

12 Noon

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

FIRING BY PAKISTANI TROOPS IN THE
AKHNOOR AREA ON 19TH MAY, 1967

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
श्रीमन्, 19 मई, 1967 को भारतीय राज्य
क्षेत्र के अन्दर अखनूर के इलाके में
पाकिस्तानी सैनिकों द्वारा गोली चलाये जाने
और उसमें उत्पन्न स्थिति की आर रक्षा
मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाता हूँ।

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE
(SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): Mr.
Chairman, Sir, at about 8 A.M. on
19th May, our police patrol moving
in the area between 4 to 5½ miles
South-South West of Akhnoor, inside
Indian territory, was fired upon by
Pakistani troops. The Pakistani
troops fired LMGs and threw gre-
nades and also used MMGs and 81 mm
mortars. Our Security Forces had
per force to return the fire. Firing
died down by and large by 9.15
A.M. but thereafter sporadic firing
continued till about 4 P.M.

Earlier on 17th May for the first
time, our police patrol party mov-
ing in the same area had been
challenged by the Pakistani troops
who objected to its patrolling, claim-
ing that the track used by our pat-
rol party was within Pakistani con-
trol. Since our patrol had all along
been using this track which also is
within Indian territory, the Pakis-
tani claim was not accepted. It
appears that the firing by the Pakis-
tani troops on our police patrol on
19th May was a premeditated one,
designed to establish by force their
so-called claim to the track.

In the firing by the Pakistani
troops on our police patrol, one
Indian police head constable was
killed and two ORs wounded. In-
juries were also caused to two civi-
lians. It appears that the Pakistanis
have also suffered casualties.

Through the aegis of the U.N.
Field Observers' Team, Pakistan
asked for a cease-fire and for a Sub-
Sector Commanders' meeting. This
was agreed to on our side. The
meeting was held at 5 P.M. on the
same day. It was agreed to main-
tain the cease-fire. Further meetings
held at the Sub-Sector Commanders'
level failed to produce any settle-
ment of the question at issue. The
Sub-Sector Commanders have agreed
to refer the matter to their higher
Commanders. A meeting of Sector
Commanders is likely to be held
soon.

Government regret that Pakistan
should have taken resort to unpro-
voked firing which has resulted in
casualties on both sides and created
some amount of tension. A strong
protest has been lodged with the
Government of Pakistan. It may be
added that the agreed procedure is
that in the case of such differences
the matter should be referred to
higher authorities and no firing
should be resorted to. For reasons
best known to them, the Pakistani
forces did not adopt this procedure
and resorted to use of force.

Government are aware that since
the firing incident, Pakistan has
moved some additional Army units
into the Dagger area on their side
across the Akhnoor border. Without
wishing to increase the tension that
the unfortunate Pakistani firing has
caused, I would like to assure the
House that all necessary measures
are in hand to deal with any devel-
opment that may take place in this
area.

श्री राजनारायण : श्रीमन्, मैं सरकार
से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार पुरानी
घटनाओं को मद्देनजर रखेगी और अपनी
गलतियों को देखेगी जैसा कि कच्छ के हमले
के मौके पर हुआ कि पाकिस्तान की सेना
कच्छ में आ गई और इस सरकार को
जानकारी नहीं थी और यहां तक इस

[श्री राजनारायण]

