

uncement has been made already on the 20th April, 1963.

(b) Zonal Committee are being appointed in all cotton growing centres sufficiently in advance of the movement of crop.

should not be hindered in any way from freely exercising their religion;

(iv) Compensation should be paid to the relatives of those who lost their lives in the incident of the 8th of May; and

(v) There should be no reprisals against the Buddhist leaders involved in the incident.

12 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC
IMPORTANCE

CONDITION OF BUDDHISTS IN SOUTH
VIET NAM

Shri Raghunath Singh (Varanasi): I call the attention of the Prime Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

The condition of Buddhists in South Viet Nam.

The Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Sir, on the 8th May, 1963, which was Buddha Punrnima Day, an incident involving a gathering consisting mainly of Buddhists took place in Hue, a town in South Viet Nam, in which some people were killed. Since then the Buddhists who constitute nearly 80 per cent of the population of South Viet Nam have been agitating strongly for the removal of certain measures which they consider to be discriminatory. The demands that they placed before the South Viet Namiese authorities were as under:—

- (i) The international Buddhist Flag should be allowed to be flown in the same manner as in the past;
- (ii) There should be no discrimination in religious matters and the Ordinance which gives a privileged position to the Christians and the Chinese religious bodies should be rescinded;
- (iii) There should be freedom of worship and the Buddhists

Discussions then took place between the Buddhist leaders and the South Viet-Nameese authorities and agreement was reached restoring some of the privileges asked for by the Buddhists. According to the Buddhists, however, this agreement was not implemented by the various agencies of the Government. This led to further demonstrations.

A Buddhist monk publicly burnt himself on 11th June in Saigon. Since then four Buddhist monks and a nun also burnt themselves. There were demonstrations by other groups, including students, and the authorities are alleged to have used violence against them. Finally, the South Viet-Nameese Government proclaimed martial law on the 21st of August. Reports indicate that the Army and Police personnel entered the Pagodas and arrested a large number of priests and laymen. Many people are believed to have been killed and injured during these raids. Some high-ranking persons, including the Foreign Minister, have also resigned their offices and posts. Various Buddhist countries have expressed their distress at these tragic happenings in South Viet-Nam. The Prime Minister wrote a letter to the President of the Republic of South Viet-Nam at the time reports were received of the understanding reached between the Government and the Buddhist leaders in Viet-Nam and he expressed the hope that necessary follow-up action would be taken in a generous and liberal manner to remove any misunderstandings or fears that the Viet-Nameese Buddhists may have: The

permanent representative of India at the United Nations was also asked to mention the matter to the Secretary-General of the UN. In view of the frustration of the agreement reached between the Government and the Buddhists and in view of the latest developments including imposition of martial law, representatives of various countries, like, Ceylon, India and others, have been considering in New York the steps that should be taken to persuade the South Viet-Nam Government to obtain a satisfactory settlement of the Buddhists' grievances. Some of the suggestions made in this behalf are:—

(i) to convene a Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN.

(ii) to form a Sub-Committee of the Asian-African members of the UN to approach the Secretary-General to convey their concern to him and to request him to use his good offices for arriving at a satisfactory settlement, and

(iii) to convene a non-official meeting of the Buddhist members of the UN to consider the matter and suggest solutions.

These talks are still continuing.

The Government of India are deeply concerned at the reports of ill-treatment of the Buddhist leaders and others in South-Viet-Nam. This is principally a human rights problem and the Government of India are consulting other like-minded governments with a view to suggesting appropriate steps that should be taken so that the situation in Viet-Nam is improved and the fears and grievances of the Buddhist in that country are removed.

I might add that the Government of India are reluctant to say or do anything in regard to the internal affairs of an independent country. That is why we have avoided taking any action, but there is no doubt that the happenings in South Viet-Nam have greatly influenced large numbers of

peoples, specially in the Buddhist countries. Great concern has been shown in India, not only amongst the Buddhists in India but amongst others too and, therefore, the action we have taken—not the action—but the talks that we had have been with a view to finding some way to help in finding a solution of this problem without any interference on our side. I hope such a way will be found. The present situation is unfortunate and there is no doubt that Buddhists all over the world are greatly agitated over it.

The other day, the Foreign Minister of South Viet-Nam resigned his office. He asked for permission to come to India and visit the various places of Buddhist pilgrimage here. He was on his way to the airport, but was stopped on the way and not allowed to go there. It is surprising, in view of the fact that he got the permission. Later, however—a day or two later—he got that permission and in fact he arrived here in Delhi with his family last evening. His visit is, of course, not exactly a political visit. He has come here for a pilgrimage purpose as a Buddhist and we shall give him such facilities for that purpose as may be necessary. Meanwhile, as I have said, we are in contact with the Ceylon Government and other Governments represented at the UN in discussing what steps we can take in this matter to help the Government and the people concerned to arrive at a suitable settlement.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad) *rose*—

Mr. Speaker: Shri Raghunath Singh.

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सीलोन की सरकार ने जो यह सुझाव रखा है कि इस विषय में एशिया के थोड़े से देशों का सम्मेलन हो, उसके बारे में भारत सरकार की क्या राय है ?

