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Title: The Minister of External Affairs made a statement regarding "the situation in Sri Lanka".

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No.4 on the Agenda. Hon. Minister of External Affairs may make a statement.

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Sir, I am on a point of order. It seems my friends are totally in a confused state. Yesterday, the Government had promised that the matter would be explained through a statement by the hon. External Affairs Minister. What is that matter? The matter pertains to the support to the Resolution of The United States of America...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let him make the statement first.

SHRI T.R. BAALU : No Sir. I need your indulgence. The subject matter today is to make a statement regarding 'The situation in Sri Lanka'. What I wanted is to go to a place named Pattukottai near Mannargudi in Thanjavur District, whereas the hon. Minister is showing the betel nuts. In Tamil the proverb is called "*Pattukottaikku vazhi ketta kotta paaku enna vilai enru sollugirar*"!

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Baalu, let him make the statement first.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: We wanted to have a statement from the hon. Minister pertaining to the support of US Resolution in the United Nations Human Rights Council...(Interruptions) He is coming forward with a statement on rehabilitation and resettlement in Sri Lanka, like supply of cement, steel, tartar, etc. We have heard this so many times...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down. No point of order, please.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Sir, the problem is the same, so the situation is the same...(Interruptions)

SHRI O.S. MANIAN (MAYILADUTHURAI): Sir, tomorrow...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go in record.

(Interruptions) â€ˆ\*

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Sir, at the outset, allow me to convey that I fully share the concerns and sentiments raised by the hon. Members of this august House regarding the Sri Lankan situation.

The end of the long period of armed conflict in Sri Lanka in May 2009, left around 3,00,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in camps in Northern Sri Lanka and general devastation of infrastructure in the affected areas.

Since the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka, the focus of Government of India has been on the welfare and well being of the Tamils citizens of Sri Lanka. Their resettlement and rehabilitation have been of the highest and most immediate priority for this Government.

The Prime Minister, in June 2009 immediately after the conflict, announced a grant of Rs. 500 crore for relief, rehabilitation and resettlement of Tamil speaking Sri Lankans. The Government of India has implemented and continues to implement a wide range of projects covering assistance projects for IDPs in the areas of housing, de-mining, education, connectivity, livelihood restoration, economic revival, etc. We have been informed by representatives of Sri Lankan Tamils that the tractors, seeds and agricultural implements gifted by the Government of India have greatly benefited the people in the area, who depend on agriculture.

India also announced the construction of 50,000 houses, mainly for IDPs in Sri Lanka. During my visit to Sri Lanka in January 2012, I handed over the first lot of completed houses to the beneficiaries at Ariyalai, Jaffna and Kilinochchi. These houses have been constructed under a pilot project for construction of 1000 houses. As of end-February 2012, a total of 365 houses have been completed, another 370 houses completed up to roof level and around 232 houses completed up to lintel level...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please do not interrupt. Please sit down.

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: It may also be kept in mind that construction is taking place in largely inaccessible areas, which in many cases has to be freed of mines and other explosive ordinance and cleared of jungle.

In December 2011, the Cabinet approved the modalities for construction and repair of the remaining 49,000 houses. A Memorandum of Understanding for construction of these houses was signed between India and Sri Lanka on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012 in Colombo. The project is expected to be completed within three years of commencement of work on the ground.

In addition to houses, India also gifted bicycles to IDPs and handed over hospitals and schools rehabilitated under the assistance of the Government of India in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

I would like to underline that it is mainly as a result of our constructive engagement with the Government of Sri Lanka and our considerable assistance programme that a modicum of normalcy is beginning to return to the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka. There has also been progress given the withdrawal of emergency regulations by the Government of Sri Lanka and the conduct of elections to local bodies in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our primary objective in all that we are doing in Sri Lanka is to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of Sri Lankan Tamils, including the Internally Displaced Persons, and to assist in the reconstruction and development of areas affected by the conflict.

Several Hon. Members of the House have raised the issue of alleged human rights violations during the protracted conflict in Sri Lanka and on the US-initiated draft resolution on 'Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka' at the ongoing 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Concerns have been expressed by various quarters on allegations of human rights violations, including as shown in the Channel 4 documentaries; it is the responsibility of the Sri Lankan Government, in the first instance to investigate and inquire into them through a transparent process.

We understand that the Government of Sri Lanka has initiated a series of measures, including appointment of a Cabinet Sub-committee to monitor implementation of the proposals in the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) and reactivating the National Police Commission, in line with the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) report. Separately, the Sri Lankan defence authorities are reported to have appointed a Court of Inquiry to look into allegations of human rights violations as required by the LLRC report.

