



INDIA AND SRI LANKA SHARE CENTURIES-OLD CIVILIZATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND SPIRITUAL BONDS: LOK SABHA SPEAKER

INDIA'S APPROACH HAS TRANSITIONED FROM "WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT" TO "WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT: SHRI OM BIRLA

WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS' CAUCUS OF SRI LANKA CALLS ON LOK SABHA SPEAKER AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

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Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla observed today that India and Sri Lanka are bound by deep civilizational, cultural, and spiritual ties that have evolved over centuries. Referring to the shared Buddhist heritage of the two nations, he noted that these enduring links continue to form the foundation of the warm and friendly relations between India and Sri Lanka. Shri Birla made these remarks while interacting with the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Sri Lanka at Parliament House today. The delegation was led by H.E. Ms. Saroja Savithri Paulraj, Minister of Women and Child Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka.

Recalling his recent interaction with a Sri Lankan parliamentary delegation led by Hon. Mr. S.M. Marikkar, Chairman of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Infrastructure and Strategic Issues, Shri Birla expressed satisfaction over the growing frequency of parliamentary exchanges between the two countries. He noted that sustained dialogue and regular engagement between parliamentarians have imparted fresh momentum to India-Sri Lanka inter-parliamentary relations and strengthened mutual understanding.

Highlighting the increasing role of women in India's democratic framework, Shri Birla stated that women are now active participants in every sphere of governance and nation-building—from the electoral process to policy-making and leadership roles. He remarked that India's approach has transitioned from "Women's Development" to "Women-led Development." He added that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi firmly believes that when women lead development, societies become more inclusive, balanced, and sustainable.

Shri Birla further noted that the first legislation passed by the Parliament of India in the newly inaugurated Parliament House was the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, which mandates 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. He described the legislation as a historic step that will enable women to play a more decisive role in the country's legislative processes, ushering in a transformative chapter in India's democratic journey.

Emphasizing the strong grassroots foundation of Indian democracy, Shri Birla mentioned that several Indian states have implemented 50 per cent reservation for women in local self-government institutions. As a result, more than 1.4 million elected women representatives are currently serving in Panchayats and

urban local bodies across the country, contributing significantly to governance and community development.

Regarding economic empowerment, Shri Birla informed the delegation that a vast number of women in India are achieving financial self-reliance through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). He highlighted initiatives such as the Lakhpati Didi scheme as transformative instruments for promoting women-led entrepreneurship, particularly in rural India.

Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Ms. Saroja Savithri Paulraj thanked Shri Birla for the warm hospitality extended to the delegation. She observed that the visit provided the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Sri Lanka with deeper insights into India's transformative initiatives, particularly in the fields of SHGs, women-led entrepreneurship, and digital commerce. H.E. Ms. Paulraj also expressed gratitude to the Government of India for its steadfast support to Sri Lanka during challenging times, including the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters such as Cyclone Ditwa.

Pleased to meet H.E. Ms. Saroja Savithri Paulraj, Minister of Women and Child Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka along with the women Parliamentary delegation from Sri Lanka at the Parliament House and engage with the distinguished members on strengthening bilateral ties and... pic.twitter.com/t1t15l0SE7

— Om Birla (@ombirlakota) May 11, 2026

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