

Britain and the slaughter of Tamils

PAGE 6

## Why Tamils lives are worth less



### Free calls & texts

Lycamobile to Lycamobile\* No connection charge

India

5p



Sri Lanka

8p

Buy online at [lycamobile.co.uk](http://lycamobile.co.uk) or call 020 7132 0322



Had a car accident? | Need a Courtesy car? | Need help getting compensation?  
We deal with All kind of vehicle accidents | We provide FREE service! | We charge NO FEE!

0845 8710 196 - 07903 810 196



## NEWS

# 'Tamil civilians died like flies'

M.R. Narayan Swamy  
IANS

THE mass of Tamil women and children struggling to walk out of Sri Lanka's war zone were so emaciated that an aid worker thought he was seeing a horror movie.

Some of them had become so thin that their bones could be seen under the thin layer of fleshless skin. They were in bloodstained, dirty and torn clothes that had not been washed for several weeks.

Many had untreated festering wounds. Some were so sick that they could not stand on their feet. At the first opportunity, they collapsed on bare earth.

Barring a few who were willing to speak, most were too weak to even utter a few words. When they did, they had only one wish: water. And they were famished. Most of them had not had a proper meal for a long time. Their eyes begged for food.

Countless others never made it out of the shrunken territory the Tamil Tigers still hold in Sri Lanka's war-battered northern coast.

These were people who had retreated along with the Tigers as the military rapidly advanced from January this year, raining shells and mortars, at times tearing apart civilians fleeing.

Those who have interacted

with the civilians undergoing treatment in hospitals in Sri Lanka's north quote them as saying that innumerable people died like flies as they tried to escape the military's far superior firepower. These sources spoke to IANS on the strict condition of anonymity.

One survivor described horrific scenes she saw in the LTTE land. 'People were blown up. People lost legs or hands. Families got separated. There was no one to care for the seriously injured and dying.' Two small hospitals in Tiger territory inundated with the dying ran out of life saving medicines. Food was in short supply. What little was available was prohibitive. A population cowed down by armed combatants lived in bunkers, praying they would live.

The wounded tore parts of their clothes to dress themselves up. If the bleeding did not stop, then they would throw a lump of sand and then do the bandaging. Wounds festered. Some who barely made it out of the war zone died in buses while being transported. The blood and gore have driven a handful insane. One Tamil woman has been tied to the hospital bed because she keeps running in the ward topsless.



Having shelled Tamils into makeshift hospitals, the SLA is now also responsible for their 'welfare' in the internment camps in which those who fled the shelling are being detained, with no end in sight

## Notorious commander to head IDP resettlement

CHIEF-OF-STAFF of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) Maj. Gen. G.A. Chandrasiri was appointed as the Competent Authority Officer in charge of resettlement of Tamils from Vanni in alleged barbed-wire 'internment camps' and 'villages' in the North.

The appointment was made by Sri Lankan President and

Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces Mahinda Rajapaksa on Friday, April 24.

Maj. Gen. Chandrasiri was the former chief of the SLA in Jaffna, under whose command Jaffna witnessed hundreds of forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings and other human rights violations in the period from 2006 to

2008. Meanwhile, Colombo has started to seek funds to 'resettle' and 'rehabilitate' civilians who have been captured from the LTTE controlled area.

Three more Sinhalese Government Agents from Kandy, Pollonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts would assist Maj. Gen. Chandrasiri as Coordinating Officers to handle the affairs of the Tamil IDPs.

The only Tamil official to assist Chandrasiri is Vavuniyaa GA Ms. P.M.S. Charles. She would help the former commander to liaise with the displaced, according to reports that appeared in the Colombo press.

Kandy GA Gotabhaya Jayaratna was appointed to handle construction, shelter, and lodging, Pollonnaruwa GA Lal Wimal to coordinate food, health and sanitation and Anuradhapura GA to handle water supply, electricity and infrastructure, the reports said.

Chandrasiri's service was extended for a year when he retired from service in 2008, on the recommendation of Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, the SLA chief.

## Sri Lanka can buy weapons but not food

THE Sri Lankan Government which was able to fire thousands of shells per day into the so-called safety zone to capture the civilians, doesn't have the means to feed them when they are captured according to Sri Lankan foreign minister who appealed to the international community for assistance.

On Tuesday, April 22, the Sri Lanka Army, which is still keeping the civilians inside the militarized zone, north of Oamanthai, for its screening, has asked the Tamil people of Vavuniyaa through loudspeaker announcements,

to donate cooked-food packets to supply the captured civilians.

"The SLA move asking for food packets from people is seen only as a prelude to Colombo asking for huge international assistance to go ahead with its long-term structural genocide of Tamils and to buttress its sagging economy in the guise of refugee-maintenance and 'rehabilitation'," commented the District Secretariat official in Vavuniyaa.

As predicted by the District secretariat official, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama met diplomats on the mo-

orning of 23 April, and appealed for more help for the surge of civilians arriving in government controlled areas, after the Sri Lankan Army entered the No Fire Zone following an offensive that resulted in over 1000 civilian casualties.

"With the unprecedented influx of large numbers of people in such a short period of time, obviously we do face an emergency humanitarian situation," he told the diplomatic corps at the ministry, and appealed for urgent supplies for shelter, safe drinking water, sanitation and medicine.

Bogollagama said at a press conference that the US government had pledged to provide a field hospital, and India was sending 40,000 emergency family kits.

The European Union had pledged US\$22 million worth of assistance and other aid was in the pipeline. The Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry set up a task force to liaise with foreign donors and coordinate assistance.

So far, no civil official is able to confirm the arrival of the new batch of civilians into the internment camps of Vavuniya town.

### Clayhall Osteopathic Health Clinic



Osteopathy is an established, recognised system of diagnosis and treatment of injuries and conditions based around the structure and function of the body.

Arthritis  
Asthma  
Back Pain  
Headaches

Knee Pain  
Migraines  
Chest pain  
Neck Pain

Hip/ pelvic pain  
Foot pain  
Facial pain  
Pregnancy care

Cramps  
Pelvic Pain  
Growing pains  
Osteoporosis

FREE telephone Consultation - 0208 220 4254  
Emergency - 07886 451412

420 Clayhall Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex IG5 0SH

## NEWS

# ‘Regular rapes, killings in internment camps’

TAMIL IDPs inside the barbed-wire internment camps in Sri Lanka Army (SLA) controlled Vavuniya are not only medically underserved, but are subjected to degrading interrogations and there are reports of regular rapes and killings, reveals a well known German writer and Human Rights activist, Thomas Seibert, who recently returned from Sri Lanka after a humanitarian trip, conducting personal interviews that described the plight of civilians kept as near-prisoners under the SLA occupation.

Tens of thousands of people who flee from the battle field have been identified and housed by the Sri Lanka Army and its paramilitaries in several camps located around Vavuniya.

"Many are tortured or simply shot. There are also reports of regular rapes," Medico International quoted Thomas Seibert in a press statement.

Mr. Seibert said that the Sri Lankan military was attempting to expand the scope of the current internment camps to house the civilians there for years. Meanwhile, more than 100,000 civilians remaining within a 15 square kilometre coastal strip in Vanni, according to the estimated figures by the UN and Sri Lankan Humanitarian organisations, are under siege and subjected to shelling, Seibert further said.

He warned of a tendency for massacre unless an immediate ceasefire is declared.

"Should the lives of the civilians be saved at least, an immediate cease fire must be declared. Everything else is an acceptance of a foreseeable massacre."

Frankfurt-based relief and human rights organisation Medi-

co International is a Non-Governmental Organization, which provides emergency relief and supports human rights and development projects to secure access to health care.

Separately, in the so-called 'safe zone, starvation is compounding the problem for civilians already affected by the daily shelling of Sri Lankan government forces.

The LTTE charged last week that 165,000 Tamil civilians belonging to 40,000 families within the 'safe zone' on the Mullaitheevu coast are faced with serious crisis due to the deliberate denial of food and other humanitarian supplies by Sri Lanka.

Dr. Thangamuttu Sathyamurthi, a top government health official in the war zone, told The Associated Press that there was a severe shortage of food and medicine in the area and people were dying of starvation.

The humanitarian situation "continues to be critical, civilian casualties have been tragically high and their suffering horrendous," U.N. deputy spokeswoman Marie Okabe said.

Last Tuesday, Sri Lankan authorities delayed the departure of a ship with World Food Program supplies scheduled to travel to the Vanni. On one hand the essential food and other important food items are not available in the District and on the other hand the people do not have income / money to buy the items. Thus, the distribution of food is entirely depending on arrivals of ships and the quantity brought, officials in the area told TamilNet. Civilians in the Vanni were only eating once a day for the last 4 weeks, the officials said.



Tamil civilians are torn between injury and death in the so called 'safe zone' or rape and disappearance in the Sri Lankan government and military run internment camps

## British aid may be used to fund 'concentration camps'

MILLIONS of pounds of British aid are being channelled by the Sri Lankan Government into controversial internment camps where it plans to hold and screen up to 200,000 civilians fleeing the conflict with the Tamil Tigers, reported The Times newspaper in London on Tuesday.

Britain has donated 5,000 tents - worth £500,000 - and more emergency aid worth millions of pounds could follow soon, according to Mike Foster, Minister for International Development, who visited Sri Lanka, the paper said.

Mr Foster visited two camps and met Sri Lankan officials to urge them to call a ceasefire and allow aid agencies to help tens of thousands of civilians still stuck on the front line or on their way to the camps.

The government officials told him that aid agencies could help the civilians once they were

inside the barbed wire enclosures - which some Tamil activists and Indian and Sri Lankan Tamil MPs have likened to concentration camps.

"It's not an ideal situation but it's important that we do this to help people who've been living in awful circumstances," Mr Foster told The Times.

He said that the British tents, able to shelter 20,000 to 30,000 people, had been given to the United Nations refugee agency to distribute in the camps, which are already holding an estimated 113,000 refugees.

"We made the case for a humanitarian ceasefire," he said. "It was noted."

The UN says that there are 50,000 inside, and tens of thousands making their way to the camps, which are already severely overcrowded.

