhi for the Ministerial meeting of the Non-aligned Coordinating Bureau.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Now, the hon. Members may seek clarifications on the issue. I would request them to be precise as we are short of time. Mr. Kalyanasundaram.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu Vice-Chairman, I welcome the Minister's *suo-moto* statement on the visit of the Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs to Colombo. He went there as the representative of the Prime Minister—based on the instructions of the Prime Minister—he had conducted discussions in an exploratory manner. But, I would like to know; was he authorised to, speak to the press and media both in Sri Lanka and after

the issue media both in Sri Lanka and returning to India. Even before he submitted the report to the Prime Minister he gave these interviews—who is overall in charge of the External Affairs Ministry. I do not know whether he took the approval of the Minister for External Affairs before he went to the television and the media. He may be an able diplomat. I don't question his capacity to handle

alter. But is proper to go to the 1.00 PM public on such a delicate issue

concerning the sentiments of the people in our country? What is the impression he has created in the minds of our people in trying to win over the Sri Lankan leadership? He is letting down the people in this country, particularly those of us who are very close to Sri Lanka, those Tamils who are affected, those refugees who are taking shelter in our country, those fishermen who are attacked everyday. Did he achieve something concrete? First of all, why he rush to the press and to the mass media in such a hurry even before reporting to the Prime Minister and the Government? What is the assurance he secured with regard to the attack on the Indian fishermen, leave the ethnic problem? I don't think the Government of Sri Lanka is very much interested in solving the ethnic problem. They want to keep that tension inside their country alive, particularly against the Tamils so that they can keep up the tension in the whole region against India. So, their game is obvious. We have been seeing it for the past five, six years. What is the concrete step the Sri Lankan Government promised to stop attacking the fishermen on the Back Bay and to allow the use of Kachcha Thivu in accordance with the 1974 agreement? Was this aspect of the joint use of Kachcha Thivu in terms of the 1974 agreement discussed? Would the Indian fishermen be allowed to go to Kachcha Thivu as hitherto, as contained in the 1974 agreement? Were these matters discussed? What other concrete issues were discussed and

what is the reaction of the Sri Lankan Government? The statement is too vague.

Then, for any political solution of the ethnic problem they may say it is their internal problem. But it has its repercussions on India because on both sides of the Back Bay there are Tamils; on the Sri Lankan side there of Tamils and on the Indian side there are 4 crores of Tamils. Did our Foreign Secretary ask the Government of Sri Lanka to withdraw the emergency and withdraw their security zone Beyond the Tamil area? Was it raised with the Government of Sri Lanka that the military occupation of Tamil area should be withdrawn so that normalcy can be restored and the confidence of the Tamil people can be secured for a political solution? My specific question is: Did the Foreign Secretary raise the question of withdrawal of the army, the military, which is not under the control of even the Government from the Tamil area so that the confidence of the Tamil people can be won?

Then, what about the refugees? The Prime Minister has been saying that we will help the refugees to go back to their country with honour, with dignity and security. What steps were discussed in this regard? Can we take these refugees as permanent settlers? They were born there; that land belongs to these Tamils as much as it belongs to the Sinhalese. What was the reaction of the Sri Lankan Government on these concrete issues? These are bilateral issues. What is the use of discussing all international issues with such a Government which is drifting away. Today's news is that they are going to Pakistan. Let them go to Pakistan. They cannot come to India and discuss with our Prime Minister on these issues! They must come closer to Delhi, not closer to Washington. Delhi is nearer to

Colombo than Washington. I want to know whether these questions were raised and what their replies were. Thank you.

**श्री सत्यपाल भलिक (उत्तर प्रदेश):**  
महोदय, जो वयान माननीय मंत्री जी का है, इसमें बताया गया है कि जो तमिल, जिन बातों पर वहाँ चर्चा हुई, उसमें से रेफ्यूजी लोगों का बड़ी संख्या में हिन्दुस्तान में आना और हमारे जो मछली पकड़ने वाले लोग हैं, उनका कस्टोडियन आफ फिशरमैन—यह जो भाषा का इस्तेमाल है सरकार की तरफ से, यह कई बार देश का नुकसान करता है।

मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब आप प्लाइट आफ फिशरमैन कहते हैं, तो आप अपने पक्ष को कमजोर करते हैं। जब आप उनसे बात कर रहे थे, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या आपने इस बात के लिए कोई विरोध प्रदर्शित किया और हमारी जल सीमा का बार-बार उनकी तरफ से उल्लंघन होता रहा है और उसी का कारण है कि हमारे फिशरमैन की कठिनाई बहुत बड़ी है। सिर्फ हमारे फिशरमैन की कठिनाई का आग्रह भी अलग हो सकता है, तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उनकी जो नवी है, उनके द्वारा लगातार उल्लंघन, एक वॉटेंट उल्लंघन जो लगातार होता रहा है, उसके सिलसिले में आपने क्या कहा और क्या आपको एक्चोरेंस मिला?

