

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED CONTINUOUS FIRING FROM ACROSS
PAKISTAN TERRITORY BY PAKISTANI FORCES IN
COOCH-BIHAR DISTRICT—*continued*.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH):
Madam, from time to time there have been
reports of concentration of Pakistani forces
within Pakistan territory near Dahagram
enclave. Taking advantage of the narrowness
of the strip of Indian territory separating the
Pakistan mainland from this enclave, illegal
movement of Pakistani nationals has been
taking place between the enclave and the
Pakistan mainland. Patrolling in the adjacent
Indian area of Tin-Bigha was intensified to
prevent un-nauthorised passage of goods and
movement of Pakistani nationals over Indian
territory from the Pakistan mainland to the
Dahagram enclave. With the intensification
of patrolling in Tin-Bigha by our border
police for ensuring that Pakistani infiltration
across the Indian border does not take place,
the East Pakistan Rifle Units came in
strength on the Pakistani side of the border and
dug themselves in opposite to the West
Bengal outpost of Jhirsingheswar.

Patrolling by the West Bengal police in the
area to prevent unlawful movement of
Pakistani nationals between the Pakistan
mainland and the Dahagram enclave, was
given the colour of an economic blockade of
the enclave by the East Pakistan Government.
Pakistan concentrated its forces all along the
border in this sector which gave rise to
tension. On the 18th February 1965, the
Deputy Commissioner of Cooch-Bihar met
his counterpart, the Deputy Commissioner of
Rangpur, in order to review the cause of
tension prevailing in this border area. Both
agreed that all possible steps should be taken
to ease the situation.

The Pakistani press, however, came out
with baseless stories of India having imposed
an economic blockade of Dahagram. The
allegations of the East Pakistan Government
were denied by the Government of West
Bengal, who in their telegram dated the 12th
March, 1965, drew the attention of the
Government of East

Pakistan to the concentration of Pakistani forces
on the border. On the 13th March, at about 5
p.m., some residents of Dahagram tried to lift
cattle belonging to Indian nationals at a place
called Phulka-dabri. They were backed by
armed personnel of the East Pakistan Rifles
from this enclave. The West Bengal Police
rushed to the scene and prevented the
Pakistani nationals from lifting the cattle. There
was a brief exchange of fire. Shortly
afterwards, a large number of Hindu
houses in Dahagram were set on fire and there
were reports of some gun shots inside
Dahagram. This was followed by Hindu
exodus from the Dahagram enclave to the
adjoining Indian territory; about 150 Hindus
fled Dahagram and came to Cooch Behar in
search of shelter and security. At about
midnight on the 13th/14th March, 1965, some
residents of the Pakistan enclave assembled
around the Tin-Bigha area and tried to
break through across Indian territory to the
Pakistan mainland. Pakistan policemen from
the enclave started firing to give cover to these
Pakistani nationals, and one Indian policeman
was injured. In self-defence, fire was
opened by West Bengal police also.

On the basis of interrogation of the Hindu
refugees from Dahagram who had come away
to the Indian territory, it was learnt that they
had been subjected to oppression and
harassment. This was taken up with the
Government of East Pakistan in a telegraphic
protest by the Government of West Bengal
where it was mentioned that unless effective
steps were taken by the Government of East
Pakistan to ease tension in this area, there was
likelihood of serious repercussions. There has
been no reply to this telegram dated 14-3-65.

The Chief Secretary, West Bengal Gov-
ernment, sent an immediate telegram on the
16th March evening, to his counterpart in East
Pakistan drawing his attention to the baseless
accusations that were being made against
Indian authorities for alleged atrocities
perpetrated in the area and also to the false and
highly provocative and inflammatory version
of the Dahagram incidents, which were
appearing in East Pakistan newspapers. The
Chief Secretary, West Bengal, suggested

[Sardar Swaran Singh.] *hat the two Chief Secretaries should meet immediately and discuss the situation. To this a conditional acceptance was received from the Chief Secretary, East Pakistan, on the 18th night. The conditions informed by the Pakistan Government were the vacation of the so-called aggression and occupation of Dahagram by Indian forces and assurance to the residents of Dana-gram who had crossed over into East Pakistan to return to Dahagram.

The situation took a turn for the worse •with commencement of continuous firing from across Pakistan territory by Pakistani forces from 3-30 a.m. on 17-3-65 in the following areas of the district of Cooch Behar, Phulkabri, Tin-Bigha, Bagdokra and Kharkharia. Heavy and intensive firing by Pakistan Forces is continuing in this area. Indian border police has had to return fire when it was indispensably necessary to maintain its posts. Pakistan forces are using mortars and hand grenades.