सरकार को जानकारी नहीं थी कि कंजरकोट का किला हमारा है या नहीं और जब महाराजन ने आ करके नक्शा दिखाया और लोक सभा में डा० लोहिया ने सबाल उठाया तब सरकार ने उसको क्लेम किया। उसी तरह में सब लोग जो कि कच्छ एग्जिमेंट को पढ़ें होंगे जानते हैं कि भारत की ओर से कहा गया कि यह तो केवल सीमा रेखा का झगड़ा है, मगर पाकिस्तान की ओर से उसमें कहा गया कि 35 सौ वर्ग मील भूमि का झगड़ा है, सीमा रेखा का नहीं है और इसके लिये तीन आदिमियों की एक कमेटी बनी हुई है जिसका अभी कोई फैसला नहीं हुआ है। यह एक गलती हो चुकी है बलुचर कच्छ के हमले के मौके पर। दूसरी बड़ी गलती हुई बलुचर जबकि पहली सितम्बर को छत्र और जोरिया में पाकिस्तान की पलटन आ गई और 6 दिन के बाद 7 सितम्बर को इस सरकार ने अपनी सेना को कहा कि तुम वहां पर जाओ और बावजूद पालिया-मेट के, बावजूद लोकमत के कारगिल, टियवाल, उरी और पूंछ से हम हटे। क्या सरकार इस बात को जानती है कि जब अखनूर कटने को हो गया था और जबकि मिलिट्री की ओर से सरकार को आगाह किया गया था कि अगर अखनूर कट जाता है तो भारत के शेष हिस्से में काश्मीर की तरफ हमारा आवागमन बिलकुल बन्द हो जायेगा और एकाएक काश्मीर पाकिस्तान के कब्जे में जा सकता है, तब मजबूर हो कर के भारत की सरकार ने भारत की सेना को 6 तारीख को बार्डर पर जाने का आदेश दिया। अब जरा सरकार का उत्तर पढ़ा जाय कार्लिंग अट्रेशन के बारे में जो हमारा है कि 17 मई को जब हमारी सेना पैट्रोलिंग कर रही थी तो पाकिस्तान की ओर से एतराज किया गया कि तुम्हारी पैट्रोलिंग यहां नहीं होनी चाहिये, यह हमारी जमीन है। यह सरकार ने कहा है। फिर, 17, 18 दो दिन बिना पाम हुये है और 19 तारीख को हमारी सीमा में पाकिस्तान की पलटन घुस करके हमारे जवानों पर, हमारे

नागरिकों पर हमला करती है। ऐसा क्यों हुआ? हमारे सुरक्षा मंत्री साहब जो इस देश की रक्षा को बिलकुल खतरे में शुरू में डाले हुये हैं और आज भी डाल रहे हैं, मैं उनमें कहना चाहता हूं कि कारण क्या है कि दो दिन तक जब सरकार ने पाकिस्तान की यह बात समझ ली कि पाकिस्तान यह कर रहा है तो इस पर कोई एक्टिविटी कार्यवाही क्यों नहीं सरकार ने की। हमारी सीमा में पाकिस्तान की पलटन के जवान घुसे हैं और उन्होंने तमाम हथियारों का इस्तेमाल किया है। इसका कारण क्या है?

इसी के साथ साथ मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि यह ताश्कन्द एग्जिमेंट दिन प्रति दिन टूट रहा है, टूट रहा है, टूट रहा है और सरकार कहती है : A strong protest has been launched with the Government of Pakistan.

इस स्ट्रांग प्रोटेस्ट के सेंटेंस का अर्थ क्या रह गया है। उस "स्ट्रांग प्रोटेस्ट" की क्या श्रेय है, क्या शकल है, उसके हाथ हैं, उसके गोड़ हैं, पांव हैं, नाक है, कान है, मुंह है या नहीं है। इसलिये मैं चाहता हूं कि आप सुरक्षा मंत्री साहब को जरा कहें कि हम लोगों के जज्बात को ध्यान में रखते हुये इस तरह से घटनाओं को छिपाने वाला बयान देकर के सदन का समय नष्ट न करें और इसका क्लीयर जवाब दें।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, there was a long speech and there was not much of questioning and I would not like really to make a counter-speech but would confine myself as objectively as I can . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: . . . to the question part of his long dissertation. Now, he has unnecessarily tried to attack the Government by bringing in the Rann of Kutch dispute or conflict and he has also

brought in the Indo-Pakistan conflict and the attack in Chhamb. They are not at all relevant.

श्री राजनारायण : क्यों ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: The operative part is this. He presumes that the Pakistan Armed Forces or the Security Forces entered our territory and attacked our forces. It is incorrect. They fired at the members of our patrol party but they never entered our territory. They were in Pakistan territory. The Pakistan forces which fired at the members of our patrol party did not enter Indian territory but from their own territory they took up positions and fired into our territory at the members of our patrol party when they were on a track which is in Indian territory. So that presumption on which he based his anger is factually not correct.

Then he has talked about the Tashkent Agreement. I would suggest that Mr. Chagla, the Leader of the House, is in charge of External Affairs and any question on Tashkent Declaration could perhaps with greater benefit be directed to the Minister of External Affairs.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया
(मध्य प्रदेश) : क्या श्रीमान् यह बतलायेंगे कि यह जो अभी आपने बताया कि सवा नौ बजे प्रातः से . . .