इसके अलावा श्रीलंका की सरकार शरणार्थियों के मामले, एथनिक जो प्रबलम उनके यहाँ है, जिस तरह से वह टेरेरिस्ट लोगों से निपटने के नाम पर सिविलियंस को जिस तरह से मारा जा रहा है, उस मामले में और हमारी जल सीमा के उल्लंघन के मामले में श्रीलंका की सरकार ने क्या क्या बातें कहीं जो हमारी राय के नजदीक है या क्या-क्या आश्वासन दिये, इसके सिलसिले में कोई जानकारी इस वक़्त में नहीं दी गई है। वह मैं जानना चाहता हूँ।

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN (Tamil Nadu): The statement of the honourable Minister, in fact, strengthens our fears that there is a perceptible change and a right-about-turn in the policy of the Government of India regarding Sri Lanka. Earlier Mr. Jayawardene, the President of Sri Lanka, sent his own brother as a personal emissary of his to the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Then the talks were carried on at a higher level. No less a person than Mr. G. Parthasarathy who now holds a Cabinet rank, was carrying on the talks, and on the other side it was Mr. Atulath Mudali, their Minister, who came and met the Prime Minister. With this background, I would first of all like to understand why there is a degradation in the level of the talks from the Prime Ministerial level to that of a Secretary. There is a statement now. Our Secretary goes there, not to talk primarily about the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka, not to talk about the killings of our fishermen in our sea by the Sri Lankan forces. He went there to talk generally about both international and bilateral issues, and the very important problem of the genocide of Tamils has been given a go-bye or at best a secondary role. We have heard the proverb: When Rome was burning, Nero was fiddling. Similarly, when the entire Sri Lankan Tamils are being killed, when Sri Lanka is burning, our Foreign Secretary and our Government are just fiddling. That is what we feel. They want a cessation of violence. And it seems our Secretary agreed to it. What does it mean? What do they mean by cessation of violence? Cessation of violence by whom? We are accusing the Government of Sri Lanka of indulging in violence. They are killing the people. They are indulging in genocide. Yet here he says we have agreed for cessation of violence. I would like to have a clarification from the honourable Minister as to what exactly this statement means. The taste of the pudding is in the eating. We have seen *Sri Lankan* papers. They are all commending the visit of Mr. Bhandari.

They are praising him skyhigh and condemning Mr. G. Parthasarathy while the death toll of Tamils in Sri Lanka is increasing everyday, and no less a person than Mr. Bhandari himself has kept quiet exchanging only usual courtesies. There are certain important issues to be discussed. For example, Jaffna is in a state of siege, a big prison house and is declared security zone; armed forces can kill anybody. So, killings are taking place every day, in and day out. Did our Secretary talk about it? Did he seek clarifications as to when the genocide would stop, Madam? A colonization policy is being adopted by the Sri Lanka Government. It means that they are settling the Sinhalese families, armed Sinhalese, those who are trained in the use of firearms and the Government is settling them in the Tamil homeland. This is a serious thing. They are settling the armed Sinhalese in the Tamil homeland and they want to change the demographic structure of Sri Lanka. They are driving out the Tamils and they are driving the Tamils out of their homeland. I want to ask: Did our Foreign Secretary talk about this colonization policy? Did our Foreign Secretary talk about this driving the Tamils out of their homeland? Did he condemn it? Only recently, Madam, the UN Commission on Human Rights condemned Sri Lanka, its indiscriminate killing of the innocent Tamils in the name of drive against the militants. So far, Madam, right from 1983, five thousand Tamils have been killed and when Mrs. Gandhi was speaking here, she condemned it as a genocide. But, did our Foreign Secretary talk about this genocide? Did he ask them: "How are you going to stop it?" Did he tell them, "We cannot keep quiet if you continue with this." On the contrary, he surrendered our rights and betrayed the Tamils. Moreover, Madam, we have heard that in Sri Lanka, the USA built a very powerful transmitter and people say that it may be perhaps a relaying station between Diego Garcia and a base in Australia and that that transmitter is so powerful that it may jam all our telecommunication in India. Did our Foreign

Secretary talk about that. Thereiore, Madam, I want a clear answer.

are you going to 80 it Are you taking any poitive action? They are believing in a military solution. But you ure saying that only political solution is possible. In what way did he stress our point? What is the reaction, of the Sri Lankan Government? I would like to know what "Cessation of violence" means. Are you going to betray the Tamils fur.ther? What is the positive action that you are going to take

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Yes', Mr. Valampuri John.

SHRI VALAMPURI JOHN (Tamil Nadu): Madam Vice-Chairman. I would venture to say that though we have admiration for the variouos efforts that the Government is said to have taken so far for the final settlement in Sri Lanka, I would like to remind the House and the Governrnt through this House that we do not believe that any positive or tangible results are expected to come out of this dialogue, because the Government is dragging its feet in dialogues. There is a valid reason behind what I say. I would like to request the hon. Minister that he has to be categorical and he has to give me a categorical answer because this concerns not the aspirations and; attitudes of a few lakhs of people.

