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Title: Regarding the issue of Mahabalipuram Stalasangayana Perumal Temple taken over by ASI.

SHRI P. VISWANATHAN (KANCHEEPURAM): Madam, I would like to raise a very serious issue concerning my Parliamentary constituency with regard to taking over of the Stalasangayana Perumal Temple. The take over threat of Stalasangayana Perumal Temple by the Archeological Survey of India has created a lot of unrest amongst the people of Mahabalipuram and the people started their agitation in various ways. Foreseeing the threat the matter was raised by me in the Parliament under Rule 377 on 30th March, 2012 seeking redressal mechanism from the Government to avoid any kind of confrontation from the public and ASI.

On 30th April, 2012, I led a delegation of Members of Lion's Club of Mahabalipuram to point out the difficulties faced by the public to the hon. Union Minister for Culture Kumar Selja. Subsequently, I met Shri Gautam Sengupta, the Director General of ASI at his office on 16th July, 2012 and explained the seriousness of the temple take over issue and requested him to drop the matter once for all on 17th July, 2012. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Madam, I would like to associate myself with his views.

MADAM SPEAKER: You may please mention your problem.

SHRI P. VISWANATHAN: Madam, as has been pointed out by me, the Stalasangayana Perumal Temple is not having any architectural value, the ASI should not be allowed to take over and the maintenance of temple should be with the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Board of Tamil Nadu Government. This will honour the sentiments of the general public of Mahabalipuram and allow the public to worship without any hurdles. The ASI take over of Sri Arunachaleswar Temple in Tiruvannamalai during December, 2002 has been prevented by the agitating people of Tiruvannamalai is a classic example. In this matter, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. M. Karunanidhi wrote a letter to the hon. Prime Minister requesting him to direct the ASI to give up its move. The decision to take had been reversed subsequently.

In the same way, as a Congress MP from Kancheepuram Parliamentary constituency, I appeal to the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh to intervene in the matter and prevent the ASI take over of this temple and they should not be allowed to interfere with the religious administration.

I would also like to request you, Madam, to issue directives to the Minister of Culture, Government of India not to take over the temple which will hurt the feelings of several lakhs of Hindus in my Parliamentary constituency. ASI should not make a living temple a show piece for the foreigners by acting against the sentiments of the Hindu people.

MADAM SPEAKER: The following Members may be allowed to associate themselves with the views expressed by Shri P. Viswanathan.

Shri P.L.Punia

Shri Thol. Thirumaavalavan

Shri T.R.Baalu