

us an opportunity to exchange views on the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka, also underlined our desire to develop all round bilateral relations, particularly in economic, trade and cultural fields. We reaffirmed our belief that the political framework created by Sri Lanka following the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987, provides a viable basis for a reasonable and enduring settlement of the ethnic issue. We also stressed the need to pursue measures to bring the parties concerned to the negotiating table. During the visit it was decided that steps will be taken for the establishment of an Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission chaired by the respective Foreign Ministers. It was also agreed that Oil and Natural Gas Commission and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation will take steps towards finalising a contract for oil exploration in the Gulf of Mannar.

(d) and (e). It has always been Government's policy to have friendly and close bilateral relations with Sri Lanka. The visit of the then External Affairs Minister to Sri Lanka served to further consolidate and strengthen Indo-Sri Lanka relations.

Indians Killed/Injured in the Gulf War

*98. SHRI B. N. REDDY:
SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of EXTERN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indians are reported to have been killed/injured in the recent Gulf war; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the relief given to the dependents of their family members?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have confirmed report of death of Shri Shyam Lal and injury to 5 other Indians namely:

1. Shri Ajit Singh
2. Shri Lakhbir Singh
3. Shri Jit Singh
4. Shri Kalyan Bose
5. Shri Kasim Khan Basheer Ahmed

Action is underway to provide relief.

Curtailment of DTC Bus Services

*99. SHRI Y. S. RAJASEKHAR REDDY:
SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Transport Corporation have curtailed its bus services in order to save fuel in view of the Gulf war;

(b) if so, the number of buses withdrawn from service, depot-wise and total quantity of diesel saved as a result thereof;

(c) the number of trips and commuters carried by each DTC bus after the outbreak of the Gulf War and how does it compare with the corresponding period last year; and

(d) the steps taken to remove the inconvenience caused to the commuters due to the curtailment of bus services?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.