Mrs. Gandhi had condemned it in the very same House, as hon. Murasoli Maran has just now asserted that it was not an internal matter of any country. She condemned it in unmistakable terms that it was an internal massacre, it was genocide and total conflagration. For the External Affairs Minister to say that it was an internal matter, it is probably ihe most iiresi;onsible statement, I am sorry to point out, which any of the External Affairs Minister could have made. He says that our objective in Sri Lanka is to defuse the situation and Wring an end to violence. If

you make such a sweeping generalisation that whatever has happened and wbalevtei' has been happening today is violence only, then you are making an it responsible statement and I would like, to register my protest against this kind of a sweeping generalised statement on behalf of my people. Do you say it is violence? What is violence? Why do you say it is organized violence, a cultivated violence, an instigated violence, of a Government against innocent people, unarmed and defenceless people, against civilians. I would like to point out, as we have earlier pointed out to the hon. Prime Minister in our meeting with him the day before yesterday and I would like to make the assertion again—that what is happening there, happened only in far, far times, in Herod's period of the Biblical times. Ten thousand Tamil women have been demanding in the city of Jaffna and shouting their lungs out for their children to be given back to them children between 12 and 14. They have been kept in custody. Did you ask Mr. Bhandari, your Secretary, who visited Sri Lanka, whether he raised this question at least out of human dpnaideration. when ten thousand women were demonstrating in the streets of the city of Jaffna to get back their children between 12 and 14. By international standards, can you tell me that they are extremists? They did not get their children back. On the one hand, there are defenceless people. On the other hand, the Government let loose organized violence, cultivated violence. But in one sweeping statement you call it violence and say that you must now Put an end to it. If so are you helping the Sinhalese Government? I am sorry for asking this I say it to the entire House and the entire nation through this House that what I say today on what is happening there is not a mad man's prattle. In 1972, on August 1, in my maiden speech, when Sardar Swaran Singh was the Foreign Minister-I won't say External Affairs hut Foreign Minister; it is all foreign to us- I said that' the Tamil blood was spilled in the sandy beaches of

(Shri Valampuri John] Sri Lanka since in Jaffna so many innocent people were killed, the Government do not consider Tamil Nadu as a part of this nation. You do not allow us to say that we are children of the same common heritage. If the nation is divided, you are cardinal and principally responsible for this. Then the External Affairs Minister, the Foreign Minister, had a laugh at me and he said: You say Mr. John. Tamil blood? Where is the Tamil blood and where is the blood of a Hindi man? He said something to this effect. In 1972 it was a kind of laugh from these benches. But today the laugh has become a guffaw of the third degree. I see that there is another statement, not only a sweeping generalisation but the most irresponsible statement the Government had ever made, It is said that to meet 'the legitimate aspirations of these people is the responsibility of the Sri Lanka leadership. What is this? It is not an internal problem. Mrs. Gandhi in the very same House said that it was a genocide. If it is genocide and there is total conflagration you cannot call it as their responsibility. It is not the responsibility of the Sri Lanka leadership at all. I have my own doubts on you when you say that the life and the security of the Tamil is the responsibility of the butcher. I cannot understand you. You have been carrying on this dialogue with the suspect. Is there any reason behind this? *(Time bell rings)* You cannot talk to the real power in Sri Lanka.

Which is the real power? As a Government I can understand your pre-

dicament. You can talk only to the Government', in Sri Lanka. But you are not talking to the real power in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, Jayawardene is not the real power. Jayawardene has himself said: I have an army which I cannot control, himself has said it that he cannot control his army. Now almost all the Heads of the Nations have come to realise this. What does it mean? He has accepted that he has an ineffective leadership. You are not talking to the real power you are talking to the Sri Lanka Government which is under the clutches of the Buddhist clergy. A man cannot extricate himself from the quagmire of the tainted Buddhist clergy to you speak to the cronies, not to the real power. I understand your predicament. I understand ; our difficulties. So when you are not able to speak to the real power whether it is Jayawardene or it is Premadasa or anybody who comes there, when he

finds himself in the thick of *(Time Bell rings)* . The Buddhist clergy will not solve the problem. I say on behalf of my people today that it is a historic occasion to you it may be a parliamentary hour. For us it is an hour of war, I am sorry to make this! kind of heinous Statement. I feel it. You may have contempt, but I do not bother about it. Our people have been led to this extent that the Government of India is not taking action against the Sri Lanka Government with a reason. It is not exploring the possibility of a police action, because there is no war; there is no battle even.

