

>

Title: Further discussion on steps taken by the Government for relief and resettlement of Tamils in Sri Lanka and other measures to promote their welfare, raised by Shri T.R. Baalu on the 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2011 (Discussion concluded).

MADAM SPEAKER: Now, Item No.11 – Hon. Minister.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Madam, I would start by thanking all the Members who participated in this discussion about the steps taken by Government of India for relief and resettlement of Tamils in Sri Lanka and other measures to promote their welfare.

Madam Speaker, I would like to start by making a mention of the mover of the motion my esteemed friend Shri T.R. Baalu who spoke with passion, who spoke with reason, and spoke who spoke with righteous indignation.

श्री गणेश सिंह (मतना): महोदया, मैंने भी आपसे समय मांगा था।...(व्यवधान) आज पूरे मध्य प्रदेश में...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : यह बहुत ही संवेदनशील विषय है।

â€¦!(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦! \*

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आपको शाम को बोलने के लिए समय देंगे।

â€¦!(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : अवश्य बुलवाएंगे। आप जल्दी से क्रोधित हो जाते हैं। अभी बैठिए।

â€¦!(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : बैठ जाइए। Nothing else will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦!\*

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record. आप बैठ जाइए।आपको बुलवाएंगे। अभी बैठिए।

(Interruptions) â€¦!\*

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record. Hon. Minister, you may please continue.

(Interruptions) â€¦! \*

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Madam Speaker, however much I wanted to be present in this House, when the Leader of the DMK Party in Lok Sabha, my esteemed friend, Shri T.R. Baalu moved the motion, I could not do so. He made a very well-reasoned and very well-received speech. ...(Interruptions) It was followed by yet another very elegant speech by my distinguished predecessor, Shri Jaswant Singh. Shri Jaswant Singh brought in, to this debate, some perspective. ...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record. Hon. Minister, please continue.

(Interruptions) â€¦!\*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: श्रीलंका पर चर्चा हो जाने दीजिए।

...(ल्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: It is a very sensitive issue on Sri Lanka.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: We will do that also.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing is going into the record, except what the hon. Minister says.

Hon. Minister, please continue.

(Interruptions) â€! \*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): This is repeatedly being said. We are all concerned about the health of Shri Anna Hazare. Therefore, the Prime Minister made a fervent appeal yesterday to withdraw his fast, on behalf of the entire country. As far as I understand, that word is not used during the lifetime of a person. ...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, hon. Minister may continue.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing is going into the record except what the hon. Minister is saying.

(Interruptions) â€!\*

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: At the outset, Madam, allow me to mention that I fully share the concerns and sentiments expressed by the hon. Members during the discussion regarding the Sri Lankan Tamils. ...(Interruptions) Madam Speaker, India-Sri Lanka bilateral relationships are based upon historical, cultural, ethnic and civilizational ties, and extensive people to people interactions. ...(Interruptions) In recent years, this relationship has become multi-faceted and diverse, encompassing all areas of contemporary relations. ...(Interruptions)

श्री पवन कुमार बंसल: इतनी बढ़िया चर्चा हुई, इतना बढ़िया भाषण दिया गया, आप सब बराबर कर रहे हैं...(ल्यवधान)

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Madam, what is it they are doing? Everyday, they are disturbing the House, whenever we want to discuss the Tamils' issue. â€! (Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: श्रीलंका पर चर्चा होने दीजिए और मंत्री जी को जवाब देने दें।

...(ल्यवधान)

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Madam, Speaker, for nearly three decades Sri Lanka has borne the brunt of terrorism. The long period of arms conflict in Sri Lanka came to an end in the month of May, 2009 which left around 300,000 internally displaced persons forced to shift in the camps set up by the Government. The general devastation of the whole infrastructure in certain parts of Sri Lanka was total and emergency measures were needed to create infrastructure for the people to carry on their normal activities.