The Chief Secretary and Inspector-General of Police, West Bengal, have visited the area for an on-the-spot inspection of the situation. The Chief Secretary has reported after this visit that there is not the slightest basis for the Pakistani allegation that Indian forces have aggressed against Dahagram or that they have occupied the Pakistani enclave. The Chief Secretary has further reported that firing in the area was started by personnel of East Pakistan Rifles and that the West Bengal border police returned the fire in self-defence.

A strong telegraphic protest was lodged with the Government of East Pakistan by "the Government of West Bengal on the 17th March, urging upon that Government to issue instructions to its forces to stop firing forthwith and to desist from further aggressive activities. On the 17th March, a note was also handed over to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, refuting allegations of alleged occupation of Dahagram by Indian forces. The note urged the Pakistan Government to instruct the Chief Secretary of East Pakistan to agree to meet the Chief Secretary, West Bengal, immediately to discuss the situation. It was further stated in the

note that the Government of Pakistan should curb anti-Indian and communal propaganda in the press and over the Government radio, since this propaganda could have serious repercussions on the minorities in East Pakistan. On 19th March, 1965, the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi left a note verbale with the Foreign Secretary, repeating the conditional acceptance of the proposal made by the Chief Secretary, West Bengal, for a conference with his counterpart in East Pakistan to discuss the situation on the Cooch-Bihar border. On the afternoon of the 20th March, the Pakistan High Commission left another note verbale with the Foreign Secretary, suggesting that a party of Pakistan officials should be allowed transit facilities over Indian territory so that they can proceed to Dahagram to verify India's assertion that their forces have not committed any aggression on the Pakistani enclave of Dahagram.

In this note verbale our proposals for a meeting between the Chief Secretaries of West Bengal and East Pakistan was sidetracked. Our reaction to this note was conveyed to the Pakistan High Commissioner within two hours. We informed him that there could be no question of the Government of India agreeing to an investigation by Pakistani officials into the alleged aggression which had, in fact, never taken place. The Government of India made the following concrete suggestions:

- (i) Immediate stoppage of firing for which orders should be given by both East Pakistan and West Bengal Governments.
- (ii) Residents of Dahagram, who have come away to East Pakistan, and Pakistan officials, may apply for permits to the local authorities for transiting through Indian territory.
- (iii) Simultaneously, the East Pakistan and West Bengal Governments should specifically agree to a meeting of the Chief Secretaries at a very early date.
- (iv) The grant of permits to Pakistani residents and officials would be

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without prejudice to the procedures to be mutually agreed upon by the Governments of East Pakistan and West Bengal in regard to transit facilities to each other's enclaves.

Late last night a message was received from the Government of West Bengal saying that Pakistan Ansars—who are really a paramilitary organisation trained by Pak Army officials—backed by personnel of the East Pakistan Rifles, made raids on Indian territory in the Bagdokra and other areas and began looting and burning the houses of Indian nationals in these areas. The Pakistani raid was met by the West Bengal Border Police and some of the raiders who were indulging in arson and other such nefarious activities on Indian territory were killed. We are watching further developments. I can assure the House that such lawlessness and brigandage on the part of Pakistani personnel will be suitably and adequately dealt with.

There is no truth whatsoever in the wild Pakistani allegation that Indian troops have committed aggression by marching into the Pakistani enclave of Dahagram. There are no Indian troops in the area. Only personnel belonging to the West Bengal Police are patrolling the Indian mainland in Tin-Bigha, and they have never entered the Pakistani enclave of Dahagram.

It is extremely regrettable that the Pakistan Government should whip up wild and irresponsible propaganda in the Pakistan press and over the Pakistan Government Radio, both in East and West Pakistan, calculated to rouse communal passions. The Government of India have urged the Pakistan Government to do everything in their power to see that such false propaganda is stopped, as otherwise there are likely to be serious Tepercussions on the minorities in East Pakistan. The Government of India have also impressed upon the Government of Pakistan the need for immediate stoppage of firing, on both sides, so that the matter could be considered in a calm atmosphere between the Governments of West Bengal and East Pakistan. The Government of

India are surprised that Pakistan Government could persist in their accusation of Indian occupation of Dahagram enclave in spite of our categorical denial.

SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh): Madam, in a note which was handed over by the Pakistan High Commissioner to the Foreign Secretary on 19th March the extraordinary statement is made that 4000 Muslims have taken shelter in Rangpur district after their forcible eviction from Dahagram and its occupation by Indian police and other military personnel. Since Government has denied that there has been any aggression on the enclave, what kind of evidence did the Pakistan High Commissioner produce before the Foreign Secretary for this extraordinary allegation against the Indian Government?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: No evidence was produce'd. It was just repeated, which according to us is entirely incorrect, that Indian forces had occupied the Dahagram enclave.

SHRI A. D. MANI: It has been reported in the press that foreign personell wearing caps have been seen on the Pakistan side taking part in the military operations. Has any report been received by Government about the participation of foreign forces along with Pakistani forces on the border ?

• SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have also read the press report but beyond that there was no further confirmation from any other source of the presence of foreign troops near the Indo-Pakistan border in that region.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY (Madras): I have two questions to ask. One is, is it true that these attacks are on the increase after President Ayub Khan's visit to Peking ? That is number one. The second is, are not these attacks similar to the Chinese attack we had on our border in 1956 which we called as border disputes but which later developed into war ? These are the two questions.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Some troubl was already there, but I have given the

[Sardar Swaran Singh.]

various dates and the dates of the visit of President Ayub Khan are also known to us. So, it is for the hon. Member to draw his conclusion and it does not require any confirmation or contradiction from me. On the second question I have given the facts, but one thing is quite clear in this area. Admittedly there is no dispute about the border. There might be some dispute in the sense that it has not been formally demarcated on the Sino-Indian border. But in this part there is no dispute about the actual border here. We admit that the enclave is clear's. It is admitted on all hands that it is an enclave in the sense that there is Indian territory between the enclave and the normal Indo-Pakistan boundary.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: I am not going into that. I am asking whether these attacks are similar to the Chinese attack. I am not going into the merits of the dispute. :

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I do not know how I should answer that. There is one dissimilarity there. The Chinese attack was different because there the Chinese forces had marched into India in A big way at the time when the attack took place.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa): Madan, there was a proposal of the Indian Home Minister and the Pakistan Home Minister meeting. Subsequently there was also a proposal for the Chief Secretary of West Bengal meeting the Chief Secretary of East Pakistan, but in the meantime Pakistan has been aggravating all these troubles. In view of that, is the Government of India thinking of any possibility of our Foreign Minister meeting the Foreign Minister of Pakistan so that some development could come up, better development?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have no hesitation and I have never shown any hesitation in meeting the Pakistan Foreign Minister if anything useful can come out of that. But my difficulty has been that even when an invitation was extended, it was (aid that I should go there and the

two Foreign Ministers should discuss the preliminaries for a meeting or to resolve the Kashmir dispute. Unfortunately there are many things which require to be settled between India and Pakistan, and we are always ready to settle all disputes by peaceful means. At the same time if Pakistan resorts to these provocative acts and takes an aggressive attitude, we have to meet that to defend our territory and to defend our sovereignty.

SHRI RAM SINGH (Uttar Pradesh): Our Prime Minister appealed to the Pakistan Government to end these border attacks. Have ever these appeals produced some effect in the past?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you repeat your question?

SHRI RAM SINGH: Our Prime Minister even yesterday has appealed to the Pakistan Government to end the border attacks. Have ever in the past these appeals had any effect on Pakistan ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: We should continue to have this attitude of our willingness to settle all our matters by peaceful means. The Prime Minister has also said that. At the same time we will have to defend ourselves by all possible methods; and let us not also forget that after all the major part of Indo-Pakistan border had been settled by discussions and actually demarcated.

श्री भिमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया
(मध्य प्रदेश) : पहला प्रश्न मेरा यह है कि
पाकिस्तान वर्षों से हमारी सीमा पर—कभी
गुजरात में, कभी काश्मीर में, कभी कूचबिहार
में और कभी त्रिपुरा में—इस तरह की
वारदात करता आ रहा है और हम अपने
सुरक्षा के काम वहाँ की स्थानीय पुलिस के
जिम्मे ही कर रहे हैं, तो ऐसी स्थिति में
वहाँ ये घटनाएं कम घटे और हमारे लोगों
के मन में शान्ति का भाव आ सके, इस दृष्टि
से इस सारे सीमा क्षेत्र, जहाँ जहाँ इस तरह
की वारदात होती है, को सेना के जिम्मे
करने में शासन को क्या आपत्ति है ?