श्री राजनारायण : यानी सेना नहीं आई, सेना की गोली आई। भगवान बचाये ऐसे मंत्री से देश को।

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया :
. . . 4 बजे शाम तक गोलियां चलती रहीं तो पाकिस्तान ने लगभग कितने राउन्ड्स का उपयोग किया होगा, इसका कुछ अन्दाजा है या नहीं !

दूसरी बात, अखनूर का जो अपना हिस्सा है वह सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से बड़ा नाजुक हिस्सा है और पाकिस्तान अपने क्षेत्र में उस स्थान पर जमाव करता जा रहा है। जैसा पहले आक्रमण के समय इरादा था, अखनूर के

पाइन्ट पर घुसकर वह हमारे यहाँ आना चाहता था, उस पाइन्ट पर जो जमाव करता जा रहा है उसको काउन्टरएक्ट करने के लिये हमने पूरी तैयारी कर रखी है अथवा नहीं ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I cannot give the number of rounds that were fired. Obviously I do not think that the House would expect that any person . . .

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया :
हम अपने नहीं पूछते, उनके तो अन्दाज से बता सकते हैं।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: . . . should count as to how many rounds were fired. Firing continued on either side for several hours and nobody can or is expected to count the number of rounds that were fired. I do not think that this type of questions can really help us in any manner. The other question is important and the hon. Member has drawn attention to the situation in Akhnoor. We attach very great importance to protecting our position in Akhnoor and I would like to reiterate what I have already said in my statement, namely, that we are conscious of the move by Pakistani armed forces near this region, i.e., in what is called the Akhnoor-Dagger area. We have also taken action and I can say that we are in a position to deal with any situation that might develop in that area.

SHRI K. P. MALLIKARJUNUDU
(Andhra Pradesh): I should like to know whether the Government is aware of the fact that Pakistan has constructed a number of pill-boxes along the Kasur Nullah border and along the Ichhogil Canal, as it had done before and that at the time of joint inspection Pakistan tried to conceal this fact of preparation. Secondly, may I know whether it is a fact that in the Dagger area the concentration of troops is on a much bigger scale than what it was in September, 1965 when Pakistan committed aggression?

[Shri K. P. Mallikarjunudu.]

Thirdly, may I know whether all these preparations are in any way connected with the recent supply of arms to Pakistan by the USA and the recent talks between the Russian Government and the Pakistan Government?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Pakistan has been constructing pill-boxes at a number of points along their border and we are aware of the construction of pill-boxes in different regions. The second question is about concentration of troops in the Dagger area on the Pakistan side. There has been concentration of troops, but I cannot say whether it is more than what was there at the time or soon before the 1965 aggression by Pakistan. The third question is whether all these Pakistani preparations have got any link with—if I understood the questioner correctly—the supply of arms from . . . did he say Russia or any other country . . .

SHRI K. P. MALLIKARJUNUDU:
From both the countries.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: According to our information there has not been any supply of arms from the Soviet Union, but Pakistan is getting arms from many countries. They are getting arms from several West European countries. They are also getting arms through some of their friendly countries and very big supplies from China. Maybe the Pakistani intransigence on several scores is not unconnected with this large and liberal supply of arms they are getting from a large number of countries.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Pakistan has been, by this time, armed to the teeth and during the last twelve months Pakistan has not only been able to make good the loss it suffered during its conflict with India, but it has attained much more striking power. As our hon. Minister agrees, Pakistan has also received arms from China, from

West Germany and from other European countries and with the recent decision of the USA in the matter of supply of spare parts to Pakistan, the striking capacity of Pakistan has increased. There has been financial assistance also from China to the tune of some 167 million dollars and also financial assistance to buy arms from Saudi Arabia to the tune of 40 million dollars. Now, in this background—the hon. Minister may agree with me or not—may I know whether the conflict or the firing at Akhnoor is a prelude to a massive attack on India either by Pakistan alone or by Pakistan and China jointly in the near future?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: This firing across the border in the Akhnoor area should be dealt with as an incident, an unfortunate incident, and we should not connect it as a prelude to any major attack or a massive attack by Pakistan. If Pakistan, notwithstanding their adherence or signature to the Tashkent Declaration and the obligations which they have more than once reiterated under the United Nations Charter, embark upon any aggressive designs, surely India will meet that situation, but we should not unnecessarily get ourselves worked up. We should in a very determined manner pursue our efforts and build up our defences, but to build up our defence in a strong and dignified manner is one thing and to get excited is quite another thing.

SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh): It is quite clear that this firing at Akhnoor is the result of the policy of the United States Government in supplying arms to Pakistan. Has the Defence Minister requested the Minister of External Affairs to call the American Ambassador in Delhi to the Ministry and tell him that this is one of the perilous consequences of the policy of the United States Government?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: We have not left the United States

Government in any doubt, either at the external affairs level or at other levels, about India's strong reaction to the United States Government's decision to resume the supply of spare parts to Pakistan. We have said that this will definitely create tension and might spark off even an arms race, which the United States Government have often said they are anxious to avoid. Whether this Akhnoor firing had taken place or had not taken place, that is a separate issue, to which we attach importance and we have conveyed our views in no unmistakable terms to the United States Government.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (राजस्थान) :

मंत्री महोदय से मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि यह ट्रैक इन्टरनेशनल बार्डर जो हमारा पाकिस्तान के साथ है उससे यह कितना अन्दर है ? क्या यह ट्रैक कहीं पर दोनों ओर से उस इन्टरनेशनल बार्डर को छूता है ; और अगर है तो इसकी लम्बाई कितनी है और उस आर्क में हमारी कितनी जमीन आती है ? क्या यह बात सच है कि पाकिस्तान ने इस ट्रैक पर जाने के लिये हमारे पेट्रोल पर इसलिए हमला किया क्योंकि पाकिस्तान इस ट्रैक तक की जमीन को अपना क्लेम करने लगा है और इसी वजह से उसने 17 तारीख को हमारे पेट्रोल को चेलेज किया और बावजूद इस चेलेज के 19 तारीख को हमारा पेट्रोल गया, अनप्रिपेयर्ड अवस्था में इस रास्ते पर जिसके कारण यह घटना पैदा हुई ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I do not think it will be in our national interest to go into these details of yards or distances and the like. This track is, situated in a terrain where there are no fixed markings. This is really part of an old river bed where there is lot of sand and the like, and this track is within our territory though not far off from the border, and it is in our control, it is in our territory. With regard to the second question that he put,

it is unfair to suggest that we had gone there without any preparation. The fact that we were challenged on the earlier occasion and we went there again meant that we were not deterred by their challenge. We had to face the difficulty. If in the assertion of our own right we face danger, we have to face such a danger. We faced the danger and took some casualties and inflicted some casualties on the other side. That is part of the functioning of the Armed Forces on any border, and to suggest that we went there without preparation is not proper, and we should desist from saying this because this disheartens the people who undertake this hazardous task on our border. We should be careful when we use such expressions in this august House.

श्री जगत नारायण : (हरियाणा) :

मैं वजीर साहब से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उनको यह इल्म है कि 19 तारीख की शाम को 7 बजकर 10 मिनट पर प्रेस ट्रस्ट आफ इंडिया ने यह खबर फ्लैश की—उस पर लिखा था फ्लैश फ्लैश फ्लैश—कि पाकिस्तान की गवर्नमेंट ने यह ऐलान किया है कि हिन्दुस्तान ने पाकिस्तान पर हमला कर दिया है। क्या उनके इल्म में यह है। उसके बाद जब यह खबर हमारे पास अखबार में पहुंची तो हमने पी० आई० बी० को कांटेक्ट करने की कोशिश की और वहां से हमको इसके मुताल्लिक कोई खबर नहीं मिली। रात को 10 बजे जा कर के गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया ने पी०आई०बी० से यह कांटाक्ट किया कि हमने पाकिस्तान पर हमला नहीं किया बल्कि पाकिस्तान ने भारतवर्ष पर हमला किया है। तो क्या इसके मुताल्लिक वजीर साहब को कोई इल्म है। क्या उन्होंने पाकिस्तान से इसके मुताल्लिक प्रोटेस्ट किया है और क्या आगे के लिये कोई ऐसा इंतजाम करेंगे कि अखबारात को बिल्कुल ठीक रिपोर्ट मिल सके ताकि वह ठीक खबरें छाप सकें क्योंकि रात को 8 बजे या 9 बजे खबरें छपने के लिये चली जाती हैं।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I cannot give the exact time at which the correct version . . .

SHRI JAGAT NARAIN: At 7-10 it was received.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I am not contradicting this. I do not know, Sir, the exact time at which the news was given by the Press Trust of India or by our Director of Public Relations on the 19th but it is a fact that the news was given on the 19th and it was published in the morning newspapers on the 20th. So whether the Pakistani version came to them a few hours earlier than the Indian version I cannot contradict or confirm. The hon. Member himself is the editor of a newspaper and I cannot contradict him with regard to the actual timing of the receipt of the news by him in his office because he would know it better. Whether his assistant first placed the Pakistani news and later on gave him the Indian version I cannot say. I will have to check up the timings. But they are not of great importance from my point of view. The next publication was the morning newspapers of the 20th and this news according to the version that we gave found its place in the morning newspapers of the 20th.

