

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to grant citizenship to Srilankan Tamils who repatriated to India under Indian Citizenship Act, 1955-laid.

DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY (CHENNAI NORTH): Srilankan Tamils are descendants of indentured labourers who settled down in tea estates of Sri Lanka during colonial times. There is no doubt that they are tamil speaking people. Their forefathers hailed from what is present day State of Tamil Nadu. They faced severe discrimination at the hands of the Sri Lankan Government after it gained independence in 1948. Sri Lanka witnessed a genocidal and brutal ethnic strife. 1983 was one of the worst moments in history. There was a virtual exodus of Tamil people from Sri Lanka to India. They reached India by whatever mode that was available. However, they were having hope from Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 but this hope too was over as this act only allowed Indian Citizenship for persecuted religious minorities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis or Christians and leaves out Sri Lanka. Refugees from Sri Lanka have been neglected by the CAA.

I request the Union Government to provide Citizenship to these repatriates and their family members who repatriated to India after intermittent settlement in tea estates of hill areas in Sri Lanka under the Indian Citizenship Act, 1955.