

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-4900
ANSWERED ON 31/03/2023

ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA

4900. SHRI MITESH RAMESHBHAI PATEL (BAKABHAI)
SHRIMATI SHARDABEN ANILBHAI PATEL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) the details of food supplies and the other humanitarian assistance provided to the people of Sri Lanka during the last three years; and

(b) whether despite giving generous aid on all fronts and ancient bond with India, Sri Lanka is said to be leaning towards China on some issues and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) Under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, Government is committed to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbours. In line with this, India continues to support Sri Lanka in all possible ways to overcome challenges posed by COVID 19 pandemic as well as economic crisis.

During COVID 19 pandemic, India supplied more than 25 tons of medicines on a special aircraft to Sri Lanka in May 2020. In addition, India has gifted 5,00,000 doses of a made in India Covid vaccine, Covishield, to Sri Lanka in January 2021. In August 2021 India assisted in transportation of Liquid Medical Oxygen (140 MT) commercially procured by Sri Lanka. Indian Naval Ship Gharial was deployed for expeditious delivery of humanitarian supplies of medicine and kerosene to Sri Lanka. Indian Air Force airlifted nano nitrogen fertilizers to meet Sri Lanka's urgent requirement in November 2021. India gifted 1 lakh Rapid Antigen Test kits to Sri Lanka in February 2022.

As a response to economic crisis in Sri Lanka, in February 2022, a new Line of Credit (LoC) of US\$ 500 million was extended to Sri Lanka for purchase of petroleum products from India. A USD 1 billion Credit Facility for supply of essential items including food items, medicines, fuel etc. was extended to Government of Sri Lanka in March 2022. More than 26 tons of drugs and other medical supplies provided to Peradeniya University Hospital, Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Hambantota General Hospital and Ambulance Service '1990' in April-May 2022 to meet the acute shortage of medicines. These supplies were worth around INR 6 crore. In addition, a consignment of kerosene was delivered for the use of fishermen in Northern Province of Sri Lanka to enable their livelihoods. An LoC for urea fertilizer was extended to Government of Sri Lanka in June 2022. 65,000 MT urea have been already delivered under it. In order to cater to the daily needs of recipient families, GoI distributed custom made dry rations among fishermen communities in four districts of Northern

Province as well as economically vulnerable sections in other parts of Sri Lanka such as Eastern, Southern and Western Provinces. Government of Tamil Nadu has contributed rice, milk powder and medicines worth US\$16 million, as part of the larger Indian assistance effort.

(b) Government attaches high priority to its relationship with its neighbouring countries. India's relations with its neighbours stand on their own footing and are independent of the relations of those countries with third countries. India is confident about the strength and enduring nature of its bilateral ties with Sri Lanka which is deep-rooted and multi dimensional.
