

Why everyone should boycott Sri Lanka

PAGE 14

## UN okays Sri Lanka's slaughter of Tamils



As starvation takes its toll in Vanni, the United Nations has expressed its support for the stance taken by Sri Lanka in dealing with the civilian Tamil population. *More p14*



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## NEWS

# Lack of drugs force doctors to re-amputate patients in Vanni

THE medical care system Vanni is on the verge of complete collapse and the doctors are in deep despair due to lack of lifesaving medicines and necessary equipment required treat patients, according to the Regional Director of Health Services (RDHS) in Mullaiththeevu district.

In a letter to the Ministry of health, Dr T Varatharajan says he is in "deep despair, much same as my colleagues with me, while starting to write this letter as we have been cursed to witness yet another pathetic scene of scores of dead and injured brought to the Puthumaththalan Hospital following shelling attack at Ampalavanpokkananai, the adjoining village situated well within the new safety area."

"We are confused and clueless on how to confront this situation of mass casualties with bare minimum facilities available.

"Our health care system is on the verge of complete collapse with the abandoning of all the rest of temporary hospitals functioning at Udaiyarkaddu, Suthanthirapuram and Thevipuram, leaving Puthumaththalan as the only operational health facility. Being a small school building transformed into a primary surgical care unit, there is little space and poor infrastructure, hardly sufficient to provide even basic standards in emergency surgical care to the large influx of war wounded daily more than a hundred on average - sometimes as high as 200.

"Though we are working round the clock despite being physi-

cally and mentally exhausted, lack of lifesaving medicines required for surgical operations and post operative management and on top of all, absence of an aseptic operation theatre, seriously affecting the outcome in many cases.

"We were in total frustration when we had to re-amputate the limbs at higher levels in days after initial lifesaving amputations, just because of lack of IV penicillin and other antibiotics essential to prevent fatal sepsis.

"I have to mention with pain that we have recorded at least 04 child deaths due to diarrhoeal diseases and death of 02 elders due to acute respiratory distress during this week indicating the high vulnerability of the IDPs living under most tragic conditions with out any basic amenities or adequate healthcare support.

"The safety area declared during this week compression of a narrow strip of coastal land with thick resident population now, with the additional 2 lakh IDPs taking refuge in the area, drinking Water and dispose refill we going to be problems.

"If this situation continues further, control of communicable disease, especially water borne, may become impossible and could thus cause havoc. Therefore we as medical officers remain here to rescue our own people from disaster despite the risks, would like to urge you to use your good offices to support and strengthen us to deliver our noble services with dedication."

## India supplies vital drugs for soldiers

INDIA has agreed to supply a vital drug in short supply in Sri Lanka for post surgery treatment for the injured soldiers, according to media reports.

Nimal Siripala De Silva, Sri Lankan Health Minister, told the Sri Lankan Parliament that India has agreed to supply peathadine, a vital pain killer medicine used post surgery, for the injured Sri Lankan soldiers.

Responding to concern raised by Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna

(JVP) over the shortage of the drug in the country, Minister De Silva admitted that there was a shortage of this drug in hospitals in Anuradhapura due to problems in importing it.

"Fresh stock of this medicine is due to come from India in the next few days," he said.

Peathadine, is classed as a narcotic and is administered to patients post surgery as an anaesthetic. The drug requires special regulations for importing it.



The civilian population, already tired from fleeing and living under trees, is now further affected as the lack of medical facilities means they are losing limbs and even dying of curable diseases and injuries

## Civilian situation 'desperate and unacceptable' - MSF

AN international medical and humanitarian aid organization has released a statement highlighting the lack of medical facilities for the civilians living in LTTE controlled Vanni and in IDP camps government controlled territories.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in a statement released on Friday, February 27 said that 'many are injured, some with infected wounds that are weeks old and as a result, many people have been maimed for life,' highlighting the state medical care or the lack of it for the Tamil civilians injured by the military onslaught.

MSF, which has been prevented by the Sri Lankan government from entering Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) administered Vanni to assist civilians since September 2008 is now operating only in government held territories.

*Text of full statement released by MSF follows:*

Médecins Sans Frontières is urgently calling on both parties in the conflict in the Vanni area in northern Sri Lanka to ensure the safety of civilians and to allow access to humanitarian assistance.

In neighbouring Vavuniya, located outside the conflict zone, MSF medical teams are working with hospital staff around the clock. Ninety percent of the injuries seen are a direct result of the fighting. People are being brought to hospitals with gunshot and shrapnel wounds. In the past two weeks, MSF has performed over 300 operations on patients who were directly wounded in the conflict and it appears this number is just the tip of the iceberg.

An estimated 200,000 Sri Lankans living under desperate conditions are still trapped in the conflict zone in Sri Lanka's north. Patients tell MSF how people are being shelled for days on end, with the dead and wounded surrounding them. There is a severe lack of medical care and not enough food and drinking water.

The stories shared with MSF by those who have managed to escape make painfully clear the desperate situation inside the Vanni. People have been trapped in active conflict for weeks, hiding in bunkers they have dug themselves.

A few weeks ago, for the first time in months, a significant number of civilians began emerging from the Vanni. There are now a reported 35,000 people who have managed to reach Vavuniya. They are tired, hungry, and frightened, and have no information about their family members who did not manage to escape the conflict zone.

Many are injured, some with infected wounds that are weeks old. As a result, many people have been maimed for life. Even those who have made it to Vavuniya have no freedom of movement, no access to information, and no options to look for lost family members.

Only a minority of the people trapped inside the Vanni have succeeded in crossing the front line to safer territory. Most remain caught between the warring parties.

An additional 2,000 sick and wounded people have been transferred from the Vanni to Trincomalee by boat by the International Committee of the

Red Cross (ICRC). Despite the authorities efforts, the medical management of wounded people who were evacuated is becoming a major challenge.

While hospitals in Trincomalee and surrounding areas were initially able to cope with the influx of wounded, some are now reaching full capacity and are in need of additional space, as well as medicine and medical materials. MSF visited several hospitals following the arrival of the first medical evacuations and is in contact with local health authorities in order to identify support that can be provided to the hospitals.

As MSF has been denied access to the population trapped inside the Vanni, the organization is relying on the personal accounts of patients to highlight what is happening there.

One 53-year-old woman told MSF staff how her family spent days in a bunker without food and water. Out of desperation, and despite the shelling, they left their bunker to get some food when three out of her 15 family members were killed on the spot. Her daughter was seriously wounded by shrapnel and is now in Vavuniya Hospital. Some of her relatives had to stay behind in the Vanni. She does not know whether they are still alive. This is only one example and many people tell a similar story.

MSF teams are still unable to enter the Vanni to evaluate the needs of the affected population and provide urgently needed medical care. Together with other international organizations, MSF has been denied access since September 2008.

## NEWS

# Colombo killed 700 children in 2 months - VoT

VOICE of Tigers, the official radio of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on Sunday, March 1 said Sri Lankan armed forces have killed 2,018 Tamil civilians in January and February in Vanni and that 700 of the victims were children.

The VoT has been airing a program, "Bridging the beloved" (Uravup Paalam), where civilians have been providing details of their missing family members and whereabouts of the remaining members in the hope of locating their missed ones.

Some families were reporting that children as young as 5 years of age were missing during the artillery barrage by the Sri Lanka Army while they were displacing from a location to another. The radio broadcast has become a main source of information assisting people to find their kin and kith.

The US based Human Rights Watch, in its report issued on 20 February, have also put the civilian casualty figures at 2,000.

Newly obtained information places total civilian casualties at 7,000, with 2,000 deaths, the HRW said.

"During a three-week period from January 20 to February 13, 2009, independent observers in the Vanni collected information on 5,150 civilian casualties-1,123 deaths and 4,027 injuries-from the current fighting. This number was derived from a compilation of reports that recorded individual casualties, the date and place of the attack, and the nature of the attack," the HRW report stated.

Air attacks with cluster bombs, fire bombs and artillery barrage with cluster fitted shells have been systematically deployed by the Sri Lankan forces on civilian targets.

## Children worst hit by continuing bombing, embargo

SHRAPNEL and bullet wounds, burns and fractures are causing death and injury amongst children caught in the conflict in Northeast Sri Lanka where hospitals are overflowing and desperately short of anaesthetic and essential medicines, according to a UNICEF statement.

In a statement released on February 17, UNICEF said it was extremely alarmed at the high number of children affected by the violence in Vanni.

"Hundreds of children have been injured in the fighting and evacuated in the past week," said UNICEF Representative in Sri Lanka Philippe Duamelle.

"Children are victims of this conflict by being killed, injured, recruited, displaced, separated and denied their every day needs due to the fighting. Instead of hope, fear defines their childhood."

The UN organisation has been repeating its message to the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and the LTTE to protect children from the fighting.

The UNICEF statement comes amidst reports of severe food and medicine shortage which is severely affecting children.

Thousands of infants have been seriously affected due to the lack of crucial food supplies such as powdered milk. The situation is exasperated with thousands of desperate mothers of newborns suffering the sustained food blockage and acute malnutrition becoming infertile and unable feed their babies.

Amongst the worst affected are those with chronic diseases, whose deaths are caused by the Government of Sri Lanka's block on medicines. In the overcrowded 'safety zone' area where 200,000-250,000 civilians have been herded, there is a high rate of infectious diseases present amongst children such as respiratory diseases and diarrhoea.

Treatment is difficult as medicines are scarce. Even in makeshift hospitals many injured civilians are suffering without antibiotics treatment as even a single Panadol is difficult to come by. A patient struggled hard to purchase one Panadol tablet from a shop for 1,000 Rupees.

"People are coughing. Many of them are infected with viral infections including chicken pox," said a local resident.



Children are dying in greater numbers as the Sri Lankan government targets the civilian population

## SLA 'slaughtering civilians' - HRW

HUMAN Rights Watch (HRW) based in New York has accused the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) of 'slaughtering' civilians with indiscriminate shelling in its attempt to finish off the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

HRW, in a 45-page report published on February 19, following a two-week fact-finding mission to northern Sri Lanka, estimated 2,000 civilians have been killed and 5,000 have been injured in January alone and called on the Sri Lankan government to end its "indiscriminate artillery attacks" on civilians.