This is not a story, because our Tamil literature has been saying that

most of the early Sinhalese settlers have been from the northern provinces of India. We do not believe in it. We do not subscribe to this. Your said unconcern has led to believe that way. You are not allowing us to feel that we are from a common heritage. I would again like to tell you that you should not make such sweeping, generalised statements. You may send Mr. Parthasarathy, you may send Mr. Bhandari or you may send Mr. Bandrinath, but this problem will never end, because this dialogue will not take us anywhere. If there is the possibility of a military solution, you have to explore the possibility and achieve all this because you are to purchase peace with arms. After all, what is peace? Peace in the world is an interval between two wars. *(Time-Bell rings)* I am not crying, I am not calling for war today. I am not giving expression to my emotions. When you say that you are making positive efforts, we are not able to believe it because these efforts are taking us nowhere. People are watching you in the streets of Tamil Nadu because you are not taking any positively tangible action. You are only doing out general statements. You are laughing at us. You don't allow us to speak. You don't allow us to raise our voice. Your idea is to drag your cold feet in this matter. It means that there will be no Tamil race here. When there is no Tamil race, there is no problem. It is the wrong solution you have found out. A foolish idea has dawned upon you. Now, are you going to explore the possibility of a military solution? Are you sending your emissaries throughout the world to convince the other nations that this is really the situation? People throughout the world have started believing that the Sri Lankan Government has got an army over which they have no control. You should send emissaries to create public opinion. Whenever we raise our voice you say Bangladesh is different from Sri Lanka. You are teaching us elementary geography as if we are kindergarten students. You are making us

fool of us as if we are second class citizens in this country. I appeal to your good sense. Previously when a lot of refugees came to us, across the Eastern borders we had to wage a war. You may call it war or battle or police action. This is the only action that you have to take. Otherwise, you will be responsible for it. Allow us and our children to keep our heritage. This is the only submission I would like to make.

SHRI K. MOHANAN (Kerala): I do share the feelings expressed by my colleague here. But I would like to say that Sri Lankan problem is a delicate problem. I have also my deep feelings and my criticism against the stand taken by the Government on this issue from time to time. For the time being, I am not going into that matter because I do not want to weaken the efforts of the Government to solve this problem in an amicable manner. Anyhow, I would ask the External Affairs whether the reported statement appearing in the press was a joint state or communicate. There is general feeling among the people that there is a deviation in the stand taken by the Government of India in the past. It is for the Government to clear this impression among the people. So, I am not going into the details about the killings in Sri Lanka or the refugee influx to India or such other matters. It was reported in the press that once again the Sri Lankan Government mentioned about the joint patrolling in Palk Bay. The original stand taken by the Government of India was that they refused this proposal or acceptance of any proposal will be dangerous to the interests of this country. I would like to know whether this issue was taken up in the talks between Mr. Bhandari and the Sri Lankan authorities and, if so, what was the stand taken by our Foreign Secretary in this regard? What about the safety of our fishermen or

[Shri K. Mohanan] those who are Ashing in our territorial waters? Was there any discussion regarding these point and have we got any assurance from the Sri Lankan authorities regarding the safety of our fisherman fishing in this area? Thirdly, Sri Lanka is a member of the Non-aligned Movement and India is the Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement. We have a common cause to fight against any machination to destabilise the system in this region. In this context I would like to know whether our Foreign Secretary has raised the question of imperialist machinations in this region to destabilise the system of this sub-continent and this region, especially the American imperialism and their machinations. Have you mentioned it in a serious manner before the Sri Lankan authorities? I would like to have clarification precisely on these points from the External Affairs Minister. I am not elaborating the background of the Sri Lankan issue because, as I have mentioned in the beginning, it is a delicate problem and we will have to handle it with care. So, for the time being, at the present stage, I am not for making any comments on other issues. I am waiting. If there is at least a ray of hope in the horizon, I will support it and I will encourage it. Thank you.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE (Maharashtra): One must welcome the efforts of the Government to close the gap and to seek avenues for the settlement of this burning problem. But while this is going on, I also do not want the Government to shut its eyes to some of the stark realities of the situation. The Government is right and I think the entire House, though I And that there are some sentiments to the contrary, will agree with me that we must respect the unity and the independence of our friendly neighbour which has been friendly so far. It has also a democratic tradition. But one must realise the realities which are existing in that country. And it is

this. We are particularly concerned in our country that firstly there is a gross violation of human rights so far as the Tamil population is concerned, and secondly it has resulted in a large influx of refugees, the burden of which we have to bear. So far as the first aspect is concerned, it is a universal problem. And the whole thing started and even now it is continuing, as has been pointed out earlier, and the Sri Lankan Government is throwing dust into the eyes of the entire world by saying that this is a terrorist thing. But is it the way to meet the terrorism that you arrest children who are 8 and 12 years and put them in trucks and carry away? I am not saying all this merely as an Indian. But you can read what the 'Time' has reported. You can read what the international agencies have reported, all those who are more friendly towards Sri Lanka than any other country. And you find that there is no way of putting an end to this gross violation. Madam, do you know that they started with a restricted zone for fishermen? That is, they could fish only upto 6 o'clock in the evening.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:  
They should not reside on the coast.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Then that restricted zone is now transferred into a pro-i zone. They cannot go on fishing at all. And lakhs of fishermen are now without any livelihood. Now, these are the things going on. Therefore, I would like the Government to take notice of this. And has been rightly pointed out, does the Government not know that today like the Akalis in our country, Mr. Jayewardene in Sri Lanka has lost control over the situation? And he is himself a prisoner of the Army. This is a situation which you must realise.