I would like to commend some of the speeches which were made with statesmanship and keeping the perspective of the friendly India-Sri Lanka bilateral relationship. Shri Baalu in his speech did provide some facts which certainly need to be appreciated by this House and certainly need to be addressed by the Government of India, more particularly by the Government of Sri Lanka.

I would like to commend the speech of my distinguished predecessor. In his own elegant manner, he put the issue in the right perspective. I think it was one of those contributions which certainly has made what kind of a relationship two sovereign nations who are very associated with each other can maintain. I certainly would be guided by the experience, by the statesmanship of hon. Members like Shri Jaswant Singh in steering the external policy of this great country of ours.

Madam, Speaker, there could be differences in emphasis when bilateral relationships are concerned but the Foreign Policy of any country has to be a flowing one. The Government will have to carry on with the same set of policies when the Governments change over. The present Government will continue to be guided by all the cumulative wisdom and

experience of all the Members of this hon. House.

**श्री शरद यादव (मधेपुरा):** अध्यक्ष जी, माननीय मंत्री जी जो बात बोल रहे हैं तमिल समस्या उससे ज्यादा गंभीर है। इतिहास गवाह है कि हमारे देश के आस-पास जो लोग बसे हुए हैं उन सबमें बंगला देश का हमारे सामने एक ज्वलंत उदाहरण है। हमारे सामने तमिल लोगों का मामला भी उसी तरह का है। इसलिए यह मामला गंभीर है। मान लो कि ये तमिलियन वहां से बेचैन और परेशान होकर देश के अंदर आ गये, हम लोग उस समय क्या करेंगे। इसलिए हमें मजबूती से पड़ोसी देश के साथ इस सवाल का समाधान निकालना चाहिए। जिस तरह से वहां की जनता तंग और तबाह है उसके लिए हमें गंभीरता से कोई समाधान निकालना चाहिए। केवल बातचीत से रास्ता नहीं निकलेगा, हमें कुछ कड़ाई भी करनी चाहिए।

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: I am thankful to hon. Member Sharad Yadav Ji for drawing my attention to the problems faced both by our country and by those who are come in to our country as refugees. I was a Member of this House since 1971 when the Bangladesh crisis took place. I very vividly remember when Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister walked into this House one evening and then declared that Bangladesh has become free. So, I was a witness to that historic moment.

Even, at that point of time, the immediate provocation for India's intervention in Bangladesh was the number of refugees who were coming into our country and thereby creating a situation in our country and as a result of that, we had to take certain steps and only Shrimati Indira Gandhi could have taken those steps. I remember it with the great pride and gratitude.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI (KARUR): We do not have a leader like Shrimati Indira Gandhi now, that is the problem, which Tamils are facing. That is the thing. The Government is not taking action...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA : Madam Speaker...(*Interruptions*) I cannot be intervened in such a manner unless I yield...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Minister is not yielding.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please listen to him. We had a long debate.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (GHATAL): I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister to kindly speak out in plain language that human rights are violated in Sri Lanka. Lakhs of Tamilians are being killed...(*Interruptions*) The language should not be like that. The Government of India has to recognize that lakhs of Tamilians are dying because there is no water, no medicine, no clothing and no infrastructure. It cannot be said. The Government of India has a responsibility because of their Tamil origin, we cannot condemn the human rights violation and this problem of human rights violation has to be condemned by the Government of India.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is a debate going on once again? Let him reply.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : I would request to hon. Minister to condemn the human rights violation that is taking place in Sri Lanka.

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Madam Speaker, I have not come to the stage of addressing the human rights violations. Perhaps, in the course of my response to the debate, I might perhaps make a reference to the human rights violations which have been found in Sri Lanka. I will come to that. But, there is some kind of a sequence in the formulation of a speech and I am just going step by step.

I would like to assure the hon. Members that since the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka, the focus of Government of India has been shifted to the welfare and well being of the Tamil citizens of Sri Lanka. Rehabilitation and rebuilding their lives have been the highest and the most immediate priority. It is exactly this, which Government of India has been attempting to assist in our efforts in cooperation with the Sri Lankan Government.