The New York based group has criticized the Sri Lankan Government's conduct, particularly in their handling of an estimated 36,000 civilians, who have fled the conflict zone.

James Ross, legal and policy director at Human Rights Watch, said: "This 'war' against civilians must stop. Sri Lankan forces are shelling hospitals and so-called safe zones and slaughtering the civilians there."

"Sri Lankan forces are shelling hospitals and so-called safe zones and slaughtering the civilians there," Ross added.

The group also criticized the Sri Lankan Government's conduct in its handling of an estimated 36,000 civilians, who have fled the conflict zone.

Commenting on the treatment of internally displaced people by the Government, Ross said, "They are held by the Government in squalid military-controlled camps and hospitals with little access to the outside world".

"The Government seems to be trying its best to keep its role in their ordeal away from public scrutiny," Ross added.

The HRW representative is not alone in expressing his concern over the proposed "welfare villages", which are being enforced by the government. Prominent Tamils worldwide, including India, Britain and Sri Lanka have likened these "welfare villages" to the conditions of concentration camps set up by the Nazi government during the Second World War under Hitler's rule.

Rights groups say the plans for these "welfare villages" violate international law and monitoring camp conditions is difficult whilst the Government insists on blocking most journalists and aid workers.

## Food, but only enough for a day

A NEW sea route to deliver urgently needed relief to tens of thousands of civilians people in Vanni has been opened following food convoys through land route remain suspended for more than a month.

However only a fraction of the food required is reaching the people despite rising concerns over a growing food crisis.

As most internally displaced persons are now concentrated in a new safety zone along the eastern coastline of Mullaitheevu district, the sea route is seen as a viable alternative to reach those in need.

On Wednesday February 26, World Food Programme (WFP) transported some 40 metric tons of food - enough only to feed some 80,000 people for a single day - by sea to the government-designated safety zone in the

Vanni, where about 300,000 internally displaced Tamils are living.

The first delivery by sea was made on Wednesday 18 February. It was also a fraction of the amount needed.

"Pressurised by international community, the Colombo government allowed the transportation of a meager amount of food - 30 tonnes - for a population of 300,000", said LTTE's Puthukkudiyiruppu Political Head C. Ilamparithi, following the delivery. Calling the relief an eye-wash Ilamparithi further added: "When distributed the amount each one would be getting is 100 grams: roughly 66 grams of flour, 20 grams of Dahl and 14 grams of sugar per person".

Following the deliveries by sea, Adnan Khan, WFP representative and Country Director in Sri

Lanka said: "Now the challenge is to sustain this activity and ship sufficient quantities of food to meet the needs of tens of thousands caught in the conflict."

According to WFP calculations, 40MT can only feed about 11,500 people for a week and according to Khan, WFP's goal is to deliver up to 300 metric tons of food commodities per week by boat. "Food assistance is urgently needed for those still trapped in the conflict zone," Khan added.

Commenting on the suspension of land route Khand said: "The security situation since 16 January has not been conducive for food convoys to go in."

"The resumption of [land] convoys will only be possible if there is a lull in the conflict, but right now that's not happening," Khan added.

## NEWS

# Privacy goes public in Sri Lanka

Emily Wax

Washington Post

IT was just past 10 p.m. when the hulking bus sputtered to a stop at this military checkpoint, 70 miles from the front lines of this country's civil war.

The passengers quietly exited the bus and stood behind the razor wire, identification cards in hand. The men split off into one line. A far smaller number of women went into a separate row, some cradling sleeping babies.

But it was the women's line that took twice as long to navigate. That's because female officers rummaged through women's purses and bags before moving on to their breasts, even feeling the insides of their bras for explosives. They didn't stop there. They patted down their groins and occasionally looked inside their underwear. Pregnant women routinely had their swollen bellies squeezed or prodded, just to make sure.

Women are often singled out for scrutiny because, in Sri Lanka's 25-year civil war, more than two-thirds of the Tamil Tiger suicide bombers have been women, according to experts from the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations.

In Sri Lanka, an Indian Ocean island of 21 million where modesty is a virtue and women still wade into the sea in billowing saris, the focus on women at checkpoints can be painful - some turn red and even cry as they are being frisked.

Overall, Sri Lanka's stepped-up security - the routine traffic stops, countless checkpoints, car searches, bag checks and frisking - is testing the boundaries of what people here are willing to endure for the sake of their safety.

The experience could serve as a barometer for other countries forced to balance civil freedoms and privacy rights against the need to protect residents from terrorism.

Across much of South Asia, suicide attacks and bomb blasts are increasing.

In India, which suffered terrorist attacks in eight cities last year, frisking has become a part of daily life at malls, movies theaters, five-star hotels and even hospital emergency rooms.

Women's groups are pushing not only for more female guards, but also for some basic protections, such as separate curtained-off areas, more metal-detecting wands and fewer hands-on searches, which some rights groups say are an affront to women in a region where nakedness is still highly taboo.

"You really feel humiliated. Even when a female is putting her hands all over your body, men are often watching," said Roshan Farid, 39, a researcher for a women's rights group in Sri Lanka.

She passes through about 14

checkpoints during her trips from the capital of Colombo to the northern region of Mannar.

"On my way home, there are about nine checkpoints where no female officers are working."

In Sri Lanka, the level of security is ratcheted up after every attack.

The country is hyper-militarized, and the movement of its residents is tightly regulated, especially now that the Sri Lankan army has cornered the LTTE in a tiny patch of jungle.

"The frisking in Sri Lanka now is very intimate, and it feels shocking and rude," said Ila Kumar, an Indian woman who frequently makes business trips to Colombo. "But it's a question we are asking in India and maybe all over the world, also: Is it worth it if it stops even one female with a bomb in her bra?"

Sweeping emergency regulations introduced in August 2006 in Sri Lanka have given the security forces expansive powers of search, arrest, detention and seizure of property.

They are also permitted to hold individuals in unacknowledged detention for up to 12 months, according to Human Rights Watch.

Sri Lanka's defense minister, Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the brother of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, defended the searches, comparing the country to the United States after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, when some Americans bristled at having to remove their shoes and belts at airports.

"People complain about checkpoints and roadblocks," the defense minister, who once lived in California, said in an interview.

"But what we are doing is saving innocent lives. This is what terrorism has done to us. We don't want to do it."

Few people question the need for checkpoints in a conflict that has claimed 70,000 lives and is being waged by a group that the United States has labeled a terrorist organization.

Tamil Tigers say they want a separate homeland after decades of discrimination at the hands of Sri Lanka's Sinhalese Buddhist majority.

With the conventional ground war in Sri Lanka apparently nearing an end, experts expect suicide attacks to increase, especially in urban areas. That could put the country's minority Tamil civilian population at risk of increased ethnic profiling, referred to here as Traveling While Tamil.

Some groups have suggested allowing a third party to monitor checkpoints, and several women's groups have demanded that female guards be present, especially at rural outposts, which often have only male guards.

"No one is disputing the need



**Male soldiers at checkpoints will often search female civilians - especially Tamil women - including body searches, resulting in additional humiliation for the mainly conservative Tamil women**

for checkpoints," said Meenakshi Ganguly, a researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"But there needs to be more training in Sri Lanka to screen civilians in a respectful way. Right now, it's the behavior of a victor's army. Tamils feel like second-class citizens."

The heart of the war has centered on the discrimination that Tamils, who are largely Hindu and make up about 12 percent of the population, have felt for decades in Sri Lanka, said Beate Arnestad, a Norwegian filmmaker who made a 2007 documentary, "My Daughter the Terrorist," about two female Tamil Tiger suicide bombers.

"Who won't be brainwashed if the only experience you have in life is such a cruel war," Arnestad said.

"The female suicide bombers think, 'I would rather die with a weapon in my hand, defending the cause, than become a victim of the war.' They think the Tigers saved them, the Tigers are the way to have freedom," Arnestad added.

Many of the women joined the Black Tiger squad because they felt respected and secure within that force, after reports of Sri Lankan army soldiers sexually assaulting Tamil women, Arnestad said. For many women, the fear of checkpoints has been heightened by stories of rape and harassment at the hands of those supposedly trying to restore order.

Padmini Ganesan, 65, a Tamil schoolteacher, said many Tamil women remember the 1996 case of Krishanthi Kumaraswamy, an 18-year-old student who had just

completed her school exams when she tried to cross a checkpoint in the northern city of Jaffna.

She was gang-raped and strangled by Sri Lankan soldiers and a police officer, according to published reports at the time. To cover up their crime, the perpetrators also killed the student's mother, her brother and a neighbor who helped look for her.

The Sri Lankan government, which was at first slow to investigate the case but eventually yielded to international pressure, convicted the soldiers and the police officer, sentencing them to death.

"Every Tamil remembers the Krishanthi case," Ganesan said. "For us, the checkpoints are sort of a slow-motion thing, the trauma and the fear that we go through."

## STF kills mother of raped girl in Batticaloa

TamilNet

SRI LANKAN Special Task Force (STF) commandos who had sexually assaulted a 14-year-old Tamil girl Sunday, March 1, in Vellaaveli police division, again went to the girl's house Monday between 8:00 p.m and 9:00 p.m where they assaulted her father first and then severely tortured her mother before killing and dumping her body in the well as punishment for complaining against the STF with Batticaloa police for raping her daughter.

The father was held bound while the commandos beat the mother to death, the neighbors said.

Vellaaveli police recovered the body of the mother with the help of neighbours and handed it over to Kaluvaangnchchikudi hospital.

The mother of the raped girl had earlier complained of the incident to Eastern Province Chief Minister, Sivanesanathurai Chandrakanthan alias Pillayan.

The Chief Minister had reportedly said that he had no authority on security affairs directing her to take the matter to Vinayagamorthy Muralitahran alias Karuna, member of parliament.