[Shri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare]

Now, the responsibility for us is about the refugees. There is a principle of *non retirement*. That means no refugee should be turned out by any civilised country unless that refugee is assured in his home State safety of life, safety of liberty and safety of property. I want to ask, do these conditions exist in Sri Lanka so that we can tell the refugees to go back? Therefore, I request the Government to make it a time-bound programme. You must tell Sri Lanka Government that they must stop this nonsense within 3 months; otherwise different considerations will have to be taken, on the higher plane of mankind and human rights.

Therefore, I am pained. I do not know why this statement was drafted in this fashion, showing violence first and withdrawal of security forces as the second. I would still request the hon. Minister to change it by saying that the objective in Sri Lanka is now to defuse the situation by withdrawal of security forces to bring an end to violence. It should have been drafted in that order, and not the way it has been done. As long as those who are the breakers of law, who are the perpetrators of violence, continue to be there and there is emergency there is of course, how can you expect the normalcy to be restored? Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to take the reality into account to continue this dialogue and make it a time-bound process to see that there is even a discussion and a dialogue between the two heads of States, our Prime Minister and their President, at an early date so that President Jayewardene is bound to do what he ought to do. Thank you.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan):  
Madam, I will be very brief.

The hon. Minister of State for External Affairs' statement particularly refers to resumption of commercial activity wherever they have suffered. Accounts appearing in the Press and the tone and content of the statement as also the statement made by the Foreign Secretary during his visit, indicate that there is a shift—depending on how you like it; whether it is for the better or for the worse—but that is a shift. That impression is then confused by the Minister's mentioning here that what was put out by Sri Lankan authorities was press release and it is a joint statement or communiqué. My first point for consideration is—any aspect of the press release which the Sri Lankan authorities put out, with which the Government of India finds difficulty in agreeing? Is that press release a faithful and constructive account of what actually transpired during the Foreign Secretary's visit? That is my first question.

My second question is, what did the Government of Sri Lanka indicate about resumption of talks within Sri Lanka in the context of ethnic violence which is taking place there?

My final question is, we all know that Sri Lankan economy is badly affected because of strife taking place and the effect of Sri Lanka economy affects all those within the context of ethnic violence. The statement talks about strengthening commercial activities with Sri Lanka. Will you please spell out in concrete terms what concrete proposals came for discussions and what concrete steps you intend to take in the coming few months? Thank you.

श्री सत्यप्रकाश सातवोय : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, तीन पृष्ठ के वक्तव्य में एक पृष्ठ केवल इसी में चला गया कि भारत के विदेश सचिव की किस प्रकार से आवभगत की गयी, दो बार श्रीलंका के राष्ट्रपति उनसे मिले, उसके बाद वहाँ के गृह मंत्री, विदेश मंत्री, नेशनल सर्विसरिटी मंत्री और करल-इंडस्ट्रियल डेवलपमेंट मंत्री मिले। ऐसा लगता है कि सारे मामले को भारत सरकार ने बहुत ही साधारण तरीके से लिया है। इस बात को भी चर्चा नहीं है कि जो भारतीय हैं, विशेषकर मछुआरे जिनके साथ अमानुषिक रूप से सौर बवंर दुर्व्यवहार किया गया, जिनका नरसंहार किया गया उनके लिए इस कार्रवाई में श्रीलंका सरकार ने कोई खेद या दुःख प्रकट किया या नहीं? इस बात को भी इसमें चर्चा नहीं है कि जो गरज-धियों की विकट समस्या उत्पन्न हो गयी है उसका समाधान श्रीलंका सरकार कैसे करेगी और इसके सम्बन्ध में उन्होंने कोई आश्वासन भारत सरकार को या भारत के हमारे जो विदेश सचिव गये थे, उनको दिया था या नहीं दिया था? एक बात और मुझे कहना है कि जो मछुआरे मारे गये हैं, काफ़ी संख्या में मारे गये हैं, वे भारतीय थे और भारत की सीमा के अन्दर थे। तो आखिर उनके बच्चों का भरणपोषण कैसे होगा उनका काम कैसे चलेगा-इस सम्बन्ध में कोई विरोध हमारी सरकार ने प्रकट किया या नहीं? इन सभी समस्याओं का समाधान एक निश्चित समय के अन्दर होना चाहिए और अगर नहीं होता है तो भारत सरकार का जल मूकदर्शक बनने से काम नहीं चलेगा।

SHRI THANGABAALU (Tamil Nadu): Madam Vice-Chairman, I welcome the statement of the hon. Minister, but at the same time, with a lot of disappointment. My hon. friend in this House, Mr. Kalyanasundaram, Mr. John. Mr. Bhandare and Mr. Jayewardene, have expressed their views. Madam, I do not want to say much on this, because, I have no faith in these parleys and talks. I have no faith in these

dialogues. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said in 1948 categorically. At that time, he wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. He said very categorically and this is still ringing in my ears. As he said at that time, I think, these parleys and talks will never yield results, unless the Sri Lanka authorities come to the conclusion that they should support, that they should take the Tamil people in the island into cognisance. Otherwise, no fruitful results will be achieved.