The Prime Minister announced in June, 2009 a grant of Rs. 500 crore for relief, rehabilitation and resettlement work in Sri Lanka. Hon. Members might say that it is not enough but we also have limitations. We also have severe limitations on our resources.

So, within the parameters of what we can afford, we have been able to do this much. We have assured the Sri Lankan Government that we would be willing to continue to do more as and when the necessity arises.

Towards the humanitarian effort, India despatched 2.5 lakh family relief packs, deployed an emergency field hospital, two consignments of medicines for the use of Internally Displaced Persons, conducted an artificial limb fitment camp and deployed seven de-mining teams in Northern Sri Lanka.

Madam, Speaker, it is necessary for the House to remember that the whole of Northern Part of Sri Lanka was heavily mined and for Internally Displaced Persons to go back to their original settlements, the immediate thing, the pre-requisite for that was to have our de-mining team making it safe for those who wanted to go back to settle in their original villages and hamlets.

India also gifted more than 10,400 MTs of shelter material and four lakh cement bags for the IDPs. To revive the agricultural activities in Northern Sri Lanka, India gifted 95,000 agricultural starter packs. Most of these Tamils used to eke their livelihood by resorting to agriculture. So, it was incumbent on our part and it was conveyed by the Sri Lankan Government that it is necessary for us to provide some succour for those agriculturists who wanted to start afresh. We also provided seeds and we provided 500 tractors for the use by the IDPs to revive their agricultural activities.

Madam, Speaker, I myself went to Sri Lanka and spent five days. Let me place on record my sense of appreciation to the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka...(*Interruptions*)

**श्री मुलायम सिंह यादव (मैनपुरी):** अध्यक्ष महोदया, हम ज्यादा नहीं कहेंगे, हम इतना ही कहना चाहेंगे कि आप खाने पीने इत्यादि का सब प्रबंध उनके लिए कर देंगे, उनके मकान का और उनके रहने का पूरा खर्च करेंगे। लेकिन जो अरबों रुपये की उनकी सम्पत्ति वहां रह जाएगी, उसका क्या होगा? वे अपनी पूरी सम्पत्ति वहां छोड़कर आएंगे, वह उन्हें नहीं मिलेगी, उसके बारे में आपकी क्या राय है? जो तमिलियन्स यहां आए हैं और वहां नहीं रहेंगे, वहां उनकी खेतीबाड़ी भी है, व्यापार भी है, मकान भी है और भी कई तरह के धंधे हैं, अरबों खरबों रुपये की वहां उनकी सम्पत्ति है, उनकी वह सम्पत्ति जो वहां रह जाएगी, उसके बदले में सरकार उनके लिए क्या करेगी?

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Well, I think, that point also needs to be taken up with the Government of Sri Lanka. I think, that is a point which the hon. Member Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav ji, has made and we have taken it up with them. Those displaced persons if they have to go back to their villages and hamlets, in order to pursue whatever avocation they were in, then, I think, certain basic things have to be provided to them. Yes, they did have property and that has to be re-conveyed back to them. It has to be demarcated to them. I think, this is a process which will take some time and the Government of India will continue to impress upon the Sri Lankan authorities...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please address the Chair.

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Since he intervened, I was replying to him.

MADAM SPEAKER: You please keep addressing the Chair and do not yield every time.

SHRI S.M.KRISHNA: So, I am not supposed to turn to the right! I would keep looking at the Chair.

MADAM SPEAKER: Please adopt a middle path.

SHRI S.M.KRISHNA: I would keep looking between Madam Speaker and my notes. I would not look elsewhere.

The Government of India has given Line of Credit of about 800 million dollars for the restoration for some of the railway lines. When I went to Sri Lanka, I did initiate some work on some railway tracks which IRCON and other railway agencies have been doing. The harbours also have to be restored and some stadiums have to be reconstructed including the Cultural Centre at Jaffna and Vocational Training Centres at Batticaloa and Nuwara Eliya.