श्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू : इस बारे में तो मैंने अभी कहा है कि हम ने कहा है कि अगर

[श्री जवाहर लाल नेहरू]

ऐसा कोई सम्मेलन हो, तो हम उस में शरीक होंगे और हमारे मुल्क के बुद्धिस्त लोगों को उस में शरीक होने का पूरा मौका दिया जायेगा।

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri (Berhampur): Sir, I first want to bring to your notice that I was never informed....

Mr. Speaker: That information reached late. I am sorry. But we might proceed with it.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: Sir, this matter—we understand it appeared in the newspapers—is also being tackled by the United States Government, and the United States Ambassador in Saigon, Mr. Henry Cabbot Lodge, has met the Viet-Nam authorities several times and.....

Mr. Speaker: He may go to the question and not make a long statement.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: I want to know whether there has been any exchange of views between the United States Government and our Government with regard to the situation and what are the views of the United States Government in this regard?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: So far as I am aware, there has been no exchange of views directly with the Government. But there have been talks with the representatives of the United States Government and the United Nations, as there have been talks with the other representatives too. I cannot definitely say what views they hold as to what should be done. All that I can say is they are concerned about it and want to find some way out.

Shri Nath Pai: (Rajapur): While welcoming the interest that the Government of India have shown on this question of persecution of people on the basis of religion, and the instructions, that they have issued to our representative at the UN, may I know

whether the Government of India, in consonance with this policy, is considering the question of abandoning its silence towards the persecution of Buddhists in Tibet and will issue fresh instructions to support when that issue comes before the UN?

Mr. Speaker: That is a different thing altogether.

Shri Nath Pai: The question is one of religious persecution.

Mr. Speaker: Now, we are considering only the situation in Viet Nam.

Shri Nath Pai: I am sorry you do not allow it. It is very legitimate. In a neighbouring country of yours, there is religious persecution. I think that Government which have been rightly taking up this issue with the United Nations....

Mr. Speaker: That is a different case altogether.

Shri Nath Pai: After all, a policy cannot be put into compartments. I am sorry to interrupt, you, Mr. Speaker, and I never do that. But could we cut the policy into such slices, and say that there will be only one policy towards distant Viet Nam and another towards Tibet?

Mr. Speaker: We are not discussing policies now....

Shri Nath Pai: If the hon. Prime Minister has something to say will you restrain him, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: We are discussing the happenings in Viet Nam now. The hon. Member should realise that.

Shri Nath Pai: I do. But may I know if the hon. Prime Minister has to say something on this? If he does not want, then I have no avail; but we are equally concerned. I am agreeing with him. I am not embarrassing him regarding Viet Nam.

Mr. Speaker: I am also agreeing with him, and I am requesting the hon. Member to sit down.

Shri Nath Pai: If the hon. Prime Minister wants to say something, why should you restrain him?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. **Shri Hem Barua.**

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): May I draw the attention of the hon. Prime Minister to the latest news report that Ceylon is convening a conference of Asian nations to discuss this problem, where Communist China is proposed to be represented, and if so, may I know whether it is a fact that the Government propose to tell Ceylon that our Government would not participate in the conference because of the representation allowed to Communist China that has massacred the Buddhists in Tibet?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The first point is that I do not know, and I have had no information that such conference has been decided upon....

Shri Hem Barua: The names of the countries are also out.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: As far as I know, the idea was that Thailand should convene such a conference, no doubt, perhaps, at the initiative of the Ceylon Government; the idea is that Thailand might convene it; I have not had any information about it, nor do I know who is going to be invited.

As regards the hon. Members's proposal that we should make it clear that we shall not attend if....

Shri Hem Barua: Communist China is invited.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:...China is invited, I doubt if that will be desirable for us. We may have our conflict, as we have, with China, and we may disapprove strongly of what it has done. But the present purpose of this conference would be a different purpose. And if those sponsors of

the conference decide to invite some countries, it is very difficult for us to refuse, because thereby....

Shri Hem Barua: Will it not be a contradictory approach?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is not contradictory.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): They have invaded our country and yet we go to a conference with that country at another table.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: That is for the other countries to decide. It is for the sponsors of that conference to decide whom they will invite.

An Hon. Member: Do you not have a conscience?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is not a question of consent. We have told them previously that if it is decided upon, and if such a conference is held, any such conference of Buddhist countries, we shall attend, and we shall send representatives of Buddhists....

Shri Ranga: Is China a Buddhist country?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know.

Shri Ranga: It is a communist country.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: That fact was not mentioned to me about who is going to be invited, and who are going to be the sponsors. As I said, Thailand was at one time supposed to be the sponsor of such a conference. I do not know if it has been decided. For us to give any previous indication of what we shall do depends upon how circumstances are and what takes place. But, for me to say that we shall not attend, if something happens, is one thing, if it is something concerning us; but it is really obviously a matter concerning something else. And for us not to participate in such a conference of Buddhists would, I think, be rather harmful to that cause and not do us any good.

Shri Ranga: Will the Dalai Lama also be invited?