Now, Madam. Madam Gandhi took a lot of interest in this matter. Afterwards, our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, has been making so much efforts to, find a permanent solution to this ethnic violence. As my friend, Mr. John, elaborated, the Tamil brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka are dying day by day, are being killed day by day. There is no control over the Sri Lankan army. As he said. Mr. Jayewardene has lost control over the army in his country. Now, he wants a settlement and a political solution. By saying this, Mr. Jaye-ne only wants to drag on this issue and his main intention is to drive away all the Tamils in Sri Lanka. This is his main intention.

We are also trying for a political solution. Hon. Minister has stated that a solution should be found through negotiations. As I said earlier these negotiations will never yield any results, especially, when Mr. Jayewardene's intentions are different. This is my strong and firm belief. That is I would urge upon the Government of India and the hon. Minister, particularly, our hon. Prime Minister; unless the Government of India takes direct action against the Sri Lankan Government, nothing will come out. This is the only way to, find a permanent solution to this problem. That is why, I would appeal on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu. Our hon. friends in the Opposition have also extended their fullest co-operation to our hon. Prime Minister on this issue, in regard to finding a solution to the

problem. Hon. Minister has stated that the objective in Sri Lanka is now to defuse the situation, bring an end to violence, withdrawal of the security forces and restoration of normalcy.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister that there is organised violence against the Tamils. Day by day, genocide is taking place. The International Court of Jurists has declared that this is a pure genocide. Even now we are mentioning, violence, violence, violence. There is no violence. The violence is organised by the Government. This is nothing but genocide against the Tamils. That is why, I would request the hon. Minister; do not prolong these talks. As my friend, Mr. Bhandari, said there must be some time-bound programme. Within a month's time or three months' time we must find some solution. More than one lakh people have come over to, Tamil Nadu. This is an official figure. Unofficially it will many times more. And our friend said, the Tamil mothers of Jaffna are crying to see their children. Our hon. Minister had said that on the return of Shri Bhandari he will come out with a statement. Now Shri Bhandari has come but the statement is without anything new.

Another thing is, when Shri Partha-sarthy was discussing there was some hope of ray for the people of Tamil Nadu but now that hope is also lost. Sri Lanka has achieved its objective. Sri Lankan President has very categorically said that they have achieved whatever they wanted to achieve. That is why I am requesting the hon. Minister to have a time-bound programme to find the solution within one month or three months. Otherwise, you will not see a single Tamil in Sri Lankan country. I request the central Government to please take some firm stand. My opinion is that this type of statement will not yield any result. As Panditji said, this will not give result to the ethnic problem. The people of

Tamil Nadu feel that the Government is not taking the problem seriously. We have full belief in our leader, Sri Rajiv Gandhi. When we met him, he said that he was very much concerned about this issue and he was taking all possible help. Even now we had some hope, but after the return of Shri Bhandari that hope is also lost. It is, therefore, necessary to call Mr. Jayawardene here and talk to him personally. A time-bound programme has to be sorted out. Otherwise, nothing will come out. That is why we want the Government of India to take action. To take action means a lot of things. I once again suggest that direct action is the only solution for Sri Lankan Tamil issue. The Minister has come out with some statement. I would come that statement. They have given so many Call Attention motions and in reply thereto at least the hon. Minister has come out with a statement, but I request the hon. Minister to take firm steps about Sri Lankan Government. That is the only solution for this issue.

SHRI H. L. KAPUR (Nominated): J. am grateful to you, Madam, for giving me this opportunity to speak. The speakers who have preceded me have very clearly brought out some of the salient points which affects us very badly. We are grateful to the Foreign Minister for having made a *suo motu* statement, but I am very sorry to say that this statement does not make us any wiser. It can best be described as more cosmetics because in the statement no mention has been made to the burning problems which our Tamilian friends are facing in Sri Lanka.

The point at issue, Madam, is the genocide of Tamilians or the people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. It is being done with impunity and the Sri Lankan President just says that he has no control over the army, and we are adopting a very mild attitude.

The point at issue is the attack of the Sri Lankan navy on the unarmed

(Shri H. L. Kapur) fishermen who are fishing in our own waters. The point at issue is the future of the thousands of unfortunate refugees who have had to leave Sri Lanka, leaving behind everything. Violence is being perpetrated by the Sri Lankan Government and yet in the statement which has been read out we talk about the trauma which the Sri Lankans must recover from, which they have been undergoing or suffering for the last few years. Madam, the trauma is not of the Sri Lankans, the trauma is that of the people of the Indian origin who are suffering, on whom crimes are being perpetrated, whose children are being taken away. It is not a trauma of the Sri Lankan; it is the trauma of the people of Indian origin. And I would request the Foreign Minister and through him the Government to adopt a more firm attitude towards this if they want to solve this problem. I agree violence cannot be controlled with violence, but this kind of attitude, this kind of mild stand is not going to solve the problem. The problem will carry on and on and as my friend has said, a time will come when there will be no Tamils in Sri Lanka and the problem will solve for itself. With these few words, I thank you once again.