Mr Foster said that he had visited two transit camps where 6,400 civilians were being held before being moved into internment camps, where they are to be screened to make sure they are not Tigers.

He was not taken to the three main camps in Vavuniya - called Zone 1, Zone 2 and Zone 3 - where an estimated 80,000 civilians are being held, according to aid workers there.

Conditions in those facilities are far worse, with drinking water in short supply, according to Lisabeth List, the medical coordinator for Médecins Sans Frontières, the medical aid agency.

"They're desperate for water - it's extremely hot so more and more people are severely dehydrated," she said.

"Because there are so many elderly and children, at any moment somebody could die because of this lack of water." She also said that there was insufficient food in Zone 2 and Zone 3.

"People are getting so desperate they're having to throw food off the back of a truck and people are getting trampled," she said. "We're in full blown emergency mode now. We still expect a lot more people to come."

Ban Ki Moon, the UN Secretary-General, had made a personal appeal for a humanitarian team to enter the no-fire zone but the Government has said repeatedly that it would be too dangerous.

Meanwhile, children are being separated from their families, reported The Independent newspaper in Britain.

An eight-year-old girl, who had witnessed her father and sister die from shelling in Vanni, and then seen her mother shot, was separated from her brother - her only remaining relative - at the camps the Sri Lankan government is using to screen and inter civilians, the paper reported an aid worker as saying.

"A fifth of children in the camps where we're providing aid are either missing or separated from one of their parents," a Save the Children worker was quoted as saying.

"Those who have reached safety speak vividly of the terror of separation from their families, while others describe the horror of fleeing from the 'no-fire' zone. Many youngsters are trying to cope with the trauma of what they have experienced entirely on their own."

## Hospitals overwhelmed

THE flood of wounded civilians from the conflict in Sri Lanka is overwhelming doctors and nurses in hospitals near the war zone who said Saturday people risk dying from lack of proper attention. A British surgeon working for Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), Paul McMasters, said his team in the state-run hospital in Vavuniya had performed 71 operations in one 24-hour period.

In an MSF statement, McMasters said the hospital was strug-

gling to provide adequate post-operative care.

"One of the patients I have seen is a little girl of about seven or eight who has a severe leg injury. Her elder sister is in the same bed with wounds on her arms and legs," McMasters said. "Their sister has burns to her face. Their mother has been killed and their father is in intensive care. With the level of aftercare that we can provide at the moment, he has a fifty-fifty chance of making it,

at best."

"It's so crowded that the nurses cannot physically walk around the ward," he said, estimating the number of patients in a 45-bed ward at around 320.

"There are simply too many people to treat them all. We are not able to save some people because we need to provide more aftercare," he said, adding: "There are simply not enough nurses."

Most staff were already putting in 20-hour days, he said.



## NEWS

# Fast, protests continue in London

PARAMESWARAN Subramaniyam continues his fast unto death undeterred, placing five demands including an immediate stop of the inhuman killings of innocent Tamils in Vanni by Sri Lanka armed forces.

"I will be happy to lay down my life for the sake of Tamil people," Parameswaran said.

Protestors also continue their stance in front of the UK parliament at Westminster, having been there over three weeks, since 6 April.

The protest demonstration against the relentless attacks on the Tamils in Vanni has drawn media coverage in Britain and several countries of the world.

"The South Korean Times" media persons met Parameswaran and stood bearing placards with slogans against the genocide of the Tamils, in Parliament Square.

Hundreds of foreign nationals participated in the protest demonstration launched Saturday by the London branch of the International Committee against the Disappearance of Tamils in Trafalgar Square to draw the attention of the International Community to the continuing disappearance of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Tamil diaspora protestors also staged a protest in front of a Mark and Spencer establishment last Saturday distributing handbills calling the boycott of Sri Lankan products sold in the department store.

On Monday, 27 April, some protestors went to the Sri Lankan and Indian High Commissions, where clashes with the police ensued. Early in the morning, about 300 protestors gathered at each of the High Commissions, but numbers soon swelled to the thousands, with the Times of India reporting that there were 3,000 estimated to be in front of the Indian High Commission at one stage. By 9am, windows at the Indian High Commission were damaged and 6 people had been arrested, three at each embassy.

Meanwhile, Parameswaran continues his tiring and in many ways lonely vigil. In a faint voice barely audible, 28-year-old Parameswaran, on the 20th day of his hunger strike said last Sunday the world is waiting for right action from the US president.

"White house said stop shelling and warned Sri Lanka that a military end of the conflict will end a unified Sri Lanka. But Colombo is air attacking. We are waiting for right action. 10,000 civilians died in three months. Thousands and thousands are suffering in the hands of the Sri

Lankan military and in the refugee camps - the barbed wire camps, without international monitoring. This is clearly, without any doubt genocide... I condemn all nations for not condemning. I strongly condemn the Indian government for supporting the war in Sri Lanka", Parameswaran said.

"I am on hunger strike. I want an answer, otherwise no one can stop me," Parameswaran told TamilNet.

*The demands put forward by Parameswaran are:*

■ Immediate and permanent ceasefire

■ Food and medical aid should be allowed to reach the civilians immediately with international monitoring committees and allow "Mercy Mission to Vanni"

■ UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and UK Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, arrange to meet our representatives.

■ Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are our sole representatives and UK government should lift the ban on LTTE.

■ UN should call for an immediate referendum to the Tamils regarding whether they want separate nation or to remain as Sri Lanka.

Students are actively promoting the campaign by attending protests as a student group, uniting to organize an awareness week aimed to draw and educate non-Tamil students. Each university also held a 24 hour fast where a rota system was maintained to facilitate students to attend the ongoing protest outside Westminster.

"This shows the third generation of Tamils is also continuing aims our elders have laid out for us," Gayathirie Sooriyacumar, a dental student born in UK, told TamilNet.

"I used to feel that the suffering of Tamil people in Sri Lanka seemed so far away, and so distant," Gayathirie admits.

"However, after attending this protest and speaking to fellow protestors, I now believe, I too have a responsibility to my suffering brothers and sisters in the national liberation struggle."

"I see the struggle as one that has been suppressed for long and is ready to burst. As I learn more and more about the struggle my people face, I am frustrated of how the rest of the world ignores the genocide that is happening right now in the 'beautiful country of white sandy beaches, lush greenery, where all communities live in harmony side by side,'

*Continued on p10*



British police and Tamil protestors clashed at both the Indian and Sri Lankan High Commissions

# Unprecedented Tamil protests in Australia

TamilNet

A HUNGER strike by 6 Tamils in Australia, calling for the immediate halt of atrocities against Tamils in Sri Lanka that began on 11 April at 5:00 p.m. was concluded 17 April with an unprecedented rally in the capital city of Canberra where more than 8500 diaspora Tamils took part.

A long time peace activist, Lara Pullin, who came to see the hunger strikers said, "The rallies by the Tamils have gathered the same momentum that I saw during pre East Timor independence time and Anti-apartheid movement; one gets the feeling that Tamils have come to a stage where they are saying 'Enough is Enough' " reports from Canberra

said.

The youths on hunger strike had put forward four basic demands:

■ Immediate ceasefire

■ Allow food, medicine and aid into the conflict zone

■ Allow medical & other vital services into the conflict zone

■ Allow the Tamil people, both in the conflict zone and those indefinitely detained in concentration camps, to decide independently where they wish to reside.

The hunger strike and the continuous protest started in Parramatta, Sydney and then proceeded to Prime Minister's residence where hundreds of protestors stayed the whole night outside Kiribilli House without relenting to police pressure.

After receiving unprecedented media coverage, the hunger strik-

ers and protestors moved to Canberra where they were joined by hunger strikers from Melbourne.

During the rally in Canberra, the extremely weakened hunger strikers in wheel chairs (pictured below) and more than 8500 protestors coming from more than 5 different states marched to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Following a visit by Senator Bob Brown and assurances from the DFAT of the hunger strikers and protestors concluded the 6 day protest.

One of the hunger strikers collapsed during the rally and was taken away in an ambulance.

The hunger strikers and protestors vowed more action to come.





## NEWS

# French organisations support Eelam independence

## TamilNet

EXERCISING their right of free expression, 67 registered social welfare organisations of diaspora Tamils in France, took a pioneering democratic step of secret ballot on Saturday, 18 April, and unanimously declared support to the independence war of Eelam Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka, said Ki Pi Aravinthan in Paris to TamilNet.

The Paris declaration read that in supporting the cause of Eelam Tamils, it has infallibly adopted the will and spirit of the Vaddukkoaddai Declaration of 1976 that was overwhelmingly mandated by Tamil voters in 1977, and was in line with the ideology behind the declaration of American independence, the Republic of France in 1789 and the UN human rights declaration of 1948.

Two representatives from each of the organisations participated in the deliberations. Each organisation had a single vote.

The secret voting was presided over, counted and declared by three local government dignitaries, Mr. Serge Setterahmane, Adjoint au Maire (Deputy Mayor), Clichy la Garenne, Mme. Mireille Gitton, Adjoint au Maire (Deputy Mayor), Clichy la Garenne and Mr. David Fabre, Conseiller, Savigny sur Orge.

Mr David Joseph of British Tamil Forum and Edward Sebastiampillai, a former Member of Parliament of Sri Lanka were special observers for the occasion.

The results of the deliberations and the declaration will be sent to the President of France and to the ministries of foreign affairs and home affairs, the organisers said.

Talking on the significance of the mandate and the declaration, Mr. Aravinthan said that it democratically marks the phase of a new synthesis of components of the independence war: the will of the concerned people, the will of their diaspora and the armed struggle ensuing as a conse-

quence of failure of all other means.

The Eelam Tamil diaspora rightfully has a say in this matter, as they are largely people who were forced to leave due to events followed the Tamil-rejected constitution of 1972 and the Tamil mandate for self-determination in 1977, Aravinthan said.

No democratic space was provided to Tamils by any government after 1977 for the free expression of their will on the national question. All subsequent elections took place under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) of 1979 and after the Sixth Amendment to the constitution in 1983, both banning secession, he observed.

As one cannot foresee any free elections taking place for Tamils to express their will for nationhood in the current scenario of the island, the stakeholders outside have a duty in upholding space for free mandate, through transparent democratic means, verifiable by the international community, Aravinthan said.