SHRI TRILOKI SINGH (Uttar Pradesh): In view of the fact that Pakistan has questioned our possession of this particular track may I know, apart from referring the matter to higher authorities, the steps the Government of India has taken to ensure the security of the track in question?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: The track is in our possession. That is the biggest security.

DR. ANUP SINGH (Punjab): The hon. Minister of Defence stated in answer to the previous question that the Government of the United States has not been left in any doubt about the misgivings which we naturally entertain about the implications of their help to Pakistan. Would the

hon. Minister please tell us what precisely is the reaction of the U.S. Government when we have drawn their attention to it, because similar assurances were given by President Eisenhower and our misapprehensions were always brushed aside? We know what transpired. Will he be good enough to tell us whether there has been any change in the attitude of the U.S. Government about our misgivings? What is their reaction? What are they telling us?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Naturally they have their own version that this is not likely to prejudice us. But we have never accepted their explanation of it. We are firmly of the opinion that whatever may be their explanation of it, this will definitely work to our prejudice.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): May I know from the Minister what dispute really was talked about at the Sub-Sector Commanders' level and whether it was the dispute which gave rise to the firing? Unless that is specifically clarified, that may give rise to all sorts of misgivings as to who actually started this and who did not. The question really is this. What is the dispute which is being talked at the Sub-Sector Commanders' level and whether that is the dispute which gave rise to the firing? The second question that arises from the answer given by the hon. Minister is this. He said he was trying to build up a dignified defence. We have heard offensive defence, vigorous defence, and actually we do not know what is meant by dignified defence. Will the hon. Minister explain to the House what he meant really by dignified defence? These are my questions.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I think it is more of dialectics than of substance. The first question I would venture to reply by saying that I have not got any record of the actual discussions that took place at the Sub-Sector Commanders' level. But I do

want to sound a note of warning that a suggestion of this type entertaining any doubt as to who started the conflict should not be voiced on the floor of the House. My word should be accepted when I say that we were on the track which is in our possession and fire was opened on us. That should be accepted, and any suggestion that there is any doubt as to who started the firing is something which should not be said in the Indian Parliament. Whatever is the thing that is said on this side, it has become the fashion—I think the same hon. Member on one occasion also raised the question that there is some doubt as to who started the fire when the Chinese conflict took place. He is in the habit of raising these things. I take strong exception to this type of insinuation.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Sir, I rise on a point of order.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I do not give in.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It cannot be in the midst of a statement.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: I am on a point of order. Let the Minister sit down.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I will not.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Sir, I am raising a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is it?

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: It is very unfair on the part of the Minister to refer to what I said during the discussion which arose out of the book of Gen. Kaul, "The Untold Story". It is not in order on the part of the Minister to take a word of mine out of context which was said in connection with the discussion of that book. (Interruption). This is my point of order. It was specifically said there, Gen. Kaul has said that it was India which attacked China and not other-

wise. That is told in Gen. Kaul's book. That was raised there. Now, can he refer to those points which were made then on the floor of the House? Can he refer to them in view of this question which I have asked? It is absolutely unfair and the Minister has no right to make this unfair allegation against a Member of this House. I want your ruling on this. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister merely cautioned in the interests of our country. Nothing bad has been done. After all, he has not been discourteous to you; nor should you be discourteous to him.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: You should put him in his place.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal): He tried to put words into the mouth of Mr. Chatterjee.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Papers to be laid on the Table.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

STATEMENT SHOWING ACTION TAKEN ON ASSURANCES, PROMISES AND UNDERTAKINGS GIVEN DURING VARIOUS SESSIONS

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the following statements showing the action taken by Government on the various assurances, promises and undertakings given during the sessions shown against each:—

- (i) Statement No. XI—Fifty-third Session, 1965.
- (ii) Statement No. VI—Fifty-fifth Session, 1966.
- (iii) Statement No. IV—Fifty-sixth Session, 1966.
- (iv) Statement No. IV—Fifty-seventh Session, 1966.
- (v) Statement No. III—Fifty-eighth Session, 1966.