दूसरी बात जो प्रेस रिपोर्ट आई कि कुछ लोग एने देखे गये, तो क्या हमने भी अपने सोसैज के आधार पर यह कन्फर्म किया अथवा नहीं कि पाकिस्तानियों के अलावा भी, और दूसरे देश की सेना के लोग या सिपाही, उन लोगों के साथ हमारी सीमा पर अतिक्रमण करते हुए देखे गये ?

तोसरे, वहां पर हमारे कितने भारतीय नागरिक पाकिस्तानियों द्वारा गोली चलाने के परिणामस्वरूप मारे गये ? और

चौथे, कितने पाकिस्तानी हम लोगों ने गिरफ्तार किये अपनी सीमा के अन्दर ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Madam, the first point is, it is asked why the protection of the entire border is not being handed over to the Army. In regard to international borders of this type which are demarcated and about which there is too dispute, it is normal on either side that the police provides the pickets, and that is enough. And let us also keep this in mind that at that time after the demarcation some years ago when there were these clashes, certain agreements had been arrived at and, by and large, these agreements have worked well. May be, sometimes the situation becomes difficult. This is the normal practice. It is not customary in any country where there is a civilian border that you put the Army in (he forward pickets. That is just not done. Of course, if anything gets complicated, then the country concerned takes all possible steps.

The second point is about foreigners in the Pakistani territory. I have already said that this news item which appeared in certain newspapers about the presence of foreign troops in the Pakistani territory has not received confirmation from any other source. So, that answers it. But at any rate, it is quite clear (Interruptions) Please, let me finish.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him finish. \ i j

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: At any rate, what is suggested by the hon. Member over there is whether any foreign troops have been used at the border for attacks. We are satisfied that this has not been done.

श्री. विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया :
कितने भारतीय मारे गये और कितने पाकि-
स्तानी गिरफ्तार किये गये ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have not received this information with me.

SHRI D. THENGARI (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, in the first place, are these attacks the outcome of any Sino-Pak conspiracy against India, and is the Government in a position to assure us that the foreign nationals who were reportedly seen along with the Pakistani forces were certainly not the Chinese nationals, that they were not the Chinese ? Can the Government assure us? Secondly, in view of the fact that the Pakistani Border Police is being reinforced by Pakistani Armed personnel, why are we not reinforcing our Border Police with our Armed personnel ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: This question has been put as to whether in those people who were deported or who went to the other side, there were any Chinese. No one has deported anybody. I do not know where from . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Reported.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Reported? There is no report at all that there were any Chinese nationals who were moved from one part to the other. The only report that appeared in a newspaper was that there were some foreign troops. No one had mentioned that they were the Chinese. (Interruptions) May I at the same time say that we may have our difficulties, conflicts and the like? But let us not try to see danger even when it does not exist, let us not exaggerate things. Let us try to see it with a certain measure of calmness.

The other question is put as to whether there is any deep Sino-Pak conspiracy or arrangement and whether as a result of

[Sardar Swaran Singh.]

that, all this is happening. Now, we know the relations between China and Pakistan. They are becoming quite thick, and they are functioning to the prejudice of India. But that is a bigger political issue and to connect that with each incident that takes place anywhere, perhaps will not be a very safe conclusion, at any rate, without any concrete evidence.

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN (Nominated): My question is this. I was not trying to interrupt the Minister. He says that he has seen in the news-papers reports about the appearance of people who might be foreigners and he keeps on repeating, "I saw it in the paper, I saw it in the paper but there is no confirmation." Did he make any specific enquiries from the authorities on the spot whether this is true or not?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: He is a senior Member, Madam. When I have seen the reports, if it is asked, I will repeat it, I will go on repeating that I have seen reports about foreign troops there. But the question that is put is: Has any investigation been made from the authorities on the spot? Which spot? This is supposed to be a spot in Pakistan. Do you expect that I have to ask the Deputy Commissioner who is the authority on the spot of the Pakistani District, and ask him as to whether there are any foreign troops or not? (*Interruptions*) We have verified it from such sources as we have. And it is not customary to question me about my source, with relation to the source of my information, in our country. I have said that this has not been confirmed.

[Several hon. Members stood up]

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I do not want any further discussion on this and I think we have had enough. (*Interruptions*) I think we go back to the Budget.