Shri Nath Pai: Will you allow me, Mr. Speaker, to put one question? The one question which I had asked was disallowed by you in your discretion. So, I shall now ask another question that can possibly be answered.

Mr. Speaker: The same question was put by another Member of his own party.

Shri Nath Pai: I never try to sidetrack your rulings. That has never been my practice. I am coming to an entirely different question. Normally, I have a right to ask a question...

Mr. Speaker: These are hypothetical questions. What will be the policy if China is invited, whether we will attend or not?—that was the question put by Shri Hem Barua.

Shri Nath Pai: In exercise of my right, I asked one question. That was disallowed. Now I am pleading with you to let me put my second question.

Mr. Speaker: If the one that he has put is disallowed, the Member forfeits the right to put another.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): Has the attention of the hon. Prime Minister been drawn to a news yesterday in one of the leading Hindi papers of UP that when the Afro-Asian countries wanted to discuss this matter informally, the Indian representative said that he had no instructions from his country—that is, from our country? I want to know when these instructions had been issued, what are the specific instructions and whether we toe the line with has been adopted by the Afro-Asian countries in this matter?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: These accounts that have been appearing in Newspapers—one, I believe, emanated from the ambassador from Colombo—were completely incorrect. We were surprised to see them. Instructions

have been sent almost from day to day or every other day to our representatives in New York, in the UN, about this matter. We have informed them about our deep concern about this; we have asked them to consult other representatives, of Buddhist and other Asian and African countries and others there, and to act in concert with them.

Shri Daji (Indore): In view of the known fact that the South Viet Nam Government is on very good relations with the USA and is dependent upon it, why is it that the Government has not thought it advisable to contact the Government of USA so that the matter may be expeditiously settled?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have already said that our representatives are in touch with their representatives in the UN. It is rather a difficult matter for governments to deal with. It is an internal matter of a country. It may be that the United States has more intimate relations with South Viet Nam and I am sure they are taking such steps as they think necessary. They have sent a Special Ambassador for this purpose there. We have not directly contacted the Government of the United States because we had no formal proposal to make, except to show our concern. Any step that has to be taken has to be more in co-ordination with the Buddhist countries as well as other countries, and with them we are keeping in contact.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: If I heard the Prime Minister aright, he said that he wrote to the President of the Republic of South Viet Nam some days ago. Has there been a fruitful or useful or helpful response from the President of the Republic of South Viet Nam? And how do the Government propose to meet the charge of petrified silence with regard to the persecution of Buddhists in Tibet, while voicing such concern with regard to them in South Viet Nam whether in the UN or elsewhere?

Mr. Speaker: That would be a different thing. That charge can be met on some other occasion. The first part may be answered.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We got a reply from the President of South Viet Nam, in answer to my letter to him. That letter, as we have stated, was sent when there was a report of an understanding. He referred to that understanding and he hoped that everything would be all right, that all these matters would be satisfactorily settled. . . .

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Have there been further exchanges since then?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: As a matter of fact, they have not been settled satisfactorily. The objection of the Buddhists there is that although an agreement was arrived at, it was not implemented by the Government.

Mr. Speaker: Papers to be laid on the Table.

Shri Hem Barua: On a point of order, I want a clarification from you.

Mr. Speaker: Both simultaneously?

Shri Hem Barua: I am not really clear in my mind about one thing. We tabled a call attention motion some seven days ago—Shri Tridib Chaudhuri, myself, Shri Nath Pai, possibly Shri Kamath and there were other friends also. You, in your wisdom, disallowed that. Now, today a call attention notice in the name of Shri Raghunath Singh, the Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Party, has been admitted, after this matter was raised in the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting. Since you have allowed it, it should have been in the name of Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri, because he was the first, and we were with him. I cannot compromise these two positions. How has it happened like that?

Mr. Speaker: He cannot compromise these two things because he does not know the facts. I will request him to

look into the timings when these notices were received, and he will find that Shri Raghunath Singh's was the first to be received. If that be the fact, he has no charge to make. Then, he must satisfy himself.

Shri Raghunath Singh: May I say a word?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, I have asked him to look into the timings.

12.21 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

STATEMENT SHOWING ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON ASSURANCES

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the following statements showing the action taken by the Government on various assurances, promises and undertakings given by Ministers during the various sessions shown against each:—

- (i) **Supplementary Statement No. III—Fourth Session, 1963 (Third Lok Sabha).** [Placed in Library, *See* No. LT-1601/63].
- (ii) **Supplementary Statement No. VII—Third Session, 1962-63 (Third Lok Sabha).** [Placed in Library, *see* No. LT-1602/63]
- (iii) **Supplementary Statement No. IX—Second Session, 1962 (Third Lok Sabha).** [Placed in Library, *see* No. LT-1603/63]
- (iv) **Supplementary Statement No. XII—First Session, 1962. (Third Lok Sabha).** [Placed in Library, *See* No. LT-1604/63]
- (v) **Supplementary Statement No. XI—Fifteenth Session, 1961 (Second Lok Sabha).** [Placed in Library, *see* No. LT-1605/63.]