The Government of India is also taking up projects in Northern Sri Lanka which were very badly devastated. In the field of education and health, for the repair of school buildings and supply of equipment to upgrade hospitals, the Government has set aside funds for taking up these projects of a humanitarian nature. In 2009-10, it spent Rs. 69 crore and in 2010-11, it spent Rs. 94 crore towards the welfare, relief, resettlement and rehabilitation of IDPs. The Government has allocated Rs. 290 crore for the purpose in 2011-12.

Our primary objective in all that we are doing in Sri Lanka is to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of Sri Lankan Tamils including IDPs and to assist in the development of Northern Sri Lanka. I am happy to convey to the House that according to information available to us, around 2,90,000 IDPs have gone back to their homes and around 10,000 more may be there. Amongst those 2,90,000 IDPs, I do not exactly know how many are left. An assessment is being made as to how many of them still have their houses intact, and I am sure, in the course of the conflict, they would also have been very badly damaged. So, it is necessary for us to think in terms of rehabilitating their houses also.

Some Members have raised the issue of the Report of the UN Secretary General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka. India has taken note of the Report. We have heard the views of the Sri Lankan Government including the assessment of the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka who was here in the month of May this year. During my meeting with him, and also in Colombo, when TROIKA met, I had taken it up in the strongest possible terms that it is necessary for Sri Lanka to address the human rights violation. India has always championed the cause of human rights which is so very dear to us. Right from the days of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, we have always advocated very vehemently about human rights. So, we have exactly done that with the present regime in Sri Lanka.

It may be recalled that the Panel was set up by the UN Secretary General with the objective of advising him on developments in Sri Lanka particularly in the last stages of conflict in 2009.

In general, there are still questions on the Report and the issue has not so far come up for discussion in the formal agenda of any relevant UN inter-Governmental body. It could come up. I will go to the United Nations in the month of September. I am sure that not only India but also many other countries which are equally concerned about the human rights violations there. There are other countries which are as much worked up as India is. We certainly will work in coordination with all the other countries which share our perception. Our perception is a very constructive one. We do not want to endanger our relationship with Sri Lanka. But none-the-less, every country has certain parameters on human rights. All of us are bound by those parameters. To that extent, the Government of India stands committed for the human rights. If there are violations, I think, the Sri Lankan Government initially must make its own enquiries, its own investigations in a manner which is transparent. So, it should not be a make-believe one. It has to be transparent and it has to be a very honest approach. The Government of Sri Lanka have conveyed to us that they are willing to do that and they are in the process of doing that.

The Government of India has repeatedly called upon the Government of Sri Lanka to be mindful of the welfare and safety of the civilians caught in the cross fires when the clashes were raging, when the conflict was raging. I think innocent persons were caught in the cross fires. ...(*Interruptions*) So, it is necessary that we will have to address that enough. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record.

(*Interruptions*) \* \_

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Members have referred to a media interview by the Defence Secretary of Sri Lanka. We have noted it. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Members, we will have this at the end.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, you keep replying. Otherwise, this would become a full-fledged discussion once again.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: In the end we will have some questions. Let him complete. Then, if you think it proper, then in the end we can have a few questions, not many.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Shri Patasani, I heard your speech yesterday. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, if you address the Chair, I think, it will solve many problems.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: On the concerns expressed by some Members on the issue of Indian fishermen in the waters between India and Sri Lanka, Madam Speaker allow me to reiterate at the very outset that the welfare, safety and security of our fishermen, have always received the highest priority by the Government.

There have been reports of incidents of attacks on the Indian fishermen allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Government of India, through diplomatic channels, have consistently and immediately taken up any reported incident involving arrest or violence against the Indian fishermen to ensure their safety and security; and their early release and repatriation.

Madam, Speaker, the Government has conveyed to the Sri Lankan Government that the use of force cannot be justified under any circumstance and that all fishermen should be treated in a humane manner. The Sri Lankan side while denying that their Navy was involved, has promised to seriously investigate some of the incidents which my learned friend, Shri Baalu has drawn the attention of this august House. A lot of other hon. Members have also drawn the attention.

