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Title: Need to bestow Mahavir Chakra to the Flying Officer K.P. Muralidharan, for his bravery during Indo-Pak War in 1971.

SHRI M.K. RAGHAVAN (KOZHIKODE): Madam, Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise an issue with pain which is dear to all of our hearts.

Madam, I would like to draw the kind attention of this august House, through you, regarding the dishonour the country has done to the supreme sacrifice made by missing Flying Officer K.P. Muralidharan in the 1971 Indo-Pak war.

Recently the nation celebrated the Vijay Divas on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 commemorating our victory of the Indo-Pak war. But as a set back to the brave deeds of the IAF, a very indolent and bizarre reply of the Government has prompted me to raise the issue and it is regarding the denial of Mahavir Chakra to Flying Officer K.P. Muralidharan of the No. 20 Squadron of the IAF even after 41 years. He had undertaken a daring air raid over the Peshawar Air base resulting in destruction of many hangars, airfield buildings etc. during which act he laid his life. His brave act has even found praise in Pakistan Wg. Cdr.(Retd.) Salim Baig's memoir "Air Battles – December 1971, My experience" who had shot down the aircraft.

### **13.00hrs**

But, unfortunately, the Indian Government could neither honour the supreme sacrifice of the young officer but also disgraced the entire act and the officer by refusing to honour him with a MVC stating that the conferring should be done within two years of the act. Such bizarre and unapologetic statements were never expected while denying the honour even when Squadron Leader A.B. Devayya was decorated with the same honour posthumously 23 years later.

Why has this double standard been adopted? If there is a two year barrier, then why no action has been taken on the defaulters? Does martyrdom have an expiry date in this world? These are some points to be answered.

Therefore, I take this occasion to urge the Government to reconsider their decision and bestow the honour to the departed soldier as a mark of respect of the nation to his brave deeds and also request to rise to the occasion by not disgracing our war heroes in this fashion.