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Title: Clarification on the statement made by Minister of External Affairs regarding the situation in Sri Lanka.

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seats. You are all very respectable and responsible Members of the House.

14.04 ¼ hrs.

*(At this stage, Shri E. Ponnuswamy and some other hon. Members
went back to their seats.)*

DR. R. SENTHIL (DHARMAPURI): Sir, the hon. Minister has made a statement on the Sri Lankan issue. The statement is a great disappointment and has angered all the Tamilians all over the world. The reason is that the Indian Government is trying to tell that the Sri Lankan Government is a humane Government and a democratic Government. Both are not true. What is happening in Sri Lanka is not a law and order problem. It is genocide of innocent Tamils. By saying again and again that the Indian Government is going work with the Sri Lankan Government, India is actually identifying itself with the genocide being committed against the innocent Tamils. [R4] We are very much angry and disappointed over it. He also says that the killing of the innocent Tamils is by the LTTE which is totally objectionable. It is not true. The Indian Government should not be voicing the voice of the Sri Lankan Government. The Indian Government should immediately intervene to stop the war and should not try to persuade in other ways. This is our stand. We will not rest until the Government changes its statement that the LTTE is killing Tamils. The Government should stop supporting the Sri Lankan Government's endeavour in eliminating the race.

MR. SPEAKER: All of you cannot be allowed to speak.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY (CHIDAMBARAM): First of all, the Minister has made a statement concentrating on the genocide killing of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Government of India is totally supporting the Government under Rajapaksa ignoring the interests and protection of innocent civilians there. We are against the stand taken by the Government of India in supporting the Rajapaksa Government. Genocide is going on there and hundreds of people are being butchered and massacred daily. We want the Indian Government to take positive steps to stop the war. They talk about rehabilitation. When does rehabilitation take place? It takes place only when people are living there. After killing the people, who are there to be rehabilitated? First of all, they should withdraw the statement, take positive steps to stop the war and then protect the interests of civilians who are affected. The Indian Government must look into the situation, be sensitive to the day-to-day happenings there, protect the interests and lives of the civilians there.

It is most important to see that the war is stopped and then rehabilitate the people. We are against the statement. The statement must be withdrawn. This language is the language of Rajapaksa. This is not the language desired. I am sorry to say this.

DR. C. KRISHNAN (POLLACHI): Killing of innocent people is taking place in Sri Lanka. It is very unfortunate that Indian Government is supplying arms and ammunition to the war field to kill the Tamilians there. This is also very bad that radar has been given to them and radar is locating the civilians, hospitals, etc. where people are living and then bombings are taking place. This sort of killings is very unfortunate and the Government of India going to help them is very bad. This is betrayal of Tamilians. We will not forget this. History will tell how things have gone. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN (GOBICHETTIPALAYAM): Sir, the LTTE is killing the innocent Tamils...(*Interruptions*)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : No. No, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hear the hon. Minister. Please take your seats. You have spoken. Let him reply. Let him respond on this issue. Please listen to the hon. Minister.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Strong words will not help now.

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Sir, I have not completed.

MR. SPEAKER: You have to complete now. You cannot go on like this.

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Sir, in the morning also, I gave a notice on this. In spite of it, you did not allow me to speak about the affairs in my constituency. ...(*Interruptions*) Sir, genocide by Sri Lanka should be stopped. War should end; peace should prevail there and a political settlement should take place. Pointing out at LTTE as if they are killing the Tamilians is unwanted and it is forgery. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please let us all hear the Minister. We are eager to hear him. You have made your point.

DR. C. KRISHNAN : We want the report to be withdrawn.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, there is no two opinions in the House on this matter. Each and everyone of us condemn the killings of innocent Tamilians in crossfire. We are equally anguished and pained and this is the point which I have made in my entire statement. We do not want to make a statement voluntarily. Sometimes we make it suo motu because the Members demand it and it is parliamentary courtesy and decorum to keep the Members informed from time to time on a matter of vital public interest. If the hon. Members find any discrepancy in some parts of the Statement, there is way to put it up and definitely corrections will be made, as I did this morning itself with regard to reply to a Question, which was inadvertently made. It is the time-honoured custom.

Therefore, my most respectful submission is that, as far as the question of civilians' pride is concerned, the entire House agrees, the Government agrees that it is very important. But at the same time this point has to be kept in mind that the Government of India has no instrumentality in dealing with another sovereign Government in forcing that sovereign Government to take a particular course of action. That may be the desire of some Members of Parliament. But this is not simply possible for any country to deal with duly constituted Government of another country in this way.

I am repeating that the Government of India is committed to provide all help to ensure safety and security of the civilian Tamilians who are suffering for long because of this conflict. We want that the conflict should come to an end. People of Sri Lanka, particularly the Tamilians must get their rightful place for which an Accord was signed in 1987 and for which a devolution package had been worked out. We will ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. Thank you. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister has assured that on behalf of the Government.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let us do this work. Already we are behind time.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please allow the House to run.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister has replied to you elaborately. He has expressed the Government's concern and support to the Tamilians. Thank you.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am thankful for your cooperation.

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. R. SENTHIL : We are walking out. We are very unhappy with the Government's attitude. ...(*Interruptions*)

14.13 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. Senthil and some other

hon. Members left the House.)