During the meetings with my Sri Lankan counterpart in February, 2011 in Thimpu and again in the month of May, 2011 when he came to India, I not only conveyed our deep concern at the violence unleashed against our fishermen, but also stressed the need to ensure that these incidents do not recur. In the Joint Press Release issued in May 2011, India and Sri Lanka agreed that the use of force could not be justified under any circumstances and that all fishermen should be treated in a humane manner. I think that is the basic understanding that Sri Lanka and India have come about the problems of the fishermen.

Here, it may not be out of place for me to convey to this august House that very often fishermen go off to catch fish. They are not concerned Madam, Speaker about international maritime boundaries. They are ignorant of that. As a result of that there are cases where our fishermen, who are Tamil speaking, have crossed over the maritime boundaries into the Sri Lankan waters and the Sri Lankan Tamil-speaking fishermen have similarly crossed over to our waters. I think we, as Government, tried to bring about an understanding between the Unions of fishermen between the two countries. I think they had a meeting which was not very encouraging, but we have not given it up. We will be continuing to insist that the fishermen's Unions must have periodical meetings so that the issues can be sorted out.

Madam, according to our records, there were six cases of Indian fishermen who died during 2011. We learnt about the death of Shri Pandiyan on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 and that of Shri Jayakumar on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2011. Four other fishermen from Tamil Nadu were reported missing on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 and their bodies were found subsequently. In all these cases, the High Commission of India in Colombo took up the matter almost on the very same day when they received information about the death of Indian fishermen.

It is very important to note here that following the India-Sri Lanka Joint Statement on Fishing Arrangements of 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2008, the incidents involving Indian fishermen declined significantly. In this connection, if I can place certain facts year-wise, it might provide an occasion for the House to appreciate how the situation has improved over a period of time. In the year 2008, the fishermen arrested were 1,456, reported missing was one and reported death was five.

### **13.00 hrs.**

In 2009, Madam, the numbers came down drastically. It was 127 and no one was reported missing and no one was reported dead. In 2010, it was 34 and there was nobody who was missing and one reported dead. In 2011, till 16<sup>th</sup> of August, the reports available with the Ministry of External Affairs are that 164 have been arrested and nobody is reported missing and 6 reported dead.

As per the information available as of now, there are no Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan jails on charges of fishing-related violations. At the same time, in 2010, a total of 352 and in 2011 till 16<sup>th</sup> August, 131 Sri Lankan fishermen were apprehended by our authorities. A total of 104 Sri Lankan fishermen are still in Indian custody.

Madam Speaker, we have been encouraged by the existence of the structured dialogue mechanism between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil National Alliance. We were concerned with the recent break down and the resulting stalemate. But now we encourage both the parties to the dialogue to resume purposeful discussions towards arriving at a genuine political settlement.

The Government of India is of the view that the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka provided an opportunity to pursue a lasting political settlement in Sri Lanka within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, acceptable to all the communities in Sri Lanka

including the Tamils. It has to be, however, kept in mind that this is a longstanding issue and Sri Lanka is going through its internal processes. The sooner Sri Lanka can come to a political arrangement within which all the communities feel comfortable, and which works for all of them, the better. The Government of India will do whatever it can to support this process.

In this context, our emphasis has been to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to move towards a new system of institutional reforms, including a devolution package, building upon the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The Joint Press Statement issued on May 17 after the Sri Lankan External Affairs Minister's visit to Delhi stated this position. We would continue to impress on the Sri Lankan Government to pursue these institutional reforms so that the Tamil people will have a feeling that they are equal citizens of Sri Lanka and that they can lead a life of dignity and self-respect as equals in that Island nation.

We have also noted the President of Sri Lanka's decision announced yesterday to withdraw the state of emergency when it lapses at the end of this month. This, in our view, is a very welcome step. We hope that this will be followed by effective steps leading to genuine national reconciliation in that country.