In his observation, the Paris



**Official counting the votes after a secret ballot of Tamil organisations in France found unanimous support for the independence of Tamil Eelam**

meet of registered organisations in France for a secret ballot supervised by neutral observers was in a way an experiment in the line of electoral colleges.

The diaspora has to creatively adopt credible and democratic ways and means to mobilise the

will and free expression of Eelam Tamils all over the world. It is something that we ought to pass to the next generation, said Aravinthan, a former militant of 1970s and the only surviving associate of Sivakumaran, the pioneer of Tamil militancy.

# Thousands of Tamils protest in Ottawa

## CTV

MORE than 30,000 supporters of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka gathered Tuesday April 21 for a massive demonstration on Parliament Hill - the continuation of a two-week protest calling for sanctions against Sri Lanka for its handling of a decades-long civil war against Tamil rebels.

Demonstrators began arriving early Tuesday despite a steady drizzle, and thousands more arrived in busloads from both Toronto and Montreal throughout the day.

The sound of drumbeats filled the air as protesters waved signs and flags, chanted and listened to speakers.

CTV's Roger Smith reported from Parliament Hill the protesters want more action from Canada to help prevent further civilian deaths in the conflict.

"They want Canada to put more pressure through the UN and other organizations on the Sri Lankan government to declare a permanent ceasefire and negotiate with the last remaining Tamil Tigers ... some sort of negotiated peace agreement rather than attacking this last Tamil stronghold where there are these civilians," Smith told CTV Newsnet.

Protesters are also urging the recall of Canada's ambassador to Sri Lanka to protest Colombo's offensive against the Tamil Tigers.

"As Tamil Canadians, we ask the Canadian government to take a stance - to call upon an immediate and permanent ceasefire, to call out the Sri Lankan High Commissioner Ambassador out of Canada because they clearly don't represent ... the 300,000 Tamil Canadians living in Canada," said Aranee Muru, with the York University Tamil Student Association.

The protesters are demanding that the Canadian government impose economic sanctions against the Sri Lankan government and expel the country's high commissioner.

Leading up to Tuesday's protest, smaller groups of Tamil supporters held demonstrations throughout Ottawa, which included stopping traffic on Wellington Street, an east-west roadway in front of Parliament.

Protesters had been criticized for carrying the flag of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which Canada has designated a terrorist organization.

But on Tuesday the protesters appeared to have put away the flag, which bears a Tiger head surrounded by bullets, with crossed machine guns underneath.

"I think the protesters are hoping some politicians will come out and talk to them today," Smith said.

"That has been something politicians have been unwilling to do because they're seen as associ-

ating with a terror group."

NDP Leader Jack Layton was among the politicians who responded.

"We need our government to speak out strongly, to use every tool available, and to do so now," said Layton to cheering from the crowd.

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff did not speak at the demonstration. But he did meet with Tamil community leaders. No members of the governing Conservatives met with the pro-

testers.

He also later released a statement saying: Tamil Canadians deserve the support of their government to help keep their family members safe.

He called for a humanitarian assistance delegation to be sent to Sri Lanka.

According to protest spokesperson Senthana Nada, the flag is a symbol of Tamil nationalism, not terrorism.

"Just like the Maple Leaf flag is the Canadian national flag, the

flags that were flown are Tamil national flags, not Tamil Tiger flags," Nada told Smith in an interview that aired on Newsnet.

"The crossed machine guns and the bullets are to represent the struggle."

Nada said the protesters have a peaceful goal. "The reason we are here is because the Parliament has reconvened and we want to come on Parliament Hill and the purpose is to show in numbers how many Canadian people are interested in saving human lives."

# Tamils rally in Berlin against Sri Lankan genocide

THOUSANDS of Tamils from all over Germany demonstrated in Berlin Friday 24 April in the latest of a series of protests worldwide against the ongoing violence in their home country.

Organizers in the German capital said between 6,000 and 7,000 Tamils took part in the peaceful protests, carrying placards with slogans and photos of children maimed in the violence of recent weeks.

However, Berlin police said the demonstrators numbered around 2,000.

"We are demonstrating again

to press for the German government to do more to help Tamils in Sri Lanka," an unnamed Tamil spokeswoman was quoted saying.

Recent fighting has sparked a wave of international concern for the fate of 50, 000 people still said by the U.N. to be trapped in the conflict zone.

The U.N. also estimates that as many as 6,500 civilians may have been killed and another 14,000 wounded in the fighting so far this year, diplomats said.

Up to 300,000 Tamil demonstrators have taken to the streets in Canada, and there have been

other protests in Paris, London and elsewhere.

Prior to the Tamil rally at Berlin's historic Brandenburg Gate, a group of around 250 people pelted the Chinese Embassy with eggs. Tamil activists have repeatedly claimed that Chinese military hardware has been used by the Sri Lankan military to squash the Tamil insurgency.

Last week, the German government expressed major concern over the situation of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in a small war zone in northeastern Sri Lanka.

## EDITORIAL &amp; OPINION

## TAMIL GUARDIAN

TG NEWS, P.O.BOX. 2308, Watford, WD18 1LS, UK

editor@tamilguardian.com www.tamilguardian.com

Tel 0845 0949873

WEDNESDAY APRIL 29, 2009 No. 397

## Disconnect and Mobilisation

## The West wants the Tamils to make it easy and forget the genocide.

Sri Lanka's military continues to massacre Tamil civilians while the Colombo government mockingly issues pious assurances that it is concerned for civilians. As we pointed out last week, this is taking place in plain sight of the international community, including those Western states that have long styled themselves as custodians of global liberalism. Yet there is still no international effort to restrain the Sinhala state.

This week the British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, and his French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner went to Sri Lanka to "urge" a ceasefire. Mr. Kouchner, interestingly, used to be a long-time advocate of humanitarian intervention. Applying once to be head of the UNHCR in 2005, he stated "we could open together a new era in the process of protecting all refugees and displaced persons in the world." None of this applies to the Tamils, of course. Explaining their failure to get the Sinhala regime to stop its onslaught into the packed civilians, Mr. Kouchner said: "We tried very hard - we insisted and we insisted - but it is up to our friends to allow it or not."

Mr. Miliband, it might be recalled, was at the forefront of Western outrage over Russia's onslaught into Georgia last August. He thundered that the UK would "not forget" Moscow's invasion and threatened dire consequences. Strangely, when Tamils are being bombed and machine-gunned by the Sinhala state today, Britain has only quiet diplomacy to offer. Interestingly, a common refrain that Western states tell the Tamils, confident the latter are gullible enough to accept it, is that they are quietly "putting pressure" on Sri Lanka.

It is clear this is far from true. Tamil journalist and activists who met this week with EU and American officials, British MPs and advocacy NGOs have been hearing consistent reports: Britain has long been blocking or neutralising other international efforts to sanction Sri Lanka. For example, Britain is refusing to allow the EU to formally take up the matter. Britain has also long been vehemently resisting suspension of the EU's GSP+ facility to Sri Lanka (a subsidy for EU firms manufacturing in the island - most of which are British). The UK has been taking lead in international missions vis-à-vis Sri Lanka, efforts that have produced no results whatsoever. Mr. Miliband's visit this week is a case in point.

As we argued earlier, Western states, looking at Sri Lanka through a 'security' lens, believe that the island's conflict will soon be settled by the Sinhala military's victory over the LTTE and that peace will thereafter follow. Underlining how disconnected from Sri Lanka's reality the West has become, Mr. Kouchner was this week, standing not far from an ongoing genocide, calling the Sinhalese his "friends" on one hand and, on the other, asserting: "the reconciliation must happen. I think it will be done." Ironically, other Western actors, such as the International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch, who have long opposed the Tamil struggle for self-rule, have in recent weeks been screaming for international action to stop the bloodbath. Those who think that the LTTE will be destroyed in the coming weeks and that then it is a question of 'peace building' and 'development' for the next few years are gravely mistaken. The foundations for a cataclysmic civil war are being inexorably laid today. The kind of polarisation that sustain not decades, but generations of struggle has become widespread and embedded. Quite apart from the euphoric jingoism that has been sweeping the Sinhalese polity and population since 2007, the wholesale massacres of Tamils since January this year has hardened resolve amongst the Tamils. 'Reconciliation', as almost all Tamils and Sinhalese know, is now an impossibility.

All of this has only been possible by the ideological blindness and hubris of Western states that, whilst caring little for the specificities of places like Sri Lanka, have nonetheless sought to roll out formulaic, patronising and shockingly naïve theories of conflict and conflict resolution. These have turned, unsurprisingly, on backing the state and hammering the armed non-state actor, irrespective of the grievances the latter represents.

Unless they are prepared to confront and discipline the Sinhala state, it is of little consequence what else the Western liberal states do now. However, it is their very failures to act against Sri Lanka's massacres that are making clear to the Tamils the crucial importance of their own actions and efforts to safeguard their people's future safety. And it is in this context that the Tamil nation is finally mobilising for the kind of protracted popular struggle envisioned by the authors of the 1976 Vaddokoddai Resolution.

## Britain and the slaughter of the Tamils

Suren Surendiran

Tamil Guardian

THE Sri Lankan military is killing hundreds of Tamil civilians each day. Last Sunday alone, a thousand people were killed by cluster bombs, artillery and machine gun fire. On Monday, hundreds died when Sri Lankan forces used them as human mine-sweepers and human shields to advance against the Tamil Tigers.

This "slaughter" of civilians, as Human Rights Watch has condemned it, has intensified since January. Over 5,000 Tamils have been massacred in the past three months alone.

Crucially, this genocide by the Sri Lankan state has been enabled by the international community, including Britain. This is why tens of thousands of British Tamils have been protesting outside Parliament here for several weeks.

We are British citizens, but our government is ignoring us and turning a blind eye to the ongoing massacres of our relatives and community in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka as a country was evicted from the UN human rights council last year for its gross violations of the human rights of its people. Sri Lanka does not let independent journalists report freely. The current government has been accused of being complicit in many abductions and killings of journalists and others.