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN: Madam Vice-Chairman, I must really thank all the hon. Members who have taken part in the discussion. I am really grateful to them for their many suggestions and I assure them that the anxiety that they have expressed is shared by us and the Government of India is very concerned about the whole matter. Therefore we have been pursuing this matter with Sri Lanka vigorously and we will continue to do it till we are in a position to achieve a satisfactory political solution acceptable to all.

Here, in the first instance, I would like to clear the apprehension of my hon. friend. Shri Kalyanasundaram. The Foreign Secretary really had no intention of giving any statement or

really telling something before a statement is made before this hon. House. The problem sometimes arises when a person comes from such a mission and the press asks him questions he may have to say something. But I assure the hon. Member that it is our duty to first inform the Parliament when it is in session and then inform anybody else.

Another thing which I would like to mention is the statement which was issued in Sri Lanka and which was reported in our papers yesterday. It was not a joint communique. It has to be made very clear that whatever has been stated in this statement is the version which is Sri Lankan and our Foreign Secretary has nothing to do with it, nor do we subscribe to the contents of this version as reported in the press.

Most of the hon. Members have expressed their anxiety and doubts whether the Government of India has made any change in the policy towards Sri Lanka. On this issue, I would like to assure the hon. Members that there has been no change or shift in our policy and we have the same old policy which was being pursued by the late Prime Minister. Shrimati Indira Gandhi, and this is being pursued by Shri Rajiv Gandhi and we will continue to pursue the same policy and there will be no change in it.

I would also like to make it very clear, as I have said in my statement also, that the Prime Minister has expressed his concern on various occasions about the refugees who are in this country. And we have made it very clear to the Sri Lankan Government that for all those refugees who are staying in this country for the time being, conditions have to be created conducive for their return in safety and with honour to their own country and we would ensure that this will be done because unless this is done the Sri Lankan question will not be settled to the satisfaction of all concerned.

It is a fact that all possible efforts are being made to defuse the situation. When we say violence, it does not mean violence *on* the part of any particular party. Violence means violence from any side, or violence from any party has to be abhorred and has to be discarded. Therefore, it is necessary for creating a conducive atmosphere for negotiations. Violence has to be stopped whether it is violence from one side or violence from the other side. We also agree and certainly, I share the views of the hon. Members that the security forces of Sri Lanka have to be disciplined and they have to observe the discipline which is expected of security forces of any country.

Another thing which I would like to mention here is that the visit of the Foreign Secretary was basically to make efforts to remove the misunderstandings and to create conditions for better understanding in order to come to a satisfactory solution to this problem. I would also like to say that his visit was not the last effort or that it was the last chance of discussion for coming to an understanding. As I mentioned in my statement, the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka will be coming to Delhi next month and the dialogue on these matters will be continued at that time also and this will have to be discussed at that time. Whether we discuss it in Sri Lanka or here in this country, all aspects of the question involved—whether it is the question of settlement of the restricted zone or prohibited zone or surveillance zone and so on—have to be discussed and only then a satisfactory solution can be found.

About children I quite share the anxiety of the hon. Members that the children have got nothing to do with the violence and surely these children who are detained must be released. What have the women and children got to do with this? Unless they are released, better and conducive at-

mosphere will not be created when we could come to a conclusion and find a satisfactory solution.

I would also like to mention here that Mr. G. Parthasarathy has been dealing with this problem and he is still dealing with this problem. In fact, he has been providing the necessary advice and instructions in this matter to all the people who have been negotiating on behalf of the Government of India whether it was the High Commission, initially, or whether it is the Foreign Secretary, Mr. G. Parthasarathy is a very experienced and able diplomat and he knows this question very well and; therefore, he knows all the intricacies and problems of this question. He had given his advice and instructions to the Foreign Secretary when he went to Sri Lanka and the Foreign Secretary came back and reported to him also and the question was discussed with him. Naturally, with regard to any further steps that will be taken, Mr. G. Parthasarathy will always be involved in that because he has been dealing with this question from the very beginning.

SHRI THAGABAALU: Even in today's *Statesman* the report appeared that Mr. Chhatwal, our High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, has been transferred. There was a statement in the Sri Lankan press one week back that Mr. Chhatwal was shifted from Sri Lanka, because he was helping the Tamil people. He was communicating the real feelings of the Tamils there to India and that is why the Sri Lanka Government wanted that he should be transferred. This is what has happened.

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN: Madam, I would like to answer—whatever the hon. Members have asked in their questions. Now, a reference has been made to the plight of the fishermen. We are not stressing on the plight of the fishermen of India but really the plight of the fishermen of Sri Lanka or the Tamil fishermen. Their plight is really very miserable because, on account of the restricted zone, the prohibited zone and the surveillance zone, they are suffering in their business. They have not been able to do their business; they have not been free for going out in Sea for fishing. So, mainly they

[Shri Khurshid Alam Khan]

are in real trouble. And, therefore, it has been stressed more on the Sri Lankan authorities that these people should not suffer because of the creation of the zones.