Some hon. Members referred to fishing rights for the Indian fishermen at Katchativu Island. ...(*Interruptions*) I wish to bring it to the notice of this august House that our fishermen have access to visit the Island for two purposes, according to the 1974 Agreement.

According to 1974 Agreement, it was decided between our two Governments that Katchatheevu is part of Sri Lankan Island. It falls within the territorial jurisdiction of Sri Lanka and the international waters. But we entered into an understandingâ€¦...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): This was not a political solution; this was a bureaucratic solution at that point of time. It was by exchange of letters between the two External Affairs Secretaries. It was only an Executive Order. It was not a political decision. ...(*Interruptions*) We will have a discussion further separately. Before he concludes, I want to ask only three questions. Please allow me. The Minister has yielded. ...(*Interruptions*) Whether the Government of India have any relevant information for a time-bound political solution as per the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and that too in the context of a statement by the Defence Secretary, who has said, "LTTE has gone, political solution not necessary?"

My second question is whether the Government of India will come forward to plead before the United Nations Organization for an enquiry by an international agency pertaining to the large scale human rights violation? Lastly, are you aware of the genocide of Tamil race in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009 by Sri Lankan Administration? Is it not your responsibility? ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: All right. Baalu ji, let the hon. Minister complete his reply.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : I am completing, Madam. This is the last sentence. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: All right.

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Won't you allow the last sentence? These are the questions for which he has to answer. I am the mover of the Motion. Don't you give time?

MADAM SPEAKER: First, let him complete. Then, I would give you a chance.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : That is why, I am completing, Madam. Is it not your responsibility to expose the perpetrators before the world as war criminals for having committed human rights violations? These are the three questions. Let him answer, Madam.

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: I was talking about Katchatheevu. I wish to bring to the attention of this august House that our fishermen have access to Katchatheevu Island only for purposes of taking rest, according to an understanding reached between two countries, and also to dry their nets. Then, to attend the annual Saint Anthony Festival there and that the rights do not cover fishing around Katchatheevu Island.

We will have to also bear in mind the fact that as per the Agreements we have concluded with Sri Lanka in 1974 and 1976, Katchatheevu Island lies on the Sri Lankan side of the maritime boundary. These Agreements were laid before Parliament.

Therefore, as far as the Government of India is concerned, the issue of maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka, and consequently, that of sovereignty over Katchatheevu Island is a matter which has been settled.

In 2009, a Delegation of Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu visited Sri Lanka, including the camps where the Internally Displaced Persons were staying. In their Report, they had mentioned that the facilities at the camps were reasonable.

During a very recent meeting, the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in India, who called on the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, has conveyed the invitation of President of Sri Lanka to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to visit Sri Lanka.

He has also invited a Parliamentary Team not only from Tamil Nadu but also from other areas of this country to visit Sri Lanka, including Northern Sri Lanka. The hon. Leader of the Opposition Shrimati Sushma Swaraj has been invited by the hon. Speaker of Sri Lanka to visit Sri Lanka and Shrimati Sushma Swaraj has accepted the invitation. She is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka in the third week of September. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Madam, I had asked three questions and he is not answering to those questions. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Let him complete.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please give him a chance to answer.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Madam, the External Affairs Ministry uses a very flowery language and he is going by whatever the External Affairs Ministry officials have briefed him. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: No, this will not go on record.

(*Interruptions*) â€¦\*

SHRI T.R. BAALU : The Government should find a political solution to this problem. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA : Madam, I am amazed at Mr. Baalu's interpretation. I am the External Affairs Minister of this country. I have the brief from the External Affairs Ministry and I have to go according to the brief. I cannot create surprises. We are dealing with the relationship between two sovereign countries and, I think, that has to be appreciated. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : They have committed human rights violations. UN committee has already brought out the report. We are not satisfied with the reply of the Minister...(*Interruptions*)

-

-

MADAM SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.15 p.m.

**13.12 hrs.**

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till  
Fifteen Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.*

---