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA (West Bengal)
Madam .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sen Gupta, since you come from that State, I allow you.

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA: May I know whether the Pakistani armies have illegally occupied any Indian territory? The second question is . . .

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have not followed even the first, Madam.

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA: May I know firstly whether the Pakistani Army or police has illegally occupied any portion of the Indian territory? I think it is very clear. And secondly, may I know whether the West Bengal Government or the Government of India were not aware of any such occupation till Mr. Amarnath Roy Pradhan, a Forward Bloc MLA in the West Bengal Assembly, made this disclosure? And apart from this, may I know whether several thousands of Indian citizens, in fear of their life and property, have taken asylum in different parts of Cooch-Bihar and Jalpaiguri District?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Madam, in this region, no Indian territory is in the possession of Pakistani Government forces either police or the others. Therefore, any disclosure if it has been made by any Member—whether he is of the Forward Block or the Backward Block, I do not know—could not be a disclosure; it might be a suspicion which was refuted, and I say that in this region not an inch of Indian territory is under the occupation of the Pakistani Police or any other agent.

4 P.M.

So the second question does not arise. Now, it has been asked as to whether several hundred or several thousand Indians or Hindus have taken shelter somewhere. That is, as I said, a sad spectacle. We know that thousands of non-Muslims—Hindus, Buddhists, Christians .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He says that Indian citizens have taken asylum in India.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: How can Indians take asylum in India?

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE (Uttar Pradesh) I want to know whether those residing on the border have deserted their villages due to continued firing by Pakistani troops.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: As a result of this tension and as a result of the firing I said that there was movement from these areas which were directly under fire to safer areas. We have also taken some precautions in that direction.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Does it not show that our security arrangements on the border are not adequate ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: In the case I should like to say that the security arrangements were very adequate, and I would like to pay a tribute to the very valiant manner in which our police force there have defended the border. It will be wrong. Madam, whatever may be our difficulties, always to create an atmosphere as if our people, who at the moment are facing the fire, are in any way deficient. That will not be correct at all.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Madam, on a point of personal clarification. I did not say anything which might be construed as a reflection on the forces there. But if the Government have not made adequate security arrangements, then the Government has to be condemned.

SAKDAB SWARAN SINGH: I do not mind being condemned so long as the hon. Member is quite clear as to what he is saying. Whatever may be the arrangements, there is no need for making arrangements always. If there are any surprises from the other side, then we make arrangements to meet this type of firing. But if the firing is resorted to and our people are exposed, then our security forces, the police, take measures, take counteraction. They have taken action, and according to my assessment and reports, very effective action. So we should really support the action that they have taken and we should not always, in the strong temptation of trying to make a statement against the Minister, forget the situation on the ground.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Madam . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will do. Let us come to the Discussion on the Budget.

THE BUDGET (GENERAL), 1965-66- GENERAL DISCUSSION— *continued-*

SHRIMATI MOHINDER KAUR (Punjab): Madam Deputy Chairman, I wish to compliment the Finance Minister for giving the much-needed relief by reducing the excise duty on essential commodities. But, I am afraid, Madam at the same time I find some omissions too. Everyone knows that diesel oil is extensively used for agricultural purposes. But somehow the cost of this commodity is so high that farmers hesitate to use it. I will give, you an example.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARCAVA) in the Chair.]

Sir, in Punjab three years back the-Punjab Government had given subsidy the-farmers to sink 6,000 wells with the understanding that electricity would be given to them to energise those wells. But so far no electricity has been given to them: because we have not got sufficient power. But last year the Government of Punjab-decided to give subsidy to the farmers up to 25 per cent, of the cost of diesel engines. But in spite of this generous offer, very few farmers came forward to take advantage of it. They were reluctant since the cost of the diesel oil is so high that recurring expenditure on diesel engine is not commensurate with the returns. So» I wish to tell you, Sir, that unless we can give adequate incentive to the farmer, he will not go in for something which does not give him adequate return. I will give you an example.

Out of the total cultivated land in India, only 20 per cent, is canal irrigated land and a much smaller percentage is irrigated by tube wells or minor irrigation works. So two-thirds of our total cultivated land in India is Barani land. Unless we can give the farmer an incentive by reducing the price of diesel oil, he is not going to go in for diesel oil operated wells.

Moreover, the electricity supplied to a village is too costly. If I may tell you, the minimum cost per village comes to Rs. 30,000. It depends on the distance from village to village. For a distant village it may be even Rs. 60,000. la