

**Remarks of High Commissioner of India during
the Launch of Indian Housing Project- Phase IV
Stage 2**

(Bandarawela, 12 October 2025)

Venerable Members of the Clergy,

His Excellency Anura Kumara Dissanayake
President of Sri Lanka

Hon'ble Samantha Vidyaratna
Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure

Hon'ble Ramalingam Chandrasekar
Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources

Hon'ble Sundaralingam Pradeep
Deputy Minister of Plantation and Community
Infrastructure

Hon'ble Prof. Ruwan Ranasinghe,
Deputy Minister for Tourism

Hon'ble Dinidu Saman Kumara
Deputy Minister for Youth Affairs

Hon'ble Members of Parliament

Hon'ble Governors,

Distinguished Guests;

Dear members of the Indian Origin Tamil Community

Vanakkam, Aybowan, Namaskar!

It gives me great joy and satisfaction to be part of this special occasion — the launch of Stage II of the Indian Housing Project Phase IV.

We are honoured and privileged to have the gracious presence of H.E. President Disanayaka at this event. This is a testament to the deep, abiding and special nature of the India-Sri Lanka friendship. It also reflects our shared commitment to the development and wellbeing of our peoples.

This shared commitment was reaffirmed during the visit by Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi in April this year. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India is marching ahead towards 'Viksit Bharat' with the motto of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'. Under the guidance of President Disanayaka, Sri Lanka too has embarked on a transformative path towards 'A Thriving Nation and a Beautiful Life'.

Today's event is indeed a celebration of history, friendship and the unbreakable bonds that unite the people of India and Sri Lanka. We are siblings; we are civilizational twins. We are seeking a future brighter than our past: one where we live with peace, dignity and great opportunities.

The Indian Origin Tamil community in Sri Lanka is a living bridge between our two nations. India's relationship with the community is deeply rooted in shared cultural, linguistic and people-to-people ties. Over time, this relationship has only grown stronger.

Our Indian Origin Tamil brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka have been an integral part of Sri Lanka's journey by contributing to its economy, enriching its culture and strengthening its social fabric. Their story is one of resilience and determination.

Our aim has always been to empower, uplift and ensure the holistic development of every member of this community. In this journey, India has been a steadfast partner of the Sri Lankan Government. We are working together hand in hand in areas such as housing, education and skill development, healthcare, and community development.

Today, we are gathered to advance the housing program for the Indian Origin Tamil community with the support of Government of India. Altogether, support for 14,000 houses has been announced. 4,000 houses under Phase III have been completed. Only a very few are left.

In 2017, Prime Minister Modi announced support for 10,000 more houses under Phase IV of the Housing Project. 1,100 houses are at present being constructed. Today, we are launching the next stage of this project.

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the enthusiasm and support of the Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure to the commencement of this Stage.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

India's commitment to housing covers 65000 houses today spread across Sri Lanka. It covers all 25 districts of the country. It is a grant commitment of over 64 billion Sri Lankan Rupees in today's terms. This mega initiative has transformed the lives of thousands of families. It provides them with shelter. It also ensures dignity and improved quality of life.

Our objective is not just to build houses, but also to build futures. We are implementing initiatives across sectors that touch hundreds of thousands of lives — from education to healthcare, from skill development to social infrastructure.

We have built the multi-specialty hospital in Dickoya and the Mahatma Gandhi International Centre in Matale. We have upgraded infrastructure at numerous academic centres. We are setting up smart classrooms in several plantation schools. We are providing scholarships through the Ceylon Estate Workers' Education Trust. We are implementing a project to upgrade plantation schools. These are only a few examples among many projects that we have implemented for the Indian Origin Tamil community.

In 2023, to mark 200 years of the arrival of the community into Sri Lanka, we have announced a special development package worth over 2.5 billion Sri Lankan Rupees. Many projects are being implemented under this package. Last year, we completed a STEM teacher-training program. It benefitted over 2,000 plantation school teachers. We would continue to request Government of Sri Lanka to expedite new projects under the package. This will ensure that benefits from the package reach the people at the earliest.

During his recent State visit, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced support for the development of the Seetha Amman Temple. This would boost tourism and strengthen related industries among the plantation community members. In turn, this will contribute to further economic and social development of the region.

Prime Minister Modi has said that the development assistance extended by India to Sri Lanka is with a sense of responsibility. A responsibility that one feels towards a family member. We are committed to working for the development of all of Sri Lanka. We stand firm in our support to Sri Lanka. Our support for the Indian Origin Tamil community is part of this overall effort.

What better words could express this sentiment than the timeless wisdom in one of the kurals of the great poet and saint Thiruvalluvar:

विरूप्परा चुट्रम | इयैईन अरूप्परा
आक्कम पलवुम थरूम

*['Virupparaa Chutram Iyaiyin Arupparaa
Aakkam Palavum Tharum']*

Which translates to:

“A relative’s unchanging love is a source of unlimited growth.”

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is what we seek from you as we march towards growth and prosperity.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm India's unwavering commitment to the welfare, progress and prosperity of the people of Sri Lanka.

Soon we will celebrate Diwali, the festival of lights, joy and prosperity. Diwali lamps illuminate our homes. In the same way, may these houses under the Indian Housing Project illuminate countless lives. And may the joint efforts of the Governments of India and Sri Lanka keep bringing prosperity to the lives of our peoples.

मिक्कनरी, Bohoma Stuti, Thank you very much!