The STF commandos in Vellaaveli police division in Batticaloa sexually abused a 14-year-old Tamil girl in front of her mother during a cordon and search conducted Sunday early morning in Vellaaveli.

The medical officer who examined the girl admitted to Batticaloa Teaching Hospital confirmed that she had been sexually abused.

The STF commandos, having ordered all the men in the area to go to a temple, interrogated the women who were left alone in the houses collecting particulars about members of the family besides sexually abusing them.



## NEWS

# LTTE planes target SLAF in Colombo

TWO Tamileelam Air Force (TAF) aircraft on Black Air Tiger mission carried out successful air raids diving into Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) Headquarters in Colombo and into the SLAF base at Katunayake, according to the LTTE.

One air craft targeted the Slave Island area where the SLAF Headquarters is located and the other the SLAF base at Katunayake between 9:20 and 9:45 p.m. Friday, February 20.

As the LTTE aircraft approached around 9:30 pm, Colombo plunged into darkness and anti-aircraft fire lit up the night sky. Thousands of tracer bullets were fired from all the corners of the city, including the Katunayake International Airport.

Eyewitnesses near Slave Island reported a loud explosion. A canteen worker, Ranjith Dissanayake, 45, said he saw the aircraft hit the tax office. "There was a huge explosion and I was thrown on the ground," he said.

47 persons, including Sri

Lanka Air Force (SLAF) airmen, were rushed to hospital from Slave Island. Several of the wounded have sustained serious injuries, the sources said. Two of them succumbed to their injuries.

At least 6 persons were wounded inside Katunayake airbase.

The Tigers released photograph of the two Black Air Tigers, Col. Roopan and Lt. Col. Siriththiran with LTTE leader Velupillai Pirapaharan before embarking on their mission.

Both the TAF pilots have earlier been decorated with Blue Tiger award for having carried out successful air raids on enemy targets, according to a news release issued by the LTTE.

The air raid is seen as major embarrassment to Sri Lankan Government which recently claimed it had destroyed the last air strip used by the LTTE.

The attack also put stop to Sri Lanka's false propaganda that the war is coming to an end and clearly shows that the LTTE retains its ability to stage strategic strikes.



LTTE leader pictured with the two Black Air Tigers, who urged greater participation in the struggle

## Black Air Tiger urges Vanni youth to join for final battle

COLONEL Roopan, one of the two Black Air Tigers who flew LTTE aircrafts hitting Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) Headquarters and the SLAF base at Katunayake Friday, in a letter left behind, urged the Tamils in Vanni to join the Liberation Tigers and strengthen the LTTE's military forces in the fight against the Sri Lanka Military forces.

*Translation of excerpts of Roopan's statement in Tamil:*

"You are aware that our expatriate Eelam Tamils are very active on conductive non-violent protests including extreme self-sacrifice of self-immolation world-wide to show solidarity with us.

"While the enemy is single-mindedly on a mission to destroy us, I urge you to strengthen our Leader's hands, and join in this inevitable last battle against our enemy.

"The intensity of destruction unleashed against our people exceeds that of the similar acts by Adolph Hitler engineered to exterminate Jews.

"I am grateful for your continued fight against our enemy, especially amidst the recent atrocities in the hospitals and safe areas by

the genocidal State armed forces."

"Sri Lanka Army (SLA) is not discriminating different age-groups while it slaughters our people.

"I joined the movement during my college days to combat the harassment meted out to my family and relatives through forced displacement. We need more and

more youths and able people to join our forces to increase our military strength.

"We have enough armaments. We urgently need man-power.

"Only safeguarding our nation and land, you will be able to perform your sacred duty of providing safety and security to your parents and relatives.

## SLAF jet downed over Vanni

A SRI LANKA Air Force (SLAF) bomber was shot down in Mullaitheevu on Friday February 27 at 11:25 am, according to civilians sources in Iranaippalai.

Several civilians saw the jet explode in mid-air as it was beginning an attack run towards an unidentified locality. A huge plume of smoke followed after the flaming debris fell to earth, they said.

The LTTE did not comment on the attack. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) spokesman Wing commander Janaka Nanayakara has denied the report that one of their aircraft was shot down in Vanni.

The civilians observers could not say in whose controlled area the wreckage had fallen. The Sri Lankan army (SLA) is locked in fierce clashes with the LTTE in areas west of Puthukkudiyiruppu.

The civilians could not identify the aircraft type - SLAF operates Israeli built Kfir and Mig-27s - and could not say what had brought the plane down. Defence writers observing Sri Lanka have long said the Tigers do not have surface-to-air missiles (SAMs).

The SLAF, which continuously attacked Mullaitheevu, stopped flying over Vanni for 3 days after the LTTE air raid against SLAF installations in Colombo.

## Heavy fighting, heavy Army casualties

TAMIL Tiger fighting formations killed at least 900 Sri Lankan Army (SLA) soldiers and wounded another 2000 in 3 days of intense fighting around Puthukkudiyiruppu reported Tamil media quoting LTTE battle command in Vanni.

Sri Lankan soldiers from the 53 and 58 divisions with the support of two task forces launched a concerted attack on PTK on Saturday February 21 with the aim of capturing the town. In the intense fighting that raged for six

days Sri Lankan security forces have taken heavy casualties, according to reports.

On Wednesday February 24, sources close to the LTTE claimed that between February 21 and 24 SLA divisions 53 and 58 took heavy casualties, without stating any numbers. On Friday February 27, sources close to LTTE, quoting LTTE battle command, claimed that between February 25 and 27 over 900 Sri Lankan Army soldiers were killed and another 2000 were wounded.

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## EDITORIAL

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## State Security

**The Tamils' security depends on their own efforts - and nothing else.**

The people of Vanni are being savaged by the Sri Lankan state with the support of the international community. Having hemmed over 250,000 terrified Tamils into an enclave in their home district of Mullaitivu, the Sinhala military is attacking them with artillery, rockets, cluster bombs and incendiaries. Having unilaterally and arbitrarily defined what it mockingly calls a 'safe zone', President Mahinda Rajapakse's government is confidently slaughtering the terrified civilians who fled into it. Over two thousand Tamil people, including seven hundred children, have been killed in the past two months. For months the government has maintained a blockade. Each day dozens of wounded civilians bleed to death for lack of medical supplies. Deaths from starvation have now begun.

The international community is well aware of all this. UN and ICRC staff from inside the Mullaitivu enclave are providing daily briefings. So are their colleagues in Vavuniya and Colombo. The UN's satellites have accurate pictures of the refugee camps, as well as the shelling and bombing and the dying. The British government admitted in Parliament that the Colombo government is prepared to commit acts of genocide. If it so wishes, the international community could stop the carnage; it is a fiction that this impoverished, indebted island state cannot be bent to the will of the world.

Yet, for all that talk in the past few years about 'Responsibility to Protect', 'international humanitarian law', 'human rights' and so on, what we are seeing is simply indifference to the slaughter of the Tamils. A myriad of Tamil protests, petitions and pleas have failed to produce a response. Much was expected when the UN sent one of its top humanitarian officials. He came, he saw, he praised the murderous regime in Colombo and then he went. Human Rights Watch report issued a shocking report on the very day Sir John Holmes - accompanied by a Sri Lankan minister and the military - toured one of the government's concentration camps in Vavuniya. It was simply ignored. The briefing he gave to the UN Security Council was devoid of criticism of the government.

Instead, the international community continues to blame the Liberation Tigers. Apparently, it is the LTTE, not the Sinhala state, that is the cause of the Tamils' suffering. And instead of pressing the Sinhala state to stop its genocidal attacks, the international community is offering to evacuate the people from Mullaitivu to the concentration camps in Vavuniya and Jaffna. In the past two



New Sri Lankan Flag

decades, one in four Tamils have been driven from their homes - either abroad or to squalid refugee camps in the island. The international community is content with this. Yet, the Tamils must be handed over to the Sinhala state.

**What we are seeing is simply indifference to the slaughter of the Tamils.**

**The key lesson for the Tamils is that the future the international community envisages for our people is to be incarcerated in concentration camps and subject to the whim of the Sinhalese.**

**If we wish any other future, then we must take our own steps to shape it.**

When the Serbian military laid siege to Sarajevo for three years, the UN ran food convoys to the Bosniak people. It did not offer to evacuate them from their homes into Serb-run camps. When the Sudanese military and militia began massacring the people of Darfur, there was no question of moving them into government-run concentration camps. Yet, apparently the Tamils must be

handed over to Sinhala state.

As we have argued before, the suffering being heaped on our people by the Sinhala military and the international community is for one purpose: to make us give up our demand for self-determination and submit to Sinhala hegemony. Indeed, that is why for the past three decades, the state has been able to brutalize our people with absolute impunity. At no stage has the international community intervened to protect us. Never has it stood up for us. Instead it has always praised the Sinhala ethocracy as a democracy and lavished aid, weapons and political support.

The vehemence of the international-backed onslaught against Tamil civilians is a direct consequence of the ferocity of LTTE resistance to the Sinhala military. Whilst Colombo holds forth coloured maps and pictures of the debris of war it has captured, it hides the bloody war of attrition underway inside those parts of Vanni over which the Lion flag was raised. Contrary to the hopes and expectations of the international community, the LTTE is not going to buckle this time either, despite the redoubled efforts of the Sinhala state.

This is the key lesson for the Tamils: the future the international community envisages for our people - and thinks appropriate for us - is to be incarcerated in concentration camps and subject to the whim of the Sinhalese. If we wish any other future, then we must take our own steps to shape it. And unless the Tamils have the protection of our own state with our own armed forces, we will always be at risk from the Sinhala state.

## OPINION

# The Diaspora as genocide resistors

**J T Janani**

Tamil Guardian

THE Tamil case for genocide has been extensively discussed in a series of articles in this paper among others. We have shown structural similarities between the genocide of the Tamils and other historic genocides including the Nazi and Rwandan examples.

Last issue we looked at the continuing failure of the United States, and its diplomatic allies, the co-chairs of the Sri Lankan Peace Process and leading European governments to comply with their obligations to the Tamil people under the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide. In this second part, we look at what 'Genocide Resistors' - particularly the Tamil Diaspora - can do to achieve compliance.