The Government of India has, nonetheless, emphasised to the Government of Sri Lanka the importance of a genuine process of reconciliation to address the grievances of the Tamil community. In this connection, we have called for implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the LLRC that has been tabled before the Sri Lankan Parliament. These include various constructive measures for healing the wounds of the conflict and fostering a process of lasting peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

We have been assured by the Government of Sri Lanka, including during my visit to Sri Lanka in January this year, of its commitment towards pursuit of a political process, through a broader dialogue with all parties, including the Tamil National Alliance, leading to the full implementation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, so as to achieve meaningful devolution of powers and genuine national reconciliation.

We hope that the Government of Sri Lanka recognizing the critical importance of this issue acts decisively and with vision in this regard. We will remain engaged with them through this process and in the spirit of partnership encourage them to take forward the dialogue with the elected representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Hon'ble Members may be aware that the Sri Lankan authorities had said they would be happy to receive an all party delegation of Members of both Houses of our Parliament. We are working to undertake such a visit at the earliest.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, several Members have raised the issue of a draft resolution initiated by USA at the ongoing 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council at Geneva on the issue of reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka.

I would like to highlight here that on such sensitive issues we will need to consider the implications of our actions carefully. Any assertions on our part may have implications on our historically friendly relations with a neighbouring country. We would also need to examine whether our actions will actually assist in the process of reconciliation in Sri Lanka, and enhance the current dialogue between the Government of Sri Lanka and Tamil parties, including the Tamil National Alliance.

As far as our position on the resolution is concerned, we are engaged with all parties in an effort to achieve a forward looking outcome that is based on reconciliation and accountability rather than deepening confrontation and mistrust between the concerned parties. I may mention that the issue of human rights allegations against Sri Lanka is yet

to come up for formal discussion at the 19th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. A view on this issue will be taken as and when the time is finalized for consideration of the draft resolution on Sri Lanka in the UN Human Rights Council.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I, therefore, would like to inform this august House that our objectives, as always, continue to remain the achievement of a future for the Tamil community in Sri Lanka that is marked by equality, dignity, justice and self-respect.

I may assure the House that the Government will bear in mind the views and sentiments expressed in this august House, and once a final view is taken Government will keep the this august Parliament informed.

Thank you, Sir....(*Interruptions*)

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 6172/15/12)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Sir, I am sorry that the Government is not serious about the human rights violations against Tamils in Sri Lanka. ...(*Interruptions*) We are walking out....(*Interruptions*)

**15.58 hrs**

*At this stage, Shri T. R. Baalu and some other  
hon. Members left the House*

*...(*Interruptions*)*

**15.59 hrs**

*At this stage, Shri Thol Thirumaavalavan came  
and stood on the floor near the Table.*

*...(*Interruptions*)*

**15.59 ½ hrs**

*At this stage, Shri C. Sivasami and some other hon. Members came  
and stood on the floor near the Table*

*...(*Interruptions*)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(*Interruptions*)* \* \_

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats.

*...(*Interruptions*)*

**16.00 hrs.**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats.

*...(*Interruptions*)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(*Interruptions*)* \* \_

**16.01 hrs**

*At this stage, Shri Thol Thirumaavalavan left the House*

*...(*Interruptions*)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(*Interruptions*)* \* \_

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats.

*...(*Interruptions*)*

**16.03 hrs**

*At this stage, Shri Thol Thirumaavalavan came  
and stood on the floor near the Table*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 4.30 p.m.

**16.04 hrs**

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Thirty Minutes past Sixteen of the Clock.*

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**16.32 hrs**

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty-Two Minutes past  
Sixteen of the Clock.*

*(Dr. Girija Vyas in the Chair)*

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (DINDIGUL): Madam Chairperson, I wish to place on record the views of my partyâ€  
*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL):  
Just a moment.

Madam, the practice in this House is that there is no clarification sought on the statement. When the statement has been made, thereafter we must proceed with the normal business of the House.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: This is not the tradition. But it is also the rule.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: No, I am not allowing anybody to seek clarification.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Sorry, Madam. Please allow me to place on record the views of my party....(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Madam, this is not an ordinary issue.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Neither it is a tradition nor is it in the rule.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Nothing is coming on record.

(Interruptions) \* \_



MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up 'Zero Hour' matters. Shri Jagdambika Pal, you have to be very brief, as I am giving you the first opportunity to speak.