The UK and other western states have suggested that by destroying the Tamil Tigers, Sri Lanka can be made peaceful. This is a profound misunderstanding of the state-racism and ethnic supremacy at the heart of the Sri Lankan crisis - a crisis that has now become genocide.

Britain is deeply implicated in this crisis.

When in 1948 Britain, the colonial power, granted independence to Sri Lanka, the Westminster-style democracy London set up allowed a pernicious Sinhala chauvinism to capture the state and begin the 60 years of violence and oppression the Tamils have now endured.

In 1977, after three decades of discrimination and state-backed mob violence, the entire Tamil political leadership united behind a demand for an independent state comprising the Tamil homeland as the only way to escape oppression.

The Sinhala-dominated state responded with violence, and a few years later, in 1983, a Tamil

armed struggle emerged in response. This resistance to the Sinhala state is led by the Tamil Tigers or LTTE - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Until 1983 Tamils have tried through many of their democratically elected leaders and parties to resolve this injustice by negotiations and peaceful means. Even during the armed struggle, LTTE has many times attempted to negotiate with successive Sri Lankan governments. As recently as 2002, a ceasefire agreement was negotiated between the government and the LTTE by the international community. Just as before, the Sri Lankan state abrogated from this agreement unilaterally in January 2008.

Since 1983, the problem in Sri Lanka has been characterised by western states as conflict, rather than state chauvinism. They have sought to support the Sinhala-dominated state and pressure the LTTE to "make peace".

The Tamils in Sinhala-dominated Sri Lanka face the same crisis as the people of Kosovo under Serbian rule.

The international community could not make the Serbian state led by Milosovic cease its attempts to wipe out the people of Kosovo, and ultimately Kosovo was granted independence to assure their safety.

Having abandoned the Tamils to majoritarian tyranny, Britain has consistently ignored the Sinhala chauvinism deeply embedded in the Sri Lankan state.

The UK has cynically sold weapons to the Sinhala military and tried to pass off the agitation by Tamils as one of poverty, merely requiring "development".

We want Britain to compel the racist regime in Sri Lanka to cease its genocide.

As a member of the UN Security Council, a close ally of the US and a member of the EU, Britain has the ability to do this. As the former colonial power that placed the Tamils at risk, and as a state that has sought explicitly to champion democracy and freedom, it has a moral obligation, too.

Remember, most British Tamils have direct relatives - mums, dads, brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces - left back in the war zone. They are genuinely concerned for their safety and whereabouts.

That is why Britain's Tamils are protesting outside Parliament day and night.



## OPINION

# India makes a hash of things - yet again

**Kumar David**  
The Island

RECEIVED wisdom for some years has been that Washington has developed a close understanding with Delhi on security issues relating to Lanka, and to put it loosely, had subcontracted its interests in this respect to India. It was assumed that the two countries had a working relationship, a similar understanding of terrorism and an adequate consultative process. American foreign policy, with its hands full in Iraq, Afghanistan-Pakistan, Iran and North Korea was glad to have a surrogate manage this theatre. Norway's role as honest broker was different; India has a deep 'own country' interest, and recently, this partnership with the US.

The Indo-American understanding commenced before the Great Crash of 2008 which demanded Washington's priority attention. And when the crash did come America should have been pleased to have a satrap deal with the mess in Lanka. But the Delhi government proved visibly incompetent in handling its delegated authority, failed to exercise power, lost control of events and allowed conditions that are acutely embarrassing for the Western powers to develop. Therefore,

America and the Europe have clearly sidelined India on the Lanka issue. I give more weight to this thesis than the alternative that the change follows an Obama Administration decision to jettison the 'global war on terror', deeming it oversimplified paranoia. There has indeed been a shift in American foreign policy on this insane 'war on terror' posture, but Delhi was booted out on the Lanka issue for sheer incompetence; it was unable to forestall one mess after another.

First let me recount how significant the strategic partnership between the United States and India has become using a recent publication. The emergence of a new phase in this partnership is best outlined in a recent paper 'War on Terror in South Asia' by Dr. Ninan Koshi which appeared in several places and most conveniently on the website Lines: (<http://lines-magazine.org/>). The core of Dr. Koshi's argument is that a fundamentally new phase in Indo-American relations commenced with the nuclear deal and a new partnership that places emphasis on strategic matters. A single extract from the paper conveys it.

"On the eve of his leaving the ambassadorial post in India, Robert Blackwill wrote in a leader page article (U.S. India Defence Cooperation) in The Hindu on May 12, 2003: 'Taken together our defence cooperation and military sales activities intensify the working relationship between the respective armed forces, build mutual cooperation for future joint military operations and strengthen Indian military capability which is in America's interest. ...An Indian military that is capable of operating efficiently alongside its American counterparts remains an important goal of our defence bilateral relationship. What we have achieved since 2001 builds a strong foundation on which to consummate this strategic objective which will promote peace and freedom across Asia and beyond'.

It was instability in the

Afghan-Pakistan region that really worried America; loss of nuclear-armed Pakistan to Islamic fundamentalists with close ties to global jihadists was unthinkable, and a new relationship with India was developed to project American power in an unprecedented way. As Dr Koshi says: "(T)he US has been engaged in a monumentally flawed and destructive campaign that President Bush described as 'all-out effort against terrorism and terrorist groups of global reach' with devastating consequences for South Asia and West Asia in particular".

We need to supplement Dr. Koshi's argument with a shared US-Indian economic objective as well, containing the other elephant in the global economy, China. Appointing Delhi as Washington's satrap to deal with the war in this bothersome island was a by-product of these two objectives. It

was also fair recognition that India, as the regional power, had special concerns and firsthand involvements.

The government in Delhi, egged on by the reactionary Madras Hindu, and not even abetted by the rightwing BJP, screwed things up almost from day one. Why, I cannot detail here, but only make passing mention of Premier Manmohan Singh's monumental incompetence, the Sonia (Rajiv) factor and India's legitimate odium for the LTTE, underestimating the effect of Lanka's war on South Indian politics, but perhaps most important of all, a naïve inability to read how clever Colombo could be in taking Prime Minister, Home Minister, Chief Minister, High Commissioner and National Security Advisor, all for a right royal ride.

*Continued on p10*



## This time we can't say "We didn't know"

**Nimmi Gowrinathan**  
The Huffington Post

THERE is a saying that has become common amongst those in the United Nations Human Rights Council. When a tense stand-off arises someone will say "Let's not play the naming and shaming game - let's try and work together." Perhaps this "game" played in the most elite policy circles is counter-productive - but it does allow history to identify those in positions of power who were complacent, cowardly, and indecisive at a moment when hundreds of thousands of civilian lives were on the line. In the case of Sri Lanka, there is no shortage of those to blame, and the footage from the civilian carnage in recent weeks should put all of us to shame.

The Government of Sri Lanka, representing the majority Sinhalese community in Sri Lanka, is calling its most recent

operation a "Hostage Rescue Mission" - claiming to have evacuated 30,000 civilians from the minority Tamil population from an active fighting zone. They say they are nearing the end of their hard-line military campaign to eradicate the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a guerilla group who has been fighting to carve out a separate Tamil state within Sri Lanka for nearly three decades. As they recaptured formerly LTTE-held districts in the North East of the island, Government forces have trampled on international humanitarian law, any semblance of free press, and committed human rights abuses on a scale that can be categorized as crimes against humanity.

As we receive daily reports of civilian casualties, the international community continues to listen to briefings, debate, and make "strong" statements of condemnation which will not jeopardize the delicate geopolitical bal-

ance that the Sri Lankan Government is relying on. Developing world nations have rallied around Sri Lanka's cry of neo-colonialism against western nations who highlight human rights abuses. Some simply vote alongside Sri Lanka, while nations like Libya, Pakistan, and Iran, have given hundreds of millions in aid along with substantial military training and technical support. While the U.S.A has limited its support to only "non-lethal" weapons (since the Leahy amendment) and India provides mainly intelligence support (radars, patrol boats) - both are warily monitoring the growing influence and involvement of China and Russia on the island.

It seems that economic woes in the Western world have not only affected consumer confidence, but has sparked a crisis of confidence amongst policymakers who now hesitate to challenge countries like China. Some prefer to hide behind the safety of the

War on Terror, promising to take on a more active role in Sri Lanka once the "end of terrorism" has been achieved. This week there will be a Tom Lanton Human Rights Commission hearing on Capitol Hill, where members of Congress will hear from Human Rights Watch, The Committee to Protect Journalists, and the Sri Lanka NGO Counsel. They will again detail gross human rights violations, the conditions in internment camps, and the concern for the lives of journalists and human rights workers.

When approximately 1,000 civilians die in one day of shelling, are Special Representatives appointed and condemning statements made our only option? Is every international institution and powerful nation so restricted by geo-political and financial realities that any sort of meaningful action becomes impossible - and worse, something we can no longer expect of them? In the last few days 68,000 civilians have

entered into internment camps where they join nearly 200,000 others recently from the conflict zone; 57,000 are being "processed" with no outside monitoring; 600 injured are waiting for ICRC transport to the only remaining hospital in the area which was recently hit by a rocket-propelled grenade; and 50-100,000 remain trapped inside and active war-zone. Since January of 2009, the International Community and the safeguards designed from lessons learned elsewhere have failed 5,000 civilians in Sri Lanka. The loss of the next 5,000 may come quicker than the first - and history will claim Sri Lanka as yet another case of lessons learned by a failure to act.

*Nimmi Gowrinathan is the Director of South Asia Programs at Operation USA and a Phd Candidate at UCLA, writing her dissertation, "Why Women Rebel? State Repression and Female Participation in Sri Lanka."*



# DIASPORA



HUNGER STRIKE, LONDON, UK



HUNGER STRIKE, LONDON, UK



BERLIN, GERMANY



NETHERLANDS



NETHERLANDS



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



OSLO, NORWAY



ROME, ITALY





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

01-05-2009 வெள்ளிக்கிழமை அக்டோபர் தித் வளக்கு அருளுதல் காலை 8.00 மணிக்கு 12 மணிவரை. அத்துடன் காலை 9 மணிக்கு கணபதி ஹோமம், நுகர்ஹோமம், நவகீர்த்திஹோமம் கும்பாசாக்கு குருப்பியாச்சேய முன்னிட்டு நடைபெறும்.