Under the International Criminal Court (ICC) rules there is no time limit (statute of limitations) for prosecution of the particular crime of genocide, so heinous is it.

In 2008 - unlike in 1958, 1977 and 1983 - Europe and North America have significant populations of motivated and politically organised Tamil citizens.

This Diaspora can and must lobby for implementation of their host countries legal obligation to punish the genocides of 1977 and 1983, and the ongoing genocide today.

Further, this legal understanding must form a base for Diaspora activity.

Any mass protest seeking implementation of the UN Convention against genocide is not just entirely lawful: it is a civic duty, for it is a civic duty of citizens to highlight illegalities committed by their government.

The Tamil Diaspora globally must ask the state and federal governments of their countries to recognise the genocide of Eelam Tamils and to abide by their UN treaty obligations to prevent and punish this genocide.

If the Sinhala State is a genocide perpetrator, there are many genocide resistors. These are invariably Diaspora and local Tamil organisations that operate in an atmosphere of harassment, prejudice and even race hate.

But to prevent or intimidate the genocide resistors - Tamil community organisations - from protesting against Tamil genocide is also collusion in the genocide.

So for example given that July's Ponghu Tamil event had as one objective among others the prevention of genocide of the Tamil people, the attempts by the Sri Lankan embassy and officials of "friendly" governments to obstruct these could constitute collusion.

Blatant forms of collusion in genocide include sales of weaponry, surveillance or other military equipment to a government that is perpetrating genocide, as



**The Diaspora in US and Europe, active and motivated, can and must lobby for the implementation of legal obligations in host countries**

well as provision of military consultancy.

Collusion includes military agreements that benefit from the proceeds of genocide: for example strategic naval use of the Trincomalee harbour, made possible by the forcible displacement of Tamil civilians, destruction of their lives and habitats.

Collusion includes commercial agreements to benefit from the proceeds of genocide - for example land, access to the sea, oil, titanium and other natural resources acquired or made possible by the killing and forcible displacement of Tamil people from their traditional habitats.

Collusion includes the direct or indirect financing of the perpetrators of genocide. Where aid is provided for "legitimate purposes", that aid should be monitored so as to ensure it is not being misused. If there is lack of transparency or accountability - the aid should be withheld rather than risk it being used to perpetrate genocide. To fail to monitor such aid, knowing that conditions for genocide exist, is reckless at best, collusion at worst.

With respect to Eelam, we see many international governments engaging in the forms of collusion outlined above: benefiting commercially or militarily from the proceeds of the genocide, for example, and providing weapons, training and advice.

They do so with impunity, because they believe they can get away with it: they expect the Tamil people to be militarily

crushed and so do not expect to be called to account.

But the Tamil Diaspora must continue to assume good faith on the part of the international community and to persist with its case for justice.

In addition to the Diaspora's duty towards the Tamil people, the Diaspora has a civic duty (to their host countries) to ask their governments to comply with the UN convention.

The first step is for the Tamil Diaspora to inform all key decision makers - including and especially the relevant ambassadors, members of parliament, Foreign office and State department officials - that we hold that genocide is taking place.

We must then ask them to agree with us. If they do not, we can ask for reasons and engage in dialogue.

This notification of genocide must be made individually as well as to the relevant department as a group - to each person as well as their department or office - so that people can be held individually accountable.

In summary the Diaspora must first build awareness of genocide - so that international collaborators cannot later say: "I did not know."

As a first step in notification, one can cite recognition of genocide by individual politicians, specific political parties, the international media and civil society.

Such popular recognition precedes official government recognition.

For example, the Times of London recognised genocide in 1983 saying "'Genocide is a word that must be used with care; but how else is one to describe the impulse which guided the Sinhalese lynch-mobs this week.'"

"The Hindu" and numerous Tamil publications in India have taken a similar position in 2009. The Toronto Star ran a headline in January "Tamils protest Genocide".

Elected Tamil politicians, both in Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu in India have recognised genocide.

For example, the Hindu recently ran a headline, quoting DMK leader Kanimozhi: "Tamils gradually being wiped out in Sri Lanka".

There is widespread recognition among the political parties of Tamil Nadu of the ongoing genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

MDMK leader Vaiko, VCK President Thirumavalan, PMK leader Ramdoss, the Communist Party of India, and many other Tamil Nadu politicians have recognised the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Vaiko has written to the Indian Premier, Manmohan Singh warning him of the genocide of Tamils. He cannot later say: "I did not know".

In Sri Lanka itself, the Tamil National Alliance, have repeatedly recognised genocide and called upon international governments to act.

Many Tamil media figures such as film director Seeman and Oscar and Grammy nominated

musician M.I.A. (Maya Arulpragasam) have come out to recognise genocide. Poets, artists and actors have recognised genocide.

For the record, the Diaspora must then seek formal recognition of the continuing crime of genocide (as opposed to specific individual acts).

Governments that refuse to acknowledge genocide (because this will require them to comply with the UN convention) may nevertheless be persuaded to recognise "Acts of genocide" as first step.

The Diaspora must invoke the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide and seek action against current genocide. Economic sanctions against the perpetrating government, military and travel restrictions are such actions.

The Diaspora must ask that its own efforts to prevent genocide must be fully assisted by their own governments.

The Tamil Diaspora has demonstrated against tremendous odds its determination to resist genocide and its overwhelming support for a Free Eelam.

We toil in the face of both thinly veiled intimidation and malignant prejudice under euphemisms such as the "war on terror".

But it is the International community's wilful refusal to prevent genocide, their obstruction of Tamil efforts to resist genocide, their willingness to benefit from the proceeds and even active collusion in it, that remains the real crime.



## TAMIL DIASPORA UNITES IN DEFIANCE



WASHINGTON, USA



WASHINGTON, USA



PARIS, FRANCE



GENEVA, SWISS



OSLO, NORWAY



BERLIN, GERMANY



# Diaspora Tamils continue protests

TAMILS across the world held demonstrations and rallies highlighting the ongoing genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka and urging the international community to intervene to stop the suffering of their kin and kith back home.

### Washington

Nearly seven thousand U.S. and Canadian Tamils filled the Ellipse at the southern perimeter to the White House on Saturday February 21, as a show of solidarity with the more than 250,000 Tamil civilians undergoing daily aerial bombardment and artillery attacks in Vanni.

The rally, organized jointly by the US-based activist group, Tamils Against Genocide (TAG) and several local organizations, drew a record crowd, dwarfing the "hurriedly arranged" counter-rally organized by supporters of

Colombo, an AFP report said.

A memorandum submitted to the State Department South Asia official demanded:

- Publicly condemn the atrocities committed by the Sri Lankan government.
- Ask the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE to allow unfettered access for international humanitarian aid agencies and journalists into the conflict zone.
- Exert political, economic or other pressure on Sri Lanka for an immediate ceasefire.
- Use your goodwill with Sri Lanka's neighbors to exert pressure on Sri Lanka, and, together with the co-chairs bring about an immediate ceasefire.
- Help find a political solution where the Tamil people living in Sri Lanka and exiled in other countries are allowed to determine the terms of coexistence with the Sinhalese state based on

the universally accepted principle of self-determination.

### Geneva

More than 15,000 Diaspora Eelam Tamils from all over Europe gathered in front of the UN office in Geneva in Switzerland Friday, February 20 voicing their demands calling the Sri Lanka government of stop the war on Tamils at once.

The representatives of the Eelam Tamils youth organizations handed a memorandum to the officials of the UN, during the demonstration.

The demonstrators began their march from the park next to Geneva Railway Station bearing placards showing slogans such as, 'We want Tamil Eelam', 'Our Leader is Pirapaharan' and 'Sri Lanka Government stop the war!' The demonstrators paid their

homage to Murukathasan who had immolated himself in front of the UN office in an attempt to draw the attention of the world to the unending sufferings of the Vanni Tamils in the artillery barrage and bombings by the armed forces of Sri Lanka.

### Oslo

Hundreds of Norwegian Tamils including many youngsters gathered in front of Norwegian parliament Monday, February 23 where they urged Norway government to help bring about a ceasefire immediately to stop the genocide of Tamils in Vanni.

Tamil Youth Organization (TYO), which organized the demonstration in which members of Norway political parties addressed the gathering, submitted a memorandum to Norwegian

parliament.

"Sri Lanka government has unleashed a merciless genocidal war on the Tamils creating a humanitarian disaster in Vanni and we are demonstrating here today to stress the need to stop the war on the Tamils immediately," TYO representatives said.

### Paris

Thousands of Tamils marched in Paris on Saturday, February 28 to denounce the Sri Lankan government's genocide of the Tamils. The Tamil Youth Organisation (TYO), who organised the march said over 7000 people came together to protest against Sri Lanka's genocide of Tamils..

The marchers shouted slogans such "EU impose a truce", and "The Sri Lankan president is a murderer", and "Stop the Tamil genocide".



**வோல்தம்ஸ்ரோ ஸ்ரீ கற்பக விநாயகர் ஆலயம்**  
**WALTHAMSTOW SRI KATPAHA VINAYAGAR TEMPLE**

**மாசிமாத விசேட ஆராதனைகள்**

15-02-2009 தூயிறு காலை 10 மணி காயத்ரி அம்மன் அபிஷேக ஆராதனை  
20-02-2009 வெள்ளி காலை 08 மணி சர்வ ஓகாதர்  
22-02-2009 தூயிறு மாலை 05 மணி பிறதோஷ வறுபாடு - தொடர்ந்து நான்கு சாமங்கன் மஹாசீவராத்ரி வறுபாடு  
28-02-2009 சனி சதுர்த்தி விழா காலை 10 மணி அபிஷேகம் சகஸ்ரநாம அர்ச்சனை மாலை 5.30 அபிஷேகம்  
தொடர்ந்து நூலாயப் பூசை. கிரவு 8 மணி வசந்தமண்டபப் பூசை கணபதி சரணம் போற்றி வறுபாடு  
08-03-2009 தூயிறு காலை 10 மணி காயத்ரி அம்மன் வறுபாடு மாலை 5.30 பிறதோஷ வறுபாடு பிறதோஷநாயகர் வீதி உலா  
09-03-2009 தங்கள் மாசிமகம் காலை 10 மணி நேடேசர் அபிஷேகம் குத்ர பாராயணம், சீவன் அம்மன் அபிஷேகம் தருவிதபுலா  
10-03-2009 செவ்வாய் பூரண விழா காலை 10 மணி அம்மன் பைரவர் அபிஷேகம் மீனாட்சி அம்மன் சகஸ்ரநாம அர்ச்சனை  
மாலை 8 மணி ஸ்ரீ சக்கர நவாபரண பூசை

ஆலயம் தொழுவது சாலவும் நன்று

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## OPINION

# A tradition of self-sacrifice as political protest

Vidya Kumaraswamy  
Tamil Guardian

THE gathering momentum of global Tamil protest against Sri Lanka's genocidal war has included acts of self immolation by Tamil activists in India and Europe. This form of protest appears at first sight to be exceptional and unusual; in need of explanation when sitting alongside the other more accepted forms of public dissent.

Tamils across the globe have engaged in acts of fasting, marches, sit-ins and formed human chains to voice their opposition to Sri Lanka's genocidal war and demonstrate their solidarity with the suffering of Eelam Tamils. Acts of self immolation, in the midst of these other protests from the standard repertoire of modern politics, may at first sight appear fanatical and imbued with a certain irrational excess.

However, these acts are not as exceptional and unusual as the might at first appear and have a resonance with iconic acts of protest from the twentieth century as well as Tamil cultural understandings.

Critical to understanding the meaning of self immolation as political protest and the resonance it appears to have amongst the wider Tamil anti genocide movement are the notions of voluntary suffering and a willingness to sacrifice for a higher ideal or for the greater good of the whole.

The political activism of Monhandas K. Gandhi, popularly known across south Asia as Mahatma Gandhi, exemplifies the relationship between political protest against oppression and injustice and THE voluntary acceptance of suffering as a form of self sacrifice for a wider good.

Gandhi's practise of non violence can be seen as incorporating two important conceptual elements. Firstly the idea of ahimsa - of doing no harm - which stems from an appreciation of the equal moral value of the other. The second important element is the voluntary acceptance of suffering by the protestor as a means of appealing to the conscience of the oppressor without harming him / her.

When Congress activists willingly and without resistance accepted the blows of the colonial

police, they were trying to demonstrate to colonial officials, the Indian public and the British public the injustices of British colonial rule in India.

This tactic was used with great effect by Gandhi in 1930 during the famous salt march when he walked along with volunteers to the sea at Dandi and publicly performed the then illegal act of making salt. Before setting off on the march, Gandhi informed the Viceroy, Irwin of his intentions and noted that he would be courting arrest in breaking British laws.

Through accepting the punishment of breaking an unjust law, Gandhi and the many thousands of volunteers who followed his example hoped to demonstrate the oppression and violence contained in the British monopoly on the production and distribution of salt.

## Critical to understanding of self immolation as political protest is the notion of voluntary suffering

In this and other similar acts of fasting or the self conscious courting of police repression and violence, Gandhi and anti colonial activists willingly accepted suffering not for personal gain but in order to promote a wider good, that is the possibility of Indian self rule.

The acts of political protest, often communicated through what have become iconic images of Gandhi fasting and unarmed protestors beaten down by police charges had a strong resonance with the mainly rural and illiterate population of India. The voluntary acceptance of suffering and self sacrifice has long been part of a tradition of exemplary protest that is also included in day to day practices.

In the Tamil speaking areas the earliest forms of literature from Sangham corpus describes many such acts of exemplary protest. The later Saivite literature also recounts tales of devotees



Vietnamese monk Thich Quang Duc, who burnt himself to protest America's actions during the Vietnam War did so out of a notion of sacrificing oneself in order to achieve a greater good

who willingly undertake acts of suffering to prove their faith.

The intertwining of non violence and exemplary suffering is also apparent in many day to day forms of social interaction in south Asian cultures. These acts are particularly associated with women who often deploy non violent forms of protest within a domestic context as a means of appealing to the conscience of those who have transgressed norms.

A classic incident in the lives of many south Asian families is that of a woman who protests the wrongful behaviour of a partner or child by refusing to eat. The logic of these incidents, which are now regularly portrayed in television dramas and the cinema, involves the woman willingly accepting the suffering of hunger as a means of appealing to the conscience of those who have transgressed familial norms and expectations.

Whilst the south Asian cultural landscape made it especially receptive to the Gandhian message, the twentieth century is littered with iconic acts of political protest through exemplary suffering from many different parts of the world.

During the Vietnam War there were several acts of self immolation by Buddhist monks and nuns protesting the United States' massively destructive military campaign in Vietnam.

These acts of public and violent self sacrifice appealed to the moral conscience of the United States population and the wider world by demonstrating in an urgent way the suffering caused by the United States' actions in Vietnam.

Similarly in 1913, the Oxford educated Suffragette Emily Wilding Davidson threw herself under the king's horse at the Epsom Derby to protest the British establishment's refusal to grant women the right to vote. As she ran onto the racecourse facing

certain injury and probable death she was heard to shout 'votes for women' - a demand that was known to be resolutely opposed by the king.

Acts of exemplary suffering have an important place in the Tamil struggle as means of resisting the Sri Lankan state's genocidal programme. During the ill-fated Indian occupation of the Tamil speaking areas Thileepan and Annai Poopathi undertook fasts unto death as a means of provoking the conscience of the Indian establishment and drawing attention to the suffering of the Tamil speaking people.

## The political activism of Mahatma Gandhi exemplifies the relationship between political protest against oppression and injustice and the acceptance of suffering as a form of self sacrifice for a wider good

The most recent acts of self immolation have taken place in a period of exceptional suffering for the Eelam Tamils. Although Sri Lanka's genocidal programme has deep mythical roots and a contemporary history that begins with political independence in 1949, it is only in the last few months that the state has pursued the annihilation of the Tamils with such public abandon.

In the aftermath of the anti Tamil pogroms that took place between 1977 and 1983, Eelam Tamils abandoned their attempts to engage the Sri Lankan state and directed their protests to the international community, the west and India in particular. The Tamils no longer regard the Sri Lankan state

as a moral interlocutor with whom dialogue is possible and their efforts are now solely directed at the conscience of outside powers.

The global Tamil anti genocide movement has placed the moral imperative of responding to the humanitarian catastrophe in the Vanni firmly on the shoulders of the international community. The intensity and momentum of the protests reflect the crisis that is now facing the Eelam Tamils and these acts of self immolation are intended capture the moral urgency of the situation in the Vanni.

The leadership of the Tamil resistance has, along with other Tamils, a nuanced response to acts of exemplary suffering as a means of resisting the Sri Lankan state's genocidal programme. The LTTE, whilst understanding and appreciating these acts for their moral intent, has argued that the Tamil struggle would benefit more from the continued participation of those who feel so acutely the moral imperative to respond to the Tamils' suffering.

The global Tamil response to the most recent acts of self immolation have taken a similar tone. Whilst these acts are understood as forms of exemplary suffering and self sacrifice undertaken in response to the humanitarian crisis in the Vanni, Tamils echo the LTTE's argument that the movement as a whole would benefit more from the continued participation of all anti genocide activists.

The Sri Lankan state's nakedly genocidal campaign in the Vanni has created a unified sense of urgency amongst Tamils across the world. Whilst Tamils cannot distance themselves from the exemplary purposes and sacrificial intent of the recent acts of self immolation, the movement cannot afford to loose the committed and continued participation of any activist who feels the imperative of making the world listen.



## NEWS

# Congress hit by southern troubles

Alistair Scrutton  
Reuters

ONE of the Indian government's key southern allies is struggling, only weeks before a general election, posing a potential problem for the Congress party as it seeks to retain power and build a stable post-poll coalition.

With 39 parliamentary seats, Tamil Nadu is a big prize in the general election, and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) swept the state in 2004, becoming a key partner in the national coalition government led by Congress.

This time around, things are unlikely to go so well for the DMK as the party is hit by Tamil protests over the war in Sri Lanka and an economic slowdown hitting the state's export sector.

In a sign of the DMK's troubles, its principal rival in the state is trying to supplant it as the main ally of Congress.

This week, Jayalalithaa, a former film actress and now head of the state opposition party, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), called on Congress to dump the DMK.

Her approach highlights growing confidence that her party, nearly wiped out in 2004, will fare much better than the DMK in

this year's election.

"Her statement is a sign that things won't go as well for Congress this time," said political analyst Mahesh Rangarajan.

Jayalalithaa has shied away from renewing a previous alliance with the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has not fully recovered from its 2004 national election defeat.

That might give Congress a confidence boost. But a more even split in the Tamil Nadu vote this time around - after the 2004 landslide in the state - means Congress would have fewer parliamentary seats to count on from Tamil Nadu when it comes to cobbling together a coalition.

Tamil Nadu has been racked by protests by Tamils who believe the government should do more to help their counterparts caught up in the crossfire between the military and Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. DMK lawmakers recently walked out of the national parliament to protest against the government's lack of action.

An economic slowdown that has hit the state's export sector may also have dented support for the incumbent DMK.

## BJP: Congress 'insensitive' to Lankan Tamils

THE Bharathya Janatha Party (BJP) accused the Congress led Indian ruling alliance of being insensitive to the sufferings of Sri Lankan Tamils and added the Indian government had not taken even 'a single meaningful step' to persuade the island government to ensure the safety of the Tamil civilians.

Senior BJP leader Venkiah Naidu also played Tamil Nadu's ruling party for not actively taking up the issue with New Delhi despite being a powerful constituent of the Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and said the BJP would highlight the "failure" of the UPA on this issue during its election campaign.

"The LTTE is not the issue now. The safety, security and welfare of Tamils is important and the Sri Lankan government should pay attention to this," Naidu

told reporters.

India should prevail upon Colombo to halt the hostilities and that if the country failed to act now, it would be construed as remaining a "mute spectator," he added.

He also criticised the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) headed by Tamil Nadu chief minister Muthuvel Karunanithi "for not actively taking up" the issue despite being part of the ruling UPA.

"Despite DMK's powerful presence in UPA, there are questions being raised as to why this issue has received such a lukewarm response," he said.

The BJP, L.K Advani also attacked Congress government's attitude to the Sri Lankan conflict and said the UPA Government's neighbourhood policy has been a disaster.



Tamil Nadu continues to protest at the Sri Lankan government's genocidal actions against the Tamils, including burning the Sri Lankan flag and causing shut-downs across the state

## Tamil Nadu parties call for UN, US intervention

THE Sri Lankan Tamils Protection Movement, an umbrella organisation of outfits like PMK, MDMK, VCK, CPI and the Tamil Nationalist Movement, has launched campaign to collect 20 million signatures for a petition calling to save Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Signatures collected from across the State will be submitted to the United Nations Secretary General, Presidents of the United States and Russia.

Political analysts said the Sri Lankan Tamils Protection Movement has decided to appeal to the UN and the US, as the Congress led Indian government did not have any leverage over Sri Lanka and was indifferent to the Tamils plight.

Pattali Makkal Katchi founder S. Ramadoss, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam general secretary Vaiko, State secretary of the Communist Party of India D. Pandian and senior CPI leader R. Nallakannu, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi

president Thol. Tirumavalavan, who are members of the movement, signed the memorandum on behalf of their parties.

Vaiko speaking to reporters said the campaign called for immediate UN intervention to save the Sri Lankan Tamils, "who are facing annihilation at the hands of the Sri Lankan Army."

Ramadoss said the Sri Lankan Tamils Protection Movement was not setup to destabilise State government and the movement's only aim was to protect the Tamils across the Palk straits. He further added that if there was any threat to the government of Karunanithi, the PMK would come to its rescue.

Pandian said the Sri Lankan Tamils Protection Movement would decide the next phase of the agitation in Madurai on March 3 following a public meeting.

Pandian also criticised the state authorities' actions aimed at denying permission for a State-

wide demonstration and called it an attempt by the government to stifle democratic rights of political parties.

The Sri Lankan Tamils' Protection Movement, in a memorandum submitted to the US Consulate general in Chennai, asked the US to take all diplomatic measures to ensure a ceasefire in Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan Tamils' Protection Movement is organising a series of rallies including one at Madurai on February 24, at Tiruchirapalli on February 28 and on March two at Tuticorin, demanding ceasefire.

Meanwhile, Vaiko, the General Secretary of MDMK courted arrest with 300 other activists for waving black flags in protest against Mr. Mukherjee, who was on a visit to Tutucorin.

Following the arrest of Vaiko, Karunanidhi warned that his government will not hesitate to invoke the National Security Act against the MDMK leader.

## Man self-immolates in UK, as protest toll in Tamil Nadu hits 8

A TAMIL man set himself on fire outside Britain's Parliament was taken to a hospital with superficial burns, according to British authorities said.

British Police said the man was on fire "for a short time" in Parliament Square in the heart of London on Friday February 27, without saying specifically that the man attempted self-immolation.

A police spokesman said the man's burns were superficial and "certainly not critical."

There was no immediate word on who the man was or why he would set himself on fire. But it follows an attempt at self-immolation by another outside the residence of the British prime Minister on February 14. The man was arrested before he could set himself ablaze.

Meanwhile, the number of deaths in Tamil Nadu from self immolation over the Eelam Tamils issue hit 8 with the death of DMDK supporter Seenivasan from Vellor.

Seenivasan who set himself on fire, on February 26, protesting Indian government's support for the Sri Lankan state was admitted to hospital and succumbed to his injuries on March 2.



## FEATURES

# Ceasefire and solution first, laying down arms irrelevant says LTTE

URGING International Community to effect a ceasefire and initiate a political solution as a priority than insisting Liberation Tigers to lay down arms, the Political Head of the LTTE, B. Nadesan, made an appeal Sunday, February 22, to the heads of the Co-chairs countries saying that "when a permanent political solution is reached for the Tamil people, with the support and the guarantee of the international community, the situation will arise where there will be no need for the arms of the LTTE."

Earlier, the Tokyo Co-chairs urged the LTTE to discuss with the Government of Sri Lanka the modalities for ending hostilities, including the laying down of arms.

"The world should take note that calls for the LTTE to lay down its arms and surrender is not helpful for resolving the conflict," wrote Mr. Nadesan.

"The LTTE has [earlier] taken part in numerous peace efforts. No one insisted then that the LTTE should lay down its arms," Nadesan said in his letter.

Expecting the LTTE to lay down arms without political solution is degrading human struggle for freedom and amounts to congratulating genocide, he said.

The letter was addressed to Barack Obama, the president of the United States, José Manuel Barroso, the president of the European Commission, Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General, the Security Council of the UN, Jens Stoltenberg, the prime minister of Norway and Taro Aso, the prime minister of Japan.

*Text of the letter follows:*

## Expressing the Tamil position to the international community

As the political representatives of the Tamil people, who are daily facing danger of genocide, we wish to put some information before the international community.

Before expressing our views on the partiality in the messages that the international community wishes to convey to the two sides (Sri Lanka Government-Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), we wish to state some basic historical facts about our liberation struggle.

Tamil people are a nation in the island of Sri Lanka. The contiguous north-east part of the island is the traditional homeland of the Tamil people. For more than fifty years, the Sri Lankan Governments have attempted to suppress and oppress this ethnic community that has the right to nationhood and self determination. In this attempt, it has confiscated their land and committed genocidal attacks on this community.

The atrocities committed by the Sri Lankan Government on

the Tamil people, whom it claims to be its own people, are blatant State Terrorism.

The Tamil community has been waging a struggle against this State Terrorism for more than fifty years. At the start, for almost 25 years, this struggle with the aim to achieving self-determination was non-violent.

This non-violent struggle, accepted world wide as a lawful means of waging struggles, was suppressed with a lot of blood letting by the Sri Lankan Governments using its armed forces that was made up only of young men of Sinhala ethnicity.

At the same time, under the pretext of ethnic-riots, many genocidal acts were committed against the Tamil people with the support of the Sri Lankan Governments. With State assistance Sinhala people were settled on land belonging to the Tamils. Tamils were also discriminated in the areas of education, job opportunities and economic development.

The Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict was further sharpened by these oppressive actions. As the non-violent struggles of the Tamils became ineffective in the context of the violence of the Sri Lankan State, this external condition necessitated the Tamil struggle to become armed. This gave birth to the LTTE and which gave the leadership for this armed struggle.

It is the Tamil people and not the LTTE that chose the political aim of the Tamil people. In the parliamentary voting of 1977, the Tamil people through their voting announced to the world their political aim. Tamil people voted for the common decision of the Tamil political parties to establish an independent state in the joint north-east part of the island, the traditional homeland of the Tamils.

The LTTE took up the national duty of fulfilling the democratic verdict of the Tamil people.

The liberation struggle of the Tamil people gained fame on the world stage for its military feats over the last thirty years. It achieved this through the most supreme dedication that could be expected of liberation fighters.

Whenever the LTTE had the upper hand militarily, the Sri Lankan ruling party pretending to find a political solution came for peace talks. But, once finding the time space to strengthen its armed forces, the Sri Lankan ruling party disrupted the peace talks and again created the conditions for war.

Sri Lankan Governments have staged this drama of deceiving the world and the Tamil people starting from the very first talks, after the launch of the armed struggle, in Thimbu in 1985 till the 2002 ceasefire agreement and the following five years of peace talks under Norway's facilitation.

With Norway's facilitation and the support of the Co-Chair countries, three important agreements were signed between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. Sri Lankan Governments rejected all three agreements, the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement, the Post Tsunami Operations Management Structure, and Secretariat for Immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation for North East for the development of North East, dealt the final blow for peace.

The world knows how the Sri Lankan Government ignored the repeated calls of the international community to not seek a solution through war but to seek a political solution through talks.

No one except the LTTE had identified correctly the stance of the Sri Lankan State on the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict. The LTTE has been saying for a long time that the Sri Lankan Governments have continued to seek a military solution to the conflict and they will never find a political solution to the conflict.

The Sri Lankan Government put forward its stance against a political solution and for a military solution in a style appealing to the international community as war on terrorism.

Just like how it formulated the liberation struggle of the Tamils as terrorism, it also used the pretext of "security reasons" to expel some humanitarian agencies and journalists. If any western diplomat or journalist dares to say that the Sinhala armed forces are violating the rights of the Tamil civilians, they are immediately categorized as "White Tigers" or terrorists.

The people of the world are watching the tolerance exhibited towards the atrocities of the Sri Lankan State just because of its status as a "State" and the rejection of the just struggle of the LTTE just because it does not have the status of a 'State'.

From Hitler's government to Rwandan government to Sudan government, it is the governments that have been committing genocide. Sri Lankan Government is also committing numerous genocides against the Tamils. This genocide history that started in 1956 has expanded today. More than 200,000 people have already been killed in this genocidal history since 1956.

The international community, though it is hesitant to support the political aspirations of the Tamil people for an independent state, it must re-examine our point that an independent state is the only permanent solution to the Tamil-Sinhala conflict. Tamil people are frustrated and dejected after long years of massacres by the Sinhala armed forces and Sinhala State.

The confidence of the Tamil people for living together has been destroyed by their huge loss-



LTTE political head B Nadesan called for a ceasefire

es, their untold miseries, and their haunting memories. This will never permit a peaceful life of equality between the Tamils and Sinhalese within Sri Lanka.

This is the ethno-political reality of this island. Brutal acts are being committed in Vanni at present further solidifying this ethno-political reality.

Weapons like artillery and multi-barrel launcher that are used by combatants against each other in war are used by the Sri Lankan armed forces on the Tamil civilians, and their IDP camps. Women, children and old people are getting killed, maimed and injured in thousands by these attacks. For past few weeks from 50 to 100 Tamil civilians are daily getting killed by such attacks by the Sri Lankan armed forces. Already more than 2000 civilians have been killed and more than 5000 have been injured. It is painful to see the world maintaining silence on this immense human suffering as if it is amused by what is going on.

The Tamils of Tamil Eelam are facing the worst genocide of the 21st century. In this situation, the LTTE is ready to accept the calls for a ceasefire issued by the international community with the good intention of ending the human suffering. The LTTE desires that this effort for a ceasefire to grow further into peace talks to seek a political solution to the ethnic conflict.

The world should take note that calls for the LTTE to lay down its arms and surrender is not helpful for resolving the conflict. It is the political reality that the arms of the LTTE are the protective shield of the Tamil people

and their tool for political liberation. The LTTE has taken part in numerous peace efforts. No one insisted then that the LTTE should lay down its arms.

The protection of the Tamil people is dependent on the arms of the LTTE. When a permanent political solution is reached for the Tamil people with the support and the guarantee of the international community the situation will arise where there will be no need for the arms of the LTTE.

Expecting the LTTE to lay down the arms, when the Tamil people are facing a horrendous genocide - and in the absence of any efforts to find a political solution is degrading the centuries of human struggle for freedom. At the same time it also appears to be congratulating the Sri Lankan Government on its genocidal war.

Therefore, the LTTE appeals to the international community, to take actions to stop the genocidal attacks on the Tamil people rather than call for the laying down of the arms of the LTTE. International community should apply pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to seek not a military but a political solution to the ethnic conflict. The international community must do everything in its power to bring a ceasefire so that the miseries of the Tamils in Vanni are brought to an end and they are protected and the food and medicine requirements for them are fulfilled.

We also wish to inform the international community that we are ready to discuss, co-operate, and work together in all their efforts to bring an immediate ceasefire and work towards a political settlement.



## NEWS

# Sri Lanka pressured over ceasefire but won't bow

WHILST admitting that there was international pressure on Sri Lanka to go for a ceasefire with the LTTE, the country's Prime Minister declared the government will not bow to international calls for a truce.

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake, further declared there would be no negotiations with the LTTE even if they lay down arms and said 'the government will not stop the war on the Tigers until they are defeated'.

"The international countries say that the Tigers should lay down their weapons and come to talks but the position of our government is that there is no need to talk to them once they give up their arms," Wickremanayake said on Tuesday, February 24.

"We are not ready for a ceasefire and the war against terrorism is at the last stage," Wickremanayake said speaking at a function in Colombo. "Some countries are pressurising us to go for ceasefire agreement. They think Sri Lanka is a colonial country and it should abide by what they say," he said.

"Sri Lanka is a sovereign state and cannot be commanded by anyone; the Tigers have to lay down their arms, unconditionally, and there is no room for talks with them," he further said.

Stating that Sri Lanka was a democratic country, Wickremanayake added it was the government of the people and that the policies were drafted according to their wishes and expectations. "We will listen only to the people (of the country)," he said. "We cannot listen to the concerned international body or community which is putting pressure on us to accept

a ceasefire agreement with LTTE," he said. "Our sovereignty must be respected and there should be no condition. We will not yield to any pressure."

The Sri Lankan Prime Minister's comments follows LTTE's announcement to United Nations and the Co-Chairs that they are ready to comply with international calls for a ceasefire with government forces.

In a letter to the United Nations, Japan, Norway, the European Union and the United States, LTTE political wing head B. Nadesan said "already more than 2,000 civilians have been killed and more than 5,000 have been injured," and added a ceasefire was needed to end the miseries of the Tamil people.

Before the Sri Lankan government responded to the offer, the Sri Lankan military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara rejected calls for an immediate ceasefire and demanded the surrender of the LTTE. "Our position is that they must lay down arms and surrender," he said. "There is no shift in our position."

Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona responding to the ceasefire call, told Associated Press: "Instead of surrendering as the entire international community and the Sri Lankan government has called them to do, [Tamil Tigers] are calling the very people who have asked them to surrender, to save their miserable skins."

"Their delusion for Eelam is in tatters," Kohona added.

Defence spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella labelled the LTTE ceasefire offer as hilarious considering the LTTE is on the brink of military defeat.



India continues its military and political support for Sri Lanka, with calls for a ceasefire seen as political tactics to calm Tamil Nadu and prevent other actors from entering the Sri Lankan theatre

## Grab LTTE ceasefire offer, India tells Sri Lanka

INDIA has urged the Sri Lankan government to 'seize the opportunity provided by LTTE's ceasefire offer to bring about a pause in hostilities', indicating another shift in its policy on its southern neighbour and the ongoing conflict.

However, political observers in Tamil Nadu labelled the move as a tactic to nullify their calls for a permanent ceasefire and dismissed it. According to them, this diplomatic move of India can prevent any other powers that may come in on one hand, and provide electoral advantage of showing a human face to the voters of India on the other hand.

The move, confined only to a 'pause', also doesn't interfere with the war India is abetting in the island, observers said.

"It is reported that the LTTE has offered a ceasefire. While this may fall short of a declaration of willingness to lay down arms, it is our view that the government of Sri Lanka should seize the opportunity presented by the offer to bring about a pause in the hostilities," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee told reporters during a visit to West Bengal.

"The government of India would, therefore, appeal to the government of Sri Lanka to immediately work out safe passage for trapped civilians to secure locations," Mukherjee said.

"This would require the cooperation of the LTTE," he underlined reading out from a statement.

Mukherjee also underscored India's "grave concern over the humanitarian crisis that is building up with every passing day in Sri Lanka."

"I sincerely hope that the government of Sri Lanka and all others will respond to this sincere appeal that is made in the interest of all sections of the people in Sri Lanka," Mukherjee added.

In the space of three weeks India has changed its stance three times, making political observers claim that India is reacting to ground realities and does not have a clear policy on the Eelam Tamil issue.

On Tuesday February 3, when the co-chairs demanded the LTTE to lay down their arms and surrender to the Sri Lankan government, India too followed suit with the same call.

However, 9 later days, on Thursday, February 12, address-

ing the parliament Indian President Pratibha Patil announced a change in India's stance over the Sri Lankan conflict.

This time instead laying down the weapons, India urged the LTTE to indicate its willingness to lay down arms and Sri Lanka to suspend military operations, so that both sides can return to the negotiating table.

Following the LTTE air raid on SLAF targets in Colombo on Friday, February 20, Indian External Affairs minister, Pranab Mukherjee skipped all references to laying down of weapons and urged both sides to 'sit across the table for a negotiated settlement of the issue'.

"An LTTE plane has been shot down. This is of concern. Political solution has to be found to the LTTE issue and military action will not do," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, said on Saturday, February 21.

Maintaining that 'a political solution is the only way out', he said, "The two sides should sit across the table for a negotiated settlement of the issue."

In the latest statement, Mukherjee has urged the Sri Lankan government to 'seize the opportunity provided by LTTE's ceasefire offer'.

In the past few weeks, international organisations, including the UN, for one reason or another, have made repeated appeals for a cessation of hostilities in Sri Lanka. Colombo, however, have rejected all calls for truce and labelled the LTTE's ceasefire call as a desperate plea "to save their miserable skins."

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## FEATURES

# UN nods 'fight to the finish'

TamilNet

THE position taken by UN Security Council Friday, February 27, indicating no go beyond 'hearing', and the considerate briefing of John Holmes largely endorsing and trusting Colombo's agenda and assurances for civilians, are read between the lines by international political observers as a 'knowing wink' at Colombo to pursue its offensive.

Alternatively, the UN stance either paves way for intervention by interested powers outside of the UN or perhaps reveals an actuality that the UN can be shaken not when people face genocide, but only when ground realities endanger the Sri Lankan state, observers said.

While the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon on Tuesday, February 24, called for a suspension of fighting and beginning of political discussions, John Holmes, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, who briefed the Security Council Friday spoke of tackling underlying political issues only after the end of fighting.

"It appears that the UN Secretariat's public call is undermined by a more private green light to the Sri Lankan military's offensive in north Sri Lanka", reported Inner City Press on Friday.

In British Parliament Wednesday, Liberal Democrat MP Edward Davey questioned British Foreign Secretary David Miliband why Britain's representative in UN earlier failed to support a briefing on Sri Lanka while ministers in London call for ceasefire.

Miliband replied: "I am sorry to hear the hon. Gentleman talk in that way, because he knows that a failed resolution-one that faces a veto-is worse than no resolution at all, and it would strengthen precisely the forces that he and I oppose. I can assure him that our diplomats, whether in New York or in the region, are all working off the same script, which is one that has been set by the Prime Minister and me."

The British silence at UN on Friday may mean that the UN Security Council is still not seasoned to consider the plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

At the beginning of the UN briefing Russia said that it is only a 'one-time hearing'.

The permanent representative of US was not present during the

briefing.

The British representative at UN, John Sawers, who earlier said that the LTTE's long 'blighting' of Colombo should be brought to an end, neither demanded a presidential statement of the council after the briefing nor answered questions put on Sri Lanka by the media, according to Inner City Press.

Interestingly, John Holmes admitted his 'knowing' stance on events.

When asked by Inner City Press on reportedly mischievous translations he received while visiting civilians in Vavuniyaa, he replied, "you should credit me with enough intelligence to assess what people told me, surrounded by the military's armed guards".

Holmes briefed the UN on the variations in the number of the trapped civilians: Colombo claiming 70,000, UN estimating 200,000 and Tamil sources putting it to 300,000.

Colombo and its war-partner New Delhi claiming only 70,000 has evoked fear in Tamil circles that the bulk of the civilians may 'disappear' either in war or in screening, if things are allowed to continue in the same way.

On 18 February India's Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee in a statement in the Indian parliament put the number of civilians at 70,000.

Sir John Holmes had gone out of his way, during his visit to Sri Lanka, to avoid criticising the hardline Mahinda Rajapaksa regime and instead praised the "good cooperation" between the government and the UN agencies vis-à-vis the needs of the displaced Tamil population. Instead, he blamed the LTTE for the continuing suffering of the Tamil civilians in Mullaiththeevu.

His remarks were made on Saturday, February 21, within a day of Human Rights Watch's damning report stating that "Sri Lankan forces are shelling hospitals and so-called safe zones and slaughtering the civilians there."

Instead, Sri John blamed the LTTE for the continuing suffering of the Tamil civilians in Mullaiththeevu.

HRW said Friday, February 20, that Sri Lankan government forces in the past two months have repeatedly and indiscriminately shelled areas crowded with Tamil civilians and casualties have skyrocketed with two thou-

Continued on p15

**WHAT YOU CAN DO TO END GENOCIDE OF TAMILS**

Stop buying Sri Lankan manufactured products such as:

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- Garments made in Sri Lanka (sold in Marks and Spencer)
- Drinks, biscuits and Sri Lankan food made in Sri Lanka (sold in Sri Lankan / Tamil shops)

Stop travelling to Sri Lanka on holiday.

Stop flying on Sri Lankan airlines.

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Sri Lanka Defence Budget for 2009 at **US \$1.6 billion.**

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The TYO is leafletting shoppers to encourage the boycott of Sri Lankan products

## Why everyone should boycott Sri Lanka

### TYO

THE United Nations Agreement on Human Rights states, amongst other things, that individuals have the "right to life", "the right to equality before the law" and "the freedom of assembly and association".

The United Nations Agreement on Human Rights forbids, amongst other things, "torture and inhumane degrading treatment", "arbitrary arrest and detention" and "hatred based on race, religion, national origin, or language".

Sri Lanka, however, being one of the 192 countries of the United Nations, has broken its agreement to abide by the Geneva Convention, by mercilessly launching a massive military campaign to exterminate every Tamil in Sri Lanka, for one reason and one reason only; they are Tamil.

Since the start of 2009, more than 3000 Tamils, most of who are innocent civilians, have been executed. All the hospitals in the areas of conflict have been fired upon, several times, destroying them and killing already wounded patients who went to seek medical help, as well as doctors and nurses. The small number of surviving doctors living amongst the civilians have set up make-shift hospitals in schools, temples and churches, but without adequate medical facilities.

The Sri Lankan government is doing everything in its power to thin down the Tamil population, including refusing the access of medical aid and food into the war zones and banning international

aid groups, such as the ICRC, from providing essential care to the injured and dying Tamils.

As the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka continues to escalate, we cannot just sit by as Tamils of the international community and watch our brothers and sisters back at home being butchered on a daily basis.

As British Tamils, we have a duty to do all we can to stop the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka and to save our people. After attempting many different strategies to bring an end to this horrific war with little success, international Tamils have decided to chance their tactics and launch an attack on the Sri Lankan economy.

Each Sri Lankan product that is purchased contributes towards financing the arms and ammunition that are being used to slay our Tamil people back at home. As Tamils, by buying these products, we are contributing towards the complete annihilation of our own people.

*Consequently, to cause a downturn in the Sri Lankan economy, all Sri Lankan products must be boycotted for the next 100 days. Listed below are a few products which must be avoided.*

1. Food items by Larich, Maliban and Nestle milk products
2. Food items that are imported by Sri Lankan Tamils and packed in Britain.
3. Garments made in Sri Lanka and sold in supermarkets such as Marks and Spencer and footwear including Bata
4. Products made from rubber and coconut
5. All forms of tea grown in

Ceylon.

6. Medicinal products
7. Fish, fish products and vegetables

Investors are also being requested to stop purchasing bonds, treasury bills and shares in corporations as well as saving their earnings in Sri Lankan banks. This will directly affect the foreign reserve that the Sri Lankan government uses to buy weapons from other countries in its genocidal war on Tamils.

Before buying any product, consumers are advised to ask the retailer if the product is from Sri Lanka. If it is, buying it is not only costing the consumer money, but is also costing Tamil lives.

Many retailers are willing to cooperate but are asking for the consumers to conduct the boycott, and then they too will stop buying Sri Lankan products. We appeal to the few importers of Sri Lankan products to the UK to give this matter their urgent consideration and seek alternative sources of similar products in South Asia.

This appeal, if successful, could bring down the Sri Lankan economy and salvage thousands of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Every Sri Lankan product that is bought by each individual consumer is serving to help the Sinhalese to defeat the Tamils so every British Tamil must make these diminutive sacrifices to pressurise the Sri Lankan government to stop the war.

Let us all work together as a community, the Tamil community, to ensure that soon, very soon, our people back at home can live with the serenity, self-respect and equality that they deserve.



NEWS

British Tamils Football League 2008/2009  
Table & Top Scores

Premier Division

											Players	Team	Top Scores
	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	1			
1	Mahajana	17	14	1	2	61	10	51	43	2	Sean	Mahajana	16
2	West-3	16	11	3	2	52	16	36	36	3	Chrishanthan	Santos	14
3	Santos	17	11	2	4	50	32	18	35	4	Senthuran	Sunrise	13
4	Watch Me	16	8	3	3	34	29	5	27	5	Similan	Mahajana	11
5	wembley	16	7	6	3	30	27	3	27	6	Luxman	Santos	9
6	Kingston Boys	15	4	3	8	28	22	6	15	7	Ahilan	Surbiton	8
7	Sunrise	16	4	3	9	36	49	-13	15	8	Roshan B	Santos	7
8	Surbiton	16	4	3	9	15	26	-11	15	9	Prathip	Watchme	7
9	Olimpics	15	2	2	10	12	52	-40	8	10	Vinoth	Wembley	6
10	Blues	16	1	2	13	17	67	-50	5	11	Nisanthan	Mahajana	6
											Prasanna	West-3	6

Division One

											Players	Team	Top Scores
	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS	1			
1	Srimurugan	12	10	-	2	33	13	20	30	2	Mohamed	MTSSC	20
2	E 17 F.C	12	9	1	2	46	21	25	28	3	Danu	E-17	10
3	MTSSC	12	6	1	5	33	37	-4	19	4	Thanu	11 Stars F.C	12
4	Harrow Boys	12	4	1	7	16	17	-1	13	5	Tee	E-17	8
5	11 Stars F.C	12	5	1	6	27	35	-8	13	6	Jenu	Srimurugan	6
6	Young rise	12	4	1	7	24	35	-11	13	7	Keeth	Harrow Boys	5
7	Valvai Blues	12	3	1	8	21	34	-13	10	8	Sanjie	Srimurugan	5
										9	Sela	Young Rise	4
										10	Arujuna	MTSSC	4
										11	Naz	Young Rise	4
											Milson	Harrow Boys	4

UN nods ‘fight to the finish’...

Continued from p14

sand deaths and five thousand people being maimed or injured. However, Sir John said: "it is hard to say how many of those killed are civilians and who is responsible for any particular incident." Throughout his presentation, Sir Holmes scrupulously avoided blaming the Colombo government in his press conference, which he jointly held with Sri Lanka's Human Rights minister Mahinda Samarasinghe. Instead, Sir John blamed the LTTE entirely for the plight of the Tamils in Mullaiththeevu where an average of 40 people are presently being killed each day by Sri Lankan bombardment. Indeed, through his presentation, Sir Hol John mes stressed his nearness to the government's position, often hailing the Human Rights Minister by his first name, and lauding Colombo's conduct vis-à-vis the displaced Tamils

who arrived outside the region being bombarded. Conversely, Sir John, who had in 2007 been denounced by the Rajapsksa regime as a 'terrorist' in the pay of the LTTE for expressing concern for humanitarian aid workers in Sri Lanka, was this year very much in favour in Colombo. On Friday HRW reported that in the past two months, "Sri Lankan forces have repeatedly and indiscriminately shelled areas crowded with displaced persons. This includes numerous reported bombardments of government-declared "safe zones" and of the remaining hospitals in the region." Sir John, however, on Saturday limited himself to "extreme concern" for the people trapped in Mullaiththeevu, which he described simply as "a pocket where the military conflict is still continuing." Sir John singled out food shortages in Mullaiththeevu as an

important area for the UN agencies and the Sri Lankan government: "At the moment, what is getting through is clearly inadequate to deal with the number of people there and their needs because there hasn't been food getting through for some time now. We have to increase it significantly as the days go by." What Sir John left out was that food shortages in Mullaiththeevu stem primarily from the government's blockade on humanitarian food convoys which has ensured no food, medicine or relief material has been allowed in for several months. HRW said Friday: "All civilians who manage to escape the Tamil Tigers are held by the government in squalid military-controlled camps and hospitals with little access to the outside world ... The government seems to be trying its best to keep its role in their ordeal away from public scrutiny." The HRW report said: "dis-

placed persons are increasingly escaping from the battle zone to what they hope is safety within government-controlled areas. Instead, they are finding government internment centers masquerading as "welfare villages." While the government for security reasons should be screening new arrivals, it is instead secretly taking away LTTE suspects to arbitrary detention or possible enforced disappearances." "All displaced persons crossing to the government side are sent to internment centers in Vavuniya and nearby locations. ... These are military-controlled, barbed-wire camps in which those sent there, including entire families, are denied their liberty and freedom of movement," HRW said. However, Sir John expressed satisfaction with the camps and transit camps which he visited, saying: "There is good cooperation going on between the Government, UN agencies and

NGOs about this, including access to the transit centres, and the other centres elsewhere and we hope very much that would continue including access to various screening points so there is confidence about what is happening to people as they arrive. HRW's report protested that "the Sri Lankan government has indicated that the ethnic Tamil population trapped in the war zone can be presumed to be siding with the LTTE and treated as combatants, effectively sanctioning unlawful attacks." Sir John, meanwhile, said: "I discussed with the government the need to make sure that everything is done to win the peace and to make sure the opportunity which is there to make a new start and create a fully integrated democratic polity is taken with all the sections of the population and again I was interested to hear the constructive answers of the kind Mahinda [the Minister] was just giving."



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