As I have already mentioned, there is no change in the Government's policy or attitude towards this question, and we shall continue to follow the same policy. We have also not agreed. I would like to once again mention, to joint naval supervision as was suggested by the Sri Lankan Government because we thought that unless normalcy was restored and all the things were taken into consideration and some satisfactory solution was found, mere joint supervision by the two navies would not solve this problem.

Sir, one of the hon. Members said that there was no hope. I think there is hope that, we would be able to find a satisfactory solution of this problem.

Some of the hon. Members think that we should give a notice of a time-bound programme. It will not be possible because when you are discussing such delicate matters, naturally they take some time, and you have got to discuss them in an atmosphere of cordiality so that it is possible for us to reach a satisfactory solution rather than we start that sort of discussion which may not lead us to a satisfactory solution.

Sir, I have already mentioned that the restricted and prohibited surveillance zone are really causing difficulties to the Sri Lankan fishermen, and I hope that as soon as a solution is found all these problems will be removed.

I assure the hon. Member that these matters particularly were discussed in the meeting by the Foreign Secretary. But it is really very difficult to mention, when the dialogue is going on, when the discussion is going on, to reveal all what is being discussed because unless some finality is reached, unless the matter is finalised, if it is disclosed in a premature manner, then it really becomes rather difficult to finalise the matter.

Sir, I once again like to assure the hon. Members that we are earnest in our efforts to ensure normalcy in Sri Lanka and to ensure that all the Sri Lankan Tamil citizens live there as other citizens of the democracy, and not as second-class citizens in any way and that all the refugees who are in this country should go back to their country in honour and live in safety.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:  
With the protection of the Indian army?

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN:  
When we are discussing for a settlement, we would not need the army to fight out the case because when discussions take place, the army is not brought in for discussion, but discussions take place across the table.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA (Tamil Nadu):  
For how long will you be discussing?

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN:  
You know that in such matters some time is needed. You cannot lay down a time limit. Naturally, we are very keen to settle this issue in the shortest possible time, and that much, I can assure.

SHRI VALAMPURI JOHN: Suppose you make the same statement next year, what will be the impression and what will be the feeling of the people?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Please do not interrupt. You have already made your point.

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN: I would like to assure the hon. Member that we treat him as an equal brother. I do not find in him and we any difference. We are equal citizens of this country. There is no question of any difference between you and me, and your cause is as dear to us as my cause is dear to you. I think you are also itching to ask something more.

I suppose I have answered most of the raised by the hon. Members.

I would again like to mention here that hon. Member. Mr. Kapur asked what we were discussing. As I mentioned, when delicate issues are being discussed, when delicate problems are being discussed, it will not be in the interest of the M. discussions or continuing discussions to disclose any thing which is in a premature stage. Because, we do not know tomorrow what shape the discussions will take place. Therefore, it is not possible for me to mention anything at this stage. This was the first meeting our Foreign Secretary had with the Sri Lankan authorities. As I said earlier, their Foreign Minister is coming next month to New Delhi to attend Nonaligned Bureau Meeting. Then, we will raise all these matters...

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN. This is not the first meeting. Earlier, Mr. G. Parthasarathy had discussions with Mr. Jayawardene. You are giving an impression as if the talks have started *de nore*.

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN' I am sorry either I have not been able to fully explain to you or you have not understood my point. I said this was the first meeting of our Foreign Secretary and their Foreign Minister is coming here next month.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN This is a continuing process.

SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN Yes, it is a continuing process—and talks would continue. Therefore, I mentioned that it would be difficult for me to lay down a time bound programme that by such and such date these discussions will be concluded. The discussions are continuing. It is a delicate question. It is a very emotional question. I particularly share the emotions with my brothers

from Tamil Nadu. As I said earlier, I do not consider any difference between me and them. Therefore, we will continue the discussions and make all possible efforts to find a satisfactory solution acceptable to all including those refugees who are in our country—and also acceptable to our people who are very much concerned about this ethnic-issue in Sri Lanka.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA: Madam, Vice-Chairman, the Hon'ble Minister has not answered to the point raised by our honourable colleague, Mr. Thangabalu regarding transfer of Mr. Chatwal.

THE VICE- CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): If you have got any specific questions, please send them in writing, the Minister would reply afterwards.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA. This is only a simple question. How did the Sri Lanka press come to know about the transfer of Mr. Chatwal in advance? Whether the Government of India has yielded to the political manoeuvres of the Sri Lankan Government to the Ambassador's transfer?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Please put your questions in writing. Now, we will take up the following three bills together—

(1) The Estate Duty (Distribution) Amendment Bill, 1985;

(2) The Union Duties of Excise (Distribution) Amendment Bill, 1985; and

(3) The Additional Duties of Excise (Goods of Special Importance) Amendment Bill, 1985.

I would request Mr. Janardhan Poojari to move these Bills as passed by the Lok Sabha.