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பாராளுமன்றம்

PARLIAMENT

Government acting as facilitators only. Although, it was anticipated that the peace talks would commence in the Island way back in April 2002, to date it is not clear as to when exactly the so-called peace talks would commence. When I left Colombo on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2002, I can recollect that a date was set in September 2002, namely 16<sup>th</sup> September 2002, subject to the proscription on the LTTE being removed ten days prior to the commencement of the peace talks. Whilst I am writing this letter, I learnt from the media and my contacts in Colombo that the President of Sri Lanka has yesterday announced that she would oppose any peace initiative with the LTTE. She has also commented that the proscription of the LTTE should not be removed until such time the progress and co-operation on the part of LTTE after the commencement of the peace talks is monitored and satisfied. This brings us to an impasse whereby the likelihood of the commencement of the peace talks in the near future is at stake. My understanding of the relevant provisions of the Sri Lankan Constitution is that the Prime Minister would encounter difficulties in removing the proscription of the LTTE without the consent of the Executive President of Sri Lanka. As a Tamil MP and also a joint leader of the Tamil National Alliance, I have adequately participated in negotiations between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. In that capacity, I am perfectly aware that the LTTE will not enter into any negotiations with the Government if the proscription on them is not removed.

It is also relevant to appraise you of the ground situation in Sri Lanka, particularly in the North and East where the Tamils are populated. I have witnessed many refugee camps in the North and East where the displaced