03-05-2009 சூரியி காலை 10.00 காயத்திர் அம்மன் அபிசேகம் திருவிழா

04-05-2009 புதன் மகால நவமிக்கு அபிசேகம் ஆரம்பம் நுகர் திரிசத் ஹோமம் பூதோதயாயகம் விதிபா

08-05-2009 வெள்ளி காலை 9.30க்கு விநாயகருக்கு அபிசேகம் சித்திராப்பெண்ணி வீசேட வழிபாடு

12-05-2009 செவ்வாய் சங்கடஹ சதுர்த்தி யாலை 5.00 அபிசேக ஆரம்பம் கணபதி மாவா மத்திர ஹோமம் தொடர்ந்து 7.00 நுலாயப்புகூச 8.00 வசத்த மண்டப்புகூச

27-05-2009 புதன்கிழமை சதுர்த்தி விதம் காலை 8.00 அபிசேக ஆரம்பம் தொடர்ந்து சகஸ்தாய அம்ச்சனை. காலை 8.00 அபிசேகம் கணபதிஹோமம் 7.30 நுலாயப்புகூச 8.00 வசத்தமண்டப்ப புகூச.

29-05-2009 வெள்ளி 108 கலசஸ்தாபன புகூச

30-05-2009 சனி காலை 7 மணிக்கு 108 கலச யாக வழிபாடு மீண்டும் காலை 8 மணிக்கு 108 கலச யாக வழிபாடு

31-05-2009 சூரியி காலை 7 மணிக்கு 108 கலச அபிசேகம் 11 மணிக்கு மஹா பூர்ணாதுத் திபாராதனை வீசேட புகூச, பிரசாதம்.

**ஆலயம் தொடருவது சாலவும் நன்று**      **மங்கள வாத்திய தேவைகளுக்கும் தொடர்புகொள்க**      2-4 Bedford Road, Walthamstow E17 4PX. Tel: 020 8527 3819, Charity No: 1092252



## NEWS

# Crouching Tiger

Anita Pratap

The Week

## Pirapaharan still has enough grit to continue the fight

LTTE leader Velupillai Pirapaharan is many things to many people-national leader, freedom fighter, revolutionary, guerrilla, killer, saviour, tyrant, visionary and terrorist. Lionised or demonised, depending on their standpoint.

I cannot know what is going on in Pirapaharan's head, but I am certain he is neither frightened nor desperate. He is not afraid of death. He has been courting it since he was 17. He is an indefatigable warrior, one who is philosophically detached from all things tactical. Yet, paradoxically, in achieving his strategic goal of Tamil Eelam, he displays an unwavering attachment.

I doubt whether these military setbacks will discourage, undermine or erode his confidence or commitment to his goal. He is very clear in his mind-he is fighting to liberate his people. For that principle he lives. For that principle he fights. And for that principle he is willing to die. Victories and defeats come and go. Territories are lost and won. Cadres die, comrades betray. But to his dying breath, he will remain true to Eelam.

In the 30 years that I have written about this conflict, never has the LTTE been so alone and friendless in its struggle. Pirapaharan is a victim of a combination of his actions and international circumstances. By assassinating Rajiv Gandhi, he made an implacable foe of India. And after 9/11, George Bush's war on terror created zero tolerance for terrorism around the world. It also blurred distinctions between ter-

rorist organisations and national liberation groups.

There is no liberation army in the world that has not faced state terror and in turn used terror as a tactic to pursue its nationalist goals. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh-Pirapaharan considers them heroes-were designated terrorists by the British rulers of India. Until recently, Nelson Mandela was on the list of terrorists.

The LTTE is banned as a terrorist organisation in some 30 countries. That has given the Sri Lankan government global sanction to destroy the LTTE. But in doing so, the international community has allowed a disaster of epic proportion to unfold. This is not an LTTE, but a Tamil tragedy. Nowhere in the world has a government been continuously bombing its own civilians for over a year. This is a crime Israeli, American and NATO forces are not guilty of.

A designated No Fire Zone has turned into a vast death chamber for Tamil civilians, trapped between the LTTE and the attacking army. Nowhere else in the world is a war being waged without outsiders and independent witnesses, not in Iraq, not in Afghanistan, not in Gaza. But in Sri Lanka, the media and NGOs have been banned from the war zone, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, among the lone relief workers there, has described the civilian situation as catastrophic. A quarter of a million Tamils uprooted. Tens of thousands imprisoned in refugee camps. Thousands killed



Wheels of fortune are not static and the LTTE leader still has the conviction to fight for Tamils' rights

and maimed.

Those who say the Tamils deserve this fate because they supported Pirapaharan are heartless and blind. There are many who support him and many who don't. Either way, they don't have the power to influence him. Is it then justifiable to punish ordinary civilians? Is it fair to kill Americans for the sin that Bush committed in Iraq, even though they not only elected, but re-elected him? The Sri Lankan army cannot be faulted for trying to destroy the LTTE. But the Sri Lankan government cannot condone or justify destroying Tamils and their homeland in the process.

But this only strengthens Pirapaharan. Politicians and bureaucrats don't realise that the LTTE welcomes war. It swells its ranks, reaffirms its *raison d'être*, it produces more emotional support for a separate state. From the previous wars that I have witnessed (journalists could manage to get in then), LTTE cadres love fighting. During peacetime, LTTE guerrillas are disciplined and restrained. In battle, there is a complete makeover. They are highly excitable, almost gleeful.

The LTTE has been written

off many times before. Pirapaharan has been 'killed' or 'nearly killed' many times in the past. If the army ever reaches his bunker, he will swallow his cyanide and the legend of Pirapaharan will probably attain mythical proportions. Lacking independent assessments, journalists repeat Sri Lankan claims that this is the end game, this is Pirapaharan's last stand.

Judging from the past, I doubt it. Sure, the Sri Lankan army will wrest the last piece of land from Pirapaharan's grip. But that doesn't mean the end of the LTTE. They will revert to what they are best at-guerrilla warfare, striking when least expected. As armies before have realised, conquering territory is one thing, holding onto it opens a Pandora's box of problems.

Pirapaharan has lost wars before. He had created a de facto Tamil Eelam with its own army, police, courts and taxation system not once, but several times in the past-only to have it all smashed and wiped out. And he had to start all over again. At 54, Pirapaharan still has enough grit to start again and continue for another 20 years.

In the meantime, he will be

watching the Indian elections closely to see which dispensation takes charge in New Delhi. He will be watching to see if there is a popular upsurge of support in Tamil Nadu for the plight of Tamils across the Palk Strait. He will be watching the disastrous impact of war on Sri Lanka's economy. He will be watching Hillary Clinton who said there should be a 'nuanced' approach to dealing with terrorism. He will be watching President Barack Obama who rightly analysed that conflicts stem from our perception of 'the other'.

Today, Pirapaharan's situation looks dire. But the wheels of fortune are not static. Things change. America has changed. The world is changing. Capitalism is discredited. Socialism sneaks in from the backdoor. Big banks have gone bust. Misery replaces prosperity in headlines. As new winds blow away many certitudes of the recent past, new opportunities, alignments and paradigms take their place on the world stage. And they will inexorably weave their impact in remote corners of faraway Sri Lanka, this beautiful emerald teardrop island that awaits its tryst with peace.

## Fast, protests ...

*Continued from p4*

Government tries to project to the world," she says.

"However, these protests aim to raise awareness of the truth and encourages the use of free media into the war stricken areas," she says.

The chants and slogans continue throughout the day into the night, stopping only every 3 hours for 2 minutes in order to respect and remember those suffering on

the ground in Mullaitheevu.

"This minute helps us meditate on the many innocent lives of the citizens as well as those who have sacrificed their lives in this war. The 2 minutes pause is ended by all repeating, a phrase meaning Tamils' yearning is for Tamil Eelam," Gayathirie said.

"Although Parames Anna knows the consequences, he believes that he is now the British government's responsibility," Gayathirie noted.

## India makes a hash ...

*Continued from p7*

Look, lets give the devil its due; the Colombo Administration has proved infinitely cleverer, craftier and cockier than the aforementioned Indian worthies - poor sods are in a daze; don't even know what hit them!

India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee declared for the umpteenth time last week: "Continuation of precipitate military actions leading to further civilian casualties at this time

would be totally unacceptable". His colleague Home Minister Palaniyandi Chidambaram referring to a decision made by the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Home Minister was quoted in the Hindu as follows: "It was decided to make a demand to Sri Lanka to announce ceasefire immediately. A ceasefire was not a demand or appeal, but a need of the Government of India". A few days earlier an anguished (about the prospect of losing his seat) Chidambaram told a Tamil

Nadu election rally: "India would urge Sri Lanka to extend the ceasefire beyond April 15. The 48-hour ceasefire announced by the Sri Lankan government was a success for India's external policy. But it was only a small development". And so they have gestured and gesticulated and gyrated for the better part of a year. Colombo responded by treating them all like a bunch of jokers from Jhansi and Jaipur.

*Continued on p15*



## NEWS

# UN says nearly 6,500 civilians killed in 3 months

Associated Press

HUNDREDS who fled intense fighting in Sri Lanka's war zone were awaiting evacuation from the tiny coastal village of Puttumattalan as the U.N. reported that nearly 6,500 ethnic Tamil civilians were killed in the last three months.

The U.N. estimates that 50,000 people were still trapped in the war zone after more than 100,000 fled earlier this week, spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs said Friday.

Nearly 1,000 awaited evacuation Friday.

Dr. Thangamuttu Sathya-murthi, a top government health official in the war zone, said there was a severe shortage of food and medicine in the area and people were dying of starvation.

The ongoing violence was so intense that many people were abandoning their dying relatives to flee the fighting, he said.

Doctors Without Borders, a medical relief group, said the civilians pouring out of the conflict zone included large numbers of people with blast, mine and gunshot wounds.

At least 6,432 civilians have been killed in the intense fighting over the past three months and 13,946 wounded, according to a private U.N. document circulated among diplomatic missions in Sri Lanka in recent days.

A foreign diplomat gave a copy to The Associated Press on Friday.

The U.N. has declined to publicly release its casualty figures and had no immediate comment on the document.

Civilian deaths have increased dramatically, according to the U.N. An average of 33 civilians were killed each day at the end of January, and that jumped to 116 by April, the document said.

More than 5,500 of those killed were inside a government-declared "no-fire" zone.

Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said the government took special care to avoid civilian casualties, and that many of those killed were combatants dressed in civilian clothing.

The Sri Lankan military on Friday gave journalists rare access to Puttumattalan, which until earlier this week was inside the section of LTTE territory designated as a "no-fire" zone.

The area around the village is full of coconut trees, but most of their leafy tops had been blown off.

Roads in the region were nearly deserted except for military vehicles and lines of damaged or destroyed houses. No building was intact.

Neighboring India, under pressure from its own Tamil population in the midst of a national election, sent National Security Adviser M. K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon to Sri Lanka on Friday to meet with President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

In a statement on their return to India, the officials said they expressed their concerns about the civilian casualties and the plight of those who already fled.

On Thursday, India called for an immediate cease-fire to allow the civilians to escape.

The White House on Friday said Washington is "deeply concerned about the plight of innocent civilians caught up in the conflict."

It said civilians should be allowed to leave the combat zone and warned that abuses of humanitarian law would make reconciliation difficult.

But Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena said the government had no plans for a cease-fire.

"The military operations will continue to free the remaining civilians," he said.

Brig. Shavendra Silva, a top commander in the conflict zone, said his troops were on the verge of crushing the remaining Tigers and ending the 25-year civil war.

More than 70,000 have died in the fighting to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have faced decades of marginalization by governments controlled by the ethnic Sinhalese majority.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he would send humanitarian experts to Sri Lanka to monitor the situation. The Security Council passed a statement in support of his decision Friday.

At the United Nations in New York, Mexican Ambassador Claude Heller, the council president, told reporters Sri Lanka's government must "extend all necessary support to the U.N. mission" so U.N. and International Committee of the Red Cross workers can help displaced people.



Though the UN is expressing concern about the civilians being injured, it is taking no action and top officials like V Nambiyar refuse to talk to the press about their visits to the island's conflict zones

## Britain, France fail to secure Sri Lanka truce

BRITISH Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his French counterpart Bernard Kouchner said Wednesday they had failed to secure an agreement from Sri Lanka to end an offensive against the Tamil Tigers and allow humanitarian access to civilians trapped by the fighting.

"We tried very hard, we insisted, and we insisted, but it is up to our friends to allow it or not," Kouchner told a news conference after talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart.

Miliband also signalled the talks had ended in failure, reminding the Sri Lankan government that calls for a ceasefire were "only to save civilians" and not the Tamil Tigers.

The announcement came after a much publicised visit to Sri Lanka by the British and French foreign ministers.

The Swedish Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt, was due to be the third member of the team but was denied a visa to visit the country by the Sri Lankan government, sparking a row with the European Union.

A Sri Lankan foreign ministry official indicated that Colombo felt it had already done enough by allowing Britain and France's top diplomats - David Miliband and Bernard Kouchner - to visit.

"The Swedish minister also wanted to jump on that bandwagon and we said no," the official was quoted as saying by AFP.

"Some think they can land up at our airport and expect a red carpet treatment. We are not a colony and neither a bankrupt Third World country. Our main donors are in Asia, not in Europe," the

official added.

Bildt described the snub as "exceedingly strange behaviour" and said he had recalled the top Swedish diplomat to Colombo.

Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, said Sri Lanka's government had made a "grave mistake."

The row is a symptom of Sri Lanka's growing antipathy towards the West, with officials in Colombo regularly accusing the United Nations and aid groups of supporting or colluding with the Liberation Tigers reported AFP.

"There certainly won't be a very good atmosphere in their meetings," a Colombo-based diplomat told AFP.

According to the French foreign ministry, the two will also urge "respect for international humanitarian law and protection of civilians" - although here too the Sri Lankan government says it has done nothing wrong.

The island's government has for months blocked most aid agencies from working in the war-torn north, and has herded escaping civilians into overcrowded camps which are guarded by the military.

Aid workers who have visited the camps have testified to food shortages, woeful sanitation, a desperate medical situation and chronic overcrowding.

Earlier this week the UN's humanitarian chief, John Holmes, left the island empty handed after he tried to secure greater humanitarian access.

Before his visit, the UN had announced that he was going on his three day mission to "discuss

with the government of Sri Lanka issues of pressing importance, including the need for the government to actively facilitate humanitarian missions critical to this area, access to those displaced persons ... (and) the release of UN staff members detained in camps."

Holmes was unable to get agreement on any issue.

Miliband too released a statement before his trip. "My priority will be to address the humanitarian situation in northern Sri Lanka and the continuing grave risk to civilians in the conflict zone," Miliband had said in a statement on Sunday.

"We reiterate and maintain our call for a ceasefire for humanitarian reasons," Miliband said, adding "the safety of civilians is of paramount importance."

He urged the government to allow civilian oversight of all internally displaced people (IDP) as soon as they left the conflict zone; to improve conditions and access to medical facilities in IDP camps; to allow international monitoring; and to allow free movement in and out of the camps.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown telephoned Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa earlier Sunday to express his concern "about the plight of civilians in the conflict zone," a statement from Brown's Downing Street office said.

"He repeated his call for a ceasefire, and pledged a further 2.5 million pounds (2.7 million euros, 3.6 million dollars) for humanitarian aid for displaced persons," it said.



## NEWS



Hambantota is the crown in China's global naval links and seals Sri Lanka's shift away from the West

## China declares support for Sri Lanka's war

DESPITE Sri Lanka's indifference to international calls to not fire at civilians and mounting civilian casualties, China has publicly declared its support for the Sri Lankan government's efforts to wipe out the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

China supports the efforts of the Sri Lankan government to safeguard national integrity while ensuring security and political stability, said Jian Yu, spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry at a press briefing on Tuesday April 21, in Beijing.

She was responding to a question about the end of the 24-hour deadline for surrender given to Pirapaharan by the Sri Lankan government, the Hindustan Times reported April 22.

According to Hindustan Times, China's declaration of support for the Sri Lankan government against the LTTE and in the process, extending its influence in the Indian Ocean, has further fuelled India's mortal distrust of its largest and most powerful neighbour.

According to Indian government sources, Beijing's support to Colombo cannot be viewed in isolation because it follows a series of initiatives aimed at influencing the Sri Lankan government.

These include selling huge quantities of arms to Colombo last year and boosting aid almost

five times to \$1 billion. In fact, China is now the largest donor to Lanka.

Its Jian-7 fighter jets, anti-aircraft guns and JY-11 3D air surveillance radars played a key role in the Sri Lankan military successes, said the Hindustan Times.

China came to rescue of Colombo after the US stopped direct aid to Sri Lanka because of its dismal human rights record.

What's worse, said strategic affairs expert Brahma Chellaney, Beijing has also roped in its ally Pakistan for providing military assistance to Sri Lanka.

Pakistan's own economy is in tatters, but it has increased its annual military assistance to Sri Lanka to \$100 million at Beijing's behest.

It is also well known that its air force trained its Sri Lankan counterpart in precision-guided attacks, add the Hindustan Times.

"The Chinese are courting Sri Lanka because of its location in the Indian Ocean -- a crucial international passageway for trade and oil. Chinese engineers are currently building a billion-dollar port in the country's south-east, Hambantota, and this is the latest 'pearl' in China's strategy to control vital sea-lanes of communication between the Indian and Pacific Oceans by assembling a 'string of pearls' in the form of listening posts, special naval

arrangements and access to ports," Chellaney told the Hindustan Times.

The Chinese are building a highway, developing two power plants and putting up a new port in the hometown of President Mahinda Rajapakse. Delhi is also feeling hard done-by by Beijing's support to Colombo over the issue of LTTE because it believes China is driving home an unfair advantage it has over India in the crisis.

"Unlike in our case, there is no moral dimension to the crisis for China. We have to think about the humanitarian situation and conditions after the offensive is over. There is no domestic compulsion for China but our involvement is much more intricate," Hindustan Times said quoting an unnamed source.

China, in fact, continues to aggressively pursue its strategic interests by building ports in the Indian Ocean rim, including in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

According to Chellaney, Beijing has sought naval and commercial links with the Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar.

"However, none of the port-building projects it has bagged in recent years can match the strategic value of Hambantota," Chellaney further told the Hindustan Times.

## India, Pakistan co-operation

BEHIND the success of the Sri Lankan army's operations against the Tamil Tigers is an interesting little detail of Indo-Pak cooperation, reported the Indian Express.

Separately but consistently, the two countries have trained and equipped the Lankan army to prepare and fight the LTTE, the paper said.

Sri Lanka has also turned to China for military support, with not only weapons being supplied by Chinese, but also training.

During his last visit, Defence Secretary Gothabaya Rajapakse signed an agreement with China to send military personnel there for training in the future. This is seen as a cementing of Sri Lanka's growing ties east and away from Western influence.

The Sri Lankan army says the reason for its success is that "we didn't reduce the momentum", planned the entire operation in advance and employed innovative counter-insurgency tactics to confront the Tigers, the Indian Express reported.

"I got training in both India and Pakistan. Both have been helping us a lot," said Brigadier Udaya Nanayakara, now the military spokesman.

"We send our officers regularly to India and Pakistan for specialised training. I did four courses in India and three in Pakistan. The last time, I trained in Secunderabad."

He said Lankan forces have been procuring the latest technology from both countries.

"We know they are rivals but we have nothing to do with that. We have benefited from both India and Pakistan," he said.

So how does Sri Lanka remain neutral in the rivalry of the armies of India and Pakistan, especially when it trains and works closely with both?

"We don't talk about it. Both are our friends," Nanayakara said.

Former Army chief General L Balagalle put this military cooperation in perspective.

"For me, 80 per cent of my advanced training happened in India. I have been trained in Pakistan as well. There are vacancies for our officers and men in both countries. We generally send company commander-level officers for training," he said.

Balagalle said during his tenure, India had problems providing equipment to Sri Lanka and that was when Pakistan stepped in.

"India was not keen to provide certain equipment because of policy, so Pakistan helped. We have been procuring equipment from China as well. We wanted equipment and would pay later, China agreed. It was mostly ammunition and we have already paid for it."

According to Balagalle, the Americans too helped with the training.

"But they have trained very few, and only officers. Majority of our men are trained by India and Pakistan. We sent our officers and men to India for special training in jungle warfare and counter-insurgency."

Nanayakara said India assisted by sharing intelligence during the current operation.

"India also helped by carrying out naval operations in the area. There were naval exercises too that helped," the paper quoted Nanayakara as saying.

## Libya lends \$500m

CONTINUING its policy of building relationships with non-western states that are willing to provide aid despite its horrific human rights violations, Sri Lanka has formed full diplomatic ties with Libya and borrowed \$500 million.

Following a visit by President Rajapakse in early April to the North African country, the two countries agreed to have full diplomatic relations. Media reports said Sri Lanka has selected the Chief of Protocol at the Foreign Ministry Sudantha Gamage Arachchi as Sri Lanka's first Ambassador to Libya.

Meanwhile, the Government Information Department in a statement Friday April 24, announced that during a special

telephone conversation held with President Rajapaksa, the Libyan leader had promised to grant a loan of \$500 million immediately.

The loan was promised to Sri Lanka during a recent visit by President Mahinda Rajapakse to Libya.

Further to the statement, the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi believes that the efforts of the President to bring about peace in the country would be fruitful and he praised the steps taken by the Sri Lankan government to defeat terrorism in the country completely.

In recent months Libya has opened its employment market to Sri Lanka offering as many as 100,000 jobs there to Sri Lankans.



## NEWS

# America in different gear on Sri Lanka

RECENT statements from international actors are indicating that in the United States there may be a change of policy in the making in relation to the Sri Lankan conflict whilst the other countries continue their policy of support for the state no matter what.

The LTTE also recognized and welcomed a refreshing attitude in US, different from the other countries.

Indicating the level of interest the United States is showing on the Sri Lankan conflict, the US Government recently held an interagency meeting to review the situation in the Sri Lanka.

The interagency meeting - the first of its kind on Sri Lanka - was attended by senior officials from the State Department, Pentagon, National Security Council, USAID, and several other agencies.

It is also reported that both President Barrack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton receive daily briefings on Sri Lanka.

In its latest statement, which is also the first statement on Sri Lanka by Obama's White House, the United States drew reference to two key points - the concept of territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and possible war crimes against its leaders.

In the statement US emphasised that continued military end to conflict will end hope for a unified Sri Lanka and added that it takes allegations of violence very seriously.

On Wednesday April 22, Clinton commenting on the ongoing conflict stated that Sri Lanka has caused "untold suffering" as it fights Tamil Tigers.

"I think that the Sri Lankan government knows that the entire world is very disappointed that in its efforts to end what it sees as 25 years of conflict, it is causing such untold suffering," Clinton told lawmakers.

Few days before Clinton's comments, the statement department released statement in which it called for an end to the military operations.

In the statement released on Thursday April 16, the US said it was deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaitivu area in Sri Lanka.

It called on the Sri Lankan government and military of Sri Lanka, and the Tamil Tigers to immediately stop hostilities.

It also called Sri Lanka to halt shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians.

Indicating the strong view the United States has on humanitarian access to the conflict zone, the statement further said: "The government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps."

"The Sri Lankan government, as the legitimate sovereign power, has before it an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict," the statement said.

"A durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities."

The US also warned that further killing, particularly killing of civilians, will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace.

The LTTE on Monday April 20, in a significant statement, recognized and welcomed a refreshing attitude in US, and pleaded the Sri Lanka government to listen to international opinion, to stop the war and enter into negotiations.

"The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam appreciates the genuine concerns expressed by the United States Government's statement dated 16th April 2009, on the escalating humanitarian catastrophe in the Vanni/Mullaitivu region."

"So far, while the rest of the world has concentrated on apportioning blame, the United States has stressed the importance of finding solutions to put an immediate end to the plight of the Tamil civilians being lured and attacked in the safe zone by the Sri Lankan Government."

"The LTTE urges the Sri Lankan government to stop its military actions, including shelling and bombing civilian areas and accept the call of the United States and other members of the International community for a ceasefire, which we believe will create a conducive atmosphere for talks on all relevant issues."

The LTTE statement issued from the political headquarters in Vanni also warned Colombo of dire consequences if the war is continued.

"The LTTE and the fight for our freedom will also continue. The methods may vary but Sri Lanka will never be able to live in peace as it imagines a military victory will bring. However, for the record, the LTTE would like to emphasize again that it is always ready to explore peaceful means to resolve the conflict", the statement said.



The United States, under Obama and Clinton, is taking a different line from the rest of the 'international community', being more open to criticism of the actions of the Sri Lankan government

## Perfect opportunity for US to prove credentials - think tank

"BARACK Obama's administration has said it is committed to the principals of international law and humanitarian protection. Sri Lanka is the perfect opportunity for the new U.S. president to show that this is not empty rhetoric," according to an influential think tank which played a key role in the formation of Kosovo.

Robert Templer of the International Crisis Group (ICG) in article said: "Urgent, determined, and united international action is necessary to ensure the safety of the innocent -- by the United Nations Security Council, other multilateral organizations, and individual countries that have relations with Sri Lanka, including India and Japan."

Only international supervision, unhindered by the government, can provide the necessary level of protection," Templer added, reflecting the changing and opportunistic perspectives of the IC, whilst being elusive on the crux of the crisis - the Tamil national aspirations.

The International Crisis Group, which was highly critical of the Eelam Tamil liberation struggle sometimes back, theoretically contributed to Bush's war on terror and the weakening of the Tamil defences leading to their genocide today, seems to have changed its perspectives, said a political analyst in Colombo.

Striking a big blow to the perspectives of Colombo and its Tamil paramilitary groups, the ICG report openly admitted the failure of the 'post-conflict development' in the East of Sri Lanka.

The report was critical at the thought of extending the failed model to 'post-conflict' north.

"The ICG's perspective, reflecting the anxieties of donor countries is understandable. But its failure is not recognizing the

fact that emotional involvement of the people and sense of belongingness are vital for any development," the political analyst told TamilNet. "In the context of Sri Lanka, they can come to the minds of Tamils only when their national aspirations are satisfied."

"Meanwhile, the ICG Asia programme director's article reflected another newly emerging concern of the international community, the uprising of the diaspora Tamil youth," he noted.

"An already humiliated Tamil diaspora is growing more volatile, angry, and mobilized - a potentially explosive combination," Templer wrote. "There are disturbing signs that a new generation of young Tamils in the United States, Canada, Britain, Europe, and India are being radicalized. That process has the potential to produce new forms of terrorism and violence. While the Tigers' targets have so far been contained to Sri Lanka, they might soon find new venues."

"The dream of an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka resonates powerfully across the diaspora and will certainly live on even after the defeat of the LTTE as a conventional military force", said Templer.

"The knee-jerking comes from guilt", was the response of the political analyst in Colombo.

On engaging the diaspora positively, Templer wrote: "All means of influencing the Tamil Tigers must be explored. The Tamil diaspora has an important role in persuading the LTTE to allow the trapped civilians to leave the target area and ultimately, agree to lay down their arms".

"Templer wants the diaspora to serve Colombo and the international community," the analyst told TamilNet. "Templer says how the war ends will be critical to Sri Lanka's future, but Tamils will not appreciate anyone approaching them from the perspective of saving the state of Sri Lanka," he warned.

## "Military end will end hope for Sri Lanka"

IN the first official US statement on the Sri Lankan situation, the White House has cautioned that, "It would compound the current tragedy if the military end of the conflict only breeds further enmity and ends hopes for reconciliation and a unified Sri Lanka in the future."

In a statement released on Friday April 24, the Obama White House said it was "deeply concerned about the plight of innocent civilians caught up in the

conflict between the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers and the mounting death toll."

It called on both sides to adhere to international humanitarian law and to "stop fighting immediately and allow civilians to safely leave the combat zone" and on the government to "stop shelling the 'safe zone'". The statement further stated that the White House is "very concerned about reports of violations, and take these allegations very seriously."



## NEWS

# Eelam Tamils continue to be a key election issue

PROTESTS, hunger strikes and shut downs in support of Eelam Tamils continued and political parties upped their pro-Eelam rhetoric in the southern state of Tamil Nadu amidst election campaigning for the May 13 Lok Sabha polls gained momentum.

As the Sri Lankan Army entered the northern part of the No Fire Zone in Mullaitheevu on Tuesday, April 20, causing large number of civilian casualties, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Muthuvel Karunanidhi called for a general state wide shut down and urged central government to give an ultimatum to Colombo to declare an "immediate and permanent ceasefire" in Sri Lanka.

Issuing a "final appeal", Karunanidhi asked all Tamils irrespective of their political affiliations to join the 12-hour strike.

"I insist that the Prime Minister, UPA chairperson (Sonia Gandhi) and external affairs minister give an ultimatum to Sri Lankan government for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and save lakhs of Tamils," he said in the telegrams.

"What we want now is to stop the killings of Tamils there. There should be a permanent ceasefire," he said in the statement.

"We cannot do any thing except crying for the Tamils. It is for the Centre to act now," Karunanidhi, who has come under fire from opposition parties for not doing enough on the Lankan Tamils issue, said.

On the day of the strike, shops and business remained closed in Tamil Nadu and traffic stayed off the road.

Most of the shops, including petty stalls, in the city remained shut till 6 pm. Schools and colleges across the state were closed and exams postponed.

The Tamil cinema industry also came to a standstill with all its activities suspended, including screening of films in theatres.

However, the strike call by the DMK is widely seen as an attempt to garner votes by being sympathetic to the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka.

"The strike call is a feeble attempt by Karunanidhi to show the people that he is concerned about the happenings in Sri Lanka," said Cho S. Ramaswamy, a political commentator.

The Sri Lankan war has caught India's ruling Congress party in a bind.

It needs to please ally DMK and win voters, without being

seen as going soft on the Tamil Tigers who are blamed for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Opposition parties in Tamil Nadu including the AIADMK and its allies, PMK, MDMK and CPM, questioned purpose of the strike, considering the DMK is part of the ruling coalition in Delhi which backs the war.

AIADMK general secretary J Jayalalitha said in a statement that the shut-down call was bogus, and that a general strike would only worsen the problems of the people.

"The AIADMK will go ahead with its election campaign plans on Thursday," she said.

She faulted Karunanidhi for failing to send out a potent warning to the centre to bring about a ceasefire.

"If Karunanidhi can't apply adequate pressure on the Union government now, when will there be a ceasefire?" she asked.

"And if India, a big power in the region, did not intervene and take strong measures, which other country would do so," she said.

PMK founder S Ramadoss criticised the DMK chief for calling for a strike only to counter a protest announced by the Sri Lankan Tamils' Protection Forum, comprising pro-LTTE parties.

The chief minister should take concrete steps instead of engaging in competitive politics on this issue, Ramadoss said at a press meeting.

Meanwhile, an AIADMK activist on Thursday, April 23, set himself ablaze in protest against alleged failure of both the Centre and Tamil Nadu governments to find a solution to the Sri Lankan Tamils issue.

Mani (43), a worker in a dyeing factory in Tirupur, doused himself with kerosene on the Kulathupalayam Main road and set himself ablaze, police said.

He was immediately rushed by the public to the Tirupur government hospital, where he is being treated for 90 per cent burns, succumbed to his injuries later.

A note reportedly recovered from Mani and addressed to AIADMK leader Jayalalitha stated that both the Centre and state governments have failed to solve the Sri Lankan Tamils problem.

Mani is the 12th person, to self immolate in India in the past few months, calling for action on the Eelam Tamils issue.



As Indian elections get closer, Eelam has become a vital issue in Tamil Nadu, with the AIADMK chief expressing support for Tamils in Sri Lanka and dismissing her opposition's efforts along similar lines

## We will fight to attain Eelam says Jayalalitha

A SEPARATE Tamil Eelam is the only solution that will permanently put an end to the problems of the Tamil people in the island of Sri Lanka, said Tamil Nadu former Chief Minister and principal Leader of the Opposition, Jayalalitha Jayaram at an election rally in Salem city.

In a powerful, moving speech, on Saturday April 25, she resolved to fight to attain independent Eelam.

"I met Art of Living founder Sri Sri Ravishankar who has just returned from the war-zone in the Vanni. He gave me CDs and photographs of the atrocities. My heart boils when I looked at it," the AIADMK leader said. If this

pathetic situation of the Tamil people has to be removed, if the problems of the Lankan Tamils has to come to an end, an independent Eelam is the only solution, she added. "We will fight to attain that independent, separate Eelam. Till today, I have never said that separate Eelam is the only solution. I have spoken about political solution, this and that. But, now I emphatically say, a separate Eelam is the only permanent solution to the Lankan conflict," she said.

Earlier, Jayalalitha had announced at an election rally in Thirunelveli (Tirunelveli) on April 18 that if elected in all the 40 seats, the AIADMK-led alliance

would have a say in the next Union Government and would strive to get Eelam if a fair political solution was not found for the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

Jayalalitha, had in the past espoused that a solution to the Tamil problem had to be found within the constitution of Sri Lanka. Few days earlier, in an interview to a popular Tamil weekly, LTTE political wing head, B Nadesan described the AIADMK led alliance in Tamil Nadu as 'an alliance of friends of Tamil Eelam' which was widely interpreted as LTTE's endorsement of AIADMK alliance in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in the southern state.

## Karunanidhi OK with Colombo

TAMIL Nadu chief minister and DMK president Muthuvel Karunanidhi said he believed Sri Lankan president Rajapakse would keep his word and not resume combat operations against Tamil Tigers, despite the Sri Lankan military declaring there is no ceasefire in place.

Karunanidhi had gone on a six-hour fast on Monday, April 27 to demand a truce.

He ended the fast after India said that Colombo had announced a halt in strikes against the LTTE - a claim which the Sri Lanka government completely denied.

"I'm totally satisfied with the Sri Lankan government's response to the fast I undertook on Monday. After a heavy shower there will be a drizzle that cannot be avoided and the present Lankan

move of continuing the war is akin to it," Karunanidhi told reporters at a news conference.

"I believe that Rajapaksa will keep his word. But I insist and urge that he must do as promised on Monday. In fact, I had offered to go on a fast nearly two months ago. VCK's Thol Thirumavalavan, DK's Veeramani and PMK's Ramadoss were present when I made that offer. But they prevented me from doing so," he told reporters.

Asked whether the peace talks could be held in Lanka without the involvement of the Tigers, as they were on the verge of a collapse, Karunanidhi indicated that a solution to the ethnic crisis was not possible without the LTTE.

"Even if you remove the vegetation from a land, it will blossom again by virtue of the fertility of the soil. This is evident from many freedom struggles."

AIADMK general secretary J Jayalalitha pooh-poohed the fast as a mere drama which was enacted to divert the attention of the people. "It is obvious India is providing the support to Lankan army in the ongoing war. Then whose attention Karunanidhi wants to grab by observing the fast?" she questioned.

She charged that the Lankan army had exposed the help rendered by India to them in the war. "The geographical sketch of the Tamil people living there has been provided by the Indian army to their Sri Lankan counterpart. That is why their army has succeeded this far in the war," she said.



NEWS

British Tamils Football League 2008/2009  
Final Table & Top Scores

Premier Division

Champion: Mahayana F.C  
Runner-up: West-3

											Players	Team	Top Scores
	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts				
1	Mahajana	18	14	2	2	61	10	51	44	1	Sean	Mahajana	16
2	West-3	18	13	3	2	52	16	36	42	2	Chrishanthan	Santos	14
3	Santos	18	11	2	5	50	32	18	35	3	Senthuran	Sunrise	13
4	Watch Me	18	9	3	4	34	29	5	30	4	Similan	Mahajana	11
5	wembley	18	7	7	4	30	27	3	28	5	Luxman	Santos	9
6	Kingston Boys	18	5	3	10	28	22	6	18	6	Ahilar	Surbiton	8
7	Sunrise	18	5	3	10	36	49	-13	18	7	Roshan B	Santos	7
8	Olimpics	18	5	2	10	12	52	-40	17	8	Prathip	Watchme	7
9	Surbiton	18	4	3	11	15	26	-11	15	9	Vinoth	Wembley	6
10	Blues	18	1	2	15	17	67	-50	5	10	Nisanthan	Mahajana	6
										11	Prasanna	West-3	6

Division One

Champion: Srimurugan F.C  
Runner-up: E-17 F.C

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

India makes a hash of things yet again ...

Continued from p10

The fact of the matter is that India has lost the plot; obvious, if one compares its present paralysis with the authority it seems to have had to call the shots a while ago. As recently as during preparations for the SAARC meeting in Colombo, and more so throughout 2008, GoSL was anxious what conditions India might impose. It could indeed have had its way to a considerable extent, but rather, chose to allow Colombo a free hand, carte blanche, little realising that the genie once out of the bottle would be much craftier than the dumb master. De facto there are massive asymmetries of power between countries of such gigantic difference in clout as Lanka and India.

A situation such as now, when GoSL can give Sonia, Singh, Mukerjee, Chidambaram, Narayanan and Alok Prasad the two fingers up, with jolly impunity and positive conviviality, is really quite funny but for the humanitar-

ian disaster, shockingly only on the sidelines as it were. Yes, this Indian government is caught by the short and curlies; it has no clout in Colombo anymore. Let us await the next thrilling instalment after the Indian general elections; things may change, who knows.

For the time being, Delhi has got itself discarded by both Colombo and the West and even Karunanidhi has begun to beat a retreat.

On April 17 the wily Tamil Nadu Chief Minister sent the following telegram to Sonia, Singh and a whole lot of others. "India should snap all ties with Sri Lanka, including diplomatic, if a ceasefire is not announced by the Sri Lankan government by tonight". Undoubtedly this is an election gundu (Tamil Nadu polls on May 14), but not only; the DMK is also buckling under the intense mass pressure building up in Tamil Nadu against GoSL and Delhi (for near unconditional support for GoSL in the war).

Colombo has shown Oslo the

door, why? Science fiction fans were awaiting a Norwegian auro-  
ra borealis, that is, secret negotiations leading to safe passage and security for the LTTE leadership. (The Norwegian Ambassador has responded: "This is, with all respect, pure and simple rubbish. Neither Norway nor any other actors have to my knowledge been involved in such talks."). The more likely reason is that the United States has been using Norway as a conduit for contacting the LTTE about the humanitarian situation of the IDPs. Colombo is livid, but for obvious reasons reluctant to play hardball with the US, so it sent a signal, it shot the messenger. It is backing up this diplomatic message with a barrage of crudities about US ambassadorial romps with LTTE socialites and undiplomatic sniffing of e-substances (leaked by "top intelligence sources" in Colombo to the Asian Tribune 16 April). In tandem, the diaspora is boiling and pressure on GoSL from the West is becoming

increasingly tough, nay hostile.

The first startling change was the Hilary Clinton-David Miliband joint statement which departed from previous practice by putting both the LTTE and GoSL in the crosswire. Then there was the EU Parliament's demand for a ceasefire followed by similar demands from Canada, US Congressmen and British MPs. US State Department releases are becoming more strongly worded and calling upon "GoSL and the LTTE to immediately stop hostilities, and to respect the right of free movement of civilians in Mulaitivu area". The State Department quote given next must be giving GoSL goose pimples as such pronouncements are being made with increasing and strident frequency. "Durable and lasting peace will only (be) achieved through a political solution that addresses legitimate aspiration of Sri Lankan communities. . . . Further killing will stain any eventual peace ... GoSL (must) employ diplomacy to permit a

peaceful outcome of the conflict".

The UN Secretary General has sent seasoned diplomat Vijay Nambiar to the region. Gordon Brown appointed Des Browne, the former defence minister, as a special envoy to the island in consultation with GoSL - the latter, under pressure from its chauvinist constituents, denied any such consultation, but this regime, within three years, has a longer inventory of lies to its debit than any previous Administration. Then there was the videoed meeting between Boucher, Blake and the Tamil diaspora - come on