

(c) whether India's role in the Human Rights Commission had been guided by the belief that human rights concerns of Tamils in Sri Lanka could be addressed in a constructive and inclusive manner; and

(d) whether India had set a time-frame for the Sri Lankan Government to act on human rights concerns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (d) During the 37th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in March 2018, the Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR) and the Secretary-General on 'Promoting Reconciliation, Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka' was presented before the UNHRC. The report reviewed progress made by the Government of Sri Lanka during the period from March 2017 to January 2018 on the implementation of resolutions 30/1 and 34/1, in particular regarding the comprehensive recommendations on the judicial and non-judicial measures necessary to advance accountability and reconciliation, and on strengthening the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

India's approach in the UNHRC has been guided by the firm belief that promotion and protection of human rights can be best pursued through constructive and collaborative engagement. We also believe in the primacy of national efforts in the realization of human rights. In keeping with its traditional commitment to human rights and values, India has actively participated in all sessions of the UNHRC, in a constructive and inclusive manner. India continues to remain engaged with Sri Lanka at all levels on its efforts to build a future that accommodates the aspirations of all sections of society, including the Sri Lankan Tamil community, for a life of equality, justice, peace, dignity and self-respect as citizens of united Sri Lanka.

**Representation against various initiatives for Issuance of passports**

184. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various passport officials were against the various initiatives taken by Government with regard to issuance of passport;

(b) whether Government has received many representations from them citing many aspects of issuance of passport; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) The Ministry has not received any representation from passport officials against the various initiatives taken by the Government with regard to issuance of passports.

**Rejection of offer of talks by Pakistan**

185. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has repeatedly rejected the offer of talks made by the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is yet to hear from Pakistan why the offer made by India for talks was turned down by it; and

(d) whether Pakistan had become nothing more than a country that exports terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (d) No such offer was made by India which was rejected by Pakistan.

The Government has clear and consistent position that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan, and is committed to addressing all outstanding issues bilaterally and peacefully in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore declaration. However, any meaningful dialogue can be held only in an atmosphere free from terror, hostility and violence. The onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive atmosphere.

Continued cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan remains a core concern for us. India has repeatedly called upon Pakistan to abide by its commitment not to allow any territory under its control to be used for terrorism against India in any manner. Pakistan has also been asked to take effective actions to end terrorism and dismantle terrorist sanctuaries and infrastructure on the territory under its control. Until such time, India will continue to take firm and decisive steps to respond to cross-border terrorism.