

Al Jazeera Interview with Nambiar (Obtained by ICP Feb 2011)

Q: ...role you played in negotiations for the surrender of many of the Tamil leaders at the time. What was agreed?

Mr. Nambiar: As you know both in April and May of last year the UN had made strenuous efforts in order to try and see that the civilian population would be safeguarded from some of the difficulties, the tragedies of the conflict that was taking place. Now, when I went in May during my second visit, the extent to which I was involved in this was a telephone conversation, a telephone message I got from a Sunday Times correspondent through the UK Foreign Office and through the UN headquarters where I was asked to check with the Sri Lankan authorities regarding the possible protection could be given to two of the Tamil leaders... When I received this call, I said that I will make an effort and contact the government authorities, which I did, the same day that is I think it's the 17 and 18 of May. I went and I spoke to the foreign secretary at that time, Mr. Palitha Kohona, the defense secretary, and subsequently I spoke to the president also. So, I raise this question ...the Sunday Times correspondent talked about their wanting to surrender...they may want to do it to a third party...afraid for their lives...so I raised this with them and suggested ...the response from them was that they would be treated likes normal prisoners of war, if they raised the white flag they would be allowed to surrender. Now that is the extent to which I was involved.

Q: This is what President of Sri Lanka told you..

Nambiar: Yes...the president also in response to my statement, he said the same thing, as did the foreign secretary and the Defense Secretary.

Q: They specifically said they would treat them...

Nambiar They just made...they just responded in the manner, they would be treated like ordinary prisoners of war.

Q: Since you spoke to so many people and parties that were involved, why do you think things went wrong?

Nambiar: I might add that this is only one of the issues that I raised...discussing a whole...the question was that the what happened in the heat of the war I am not aware of, it was something which we had no first hand knowledge about...there have been discussions of this in the press and subsequently there have been some comments make by the Sri Lankan leaders also about whether or not they could have been killed in the crossfire, there was one person who also suggested they said perhaps he could have been killed by LTTE themselves who were not interested in their people surrendering..it could have been killed by the Sri

Lankan forces, we are not in a position to make any assessment, certainly I am not.

Q: Also speculation ...coordinated execution while trying to get rid of other remaining leaders of Tamil Tigers...

Nambiar: I am not in a position to comment on that, because I don't have any independent knowledge.

Q: All these are possible...

Nambiar: I don't have any information on that...

Q: Maybe then investigation is necessary?

Nambiar: This is of course not for me to mention, there has been calls for this kind of investigation and it's for the member states to decide...