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Title: Regarding grant of citizenship to Tamil refugees-laid.

DR. D. RAVIKUMAR (VILUPPURAM): Nearly 60% of the Tamil refugees who fled Sri Lanka during the ethnic war and living in refugee camps in Tamil Nadu are of Indian descent. The ancestors of these Tamil people were taken from India to work in the tea estates of Sri Lanka by the British around 200 years ago. When Sri Lanka got its independence from the British in 1948, the Sri Lankan government used the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948 to make the Indian origin Tamils stateless. In 1964, in order to solve the statelessness of the Tamils, in 1964 Sri Lanka and India signed the Srimavo-Shastri pact and about 3 lakh people were repatriated to India. India agreed to the repatriation of the remaining Tamil people under the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. The Chennai High Court has also recently asked Indian government to consider repatriation. In this situation, I earnestly request the Ministry of External Affairs to take necessary steps so that citizenship to Tamil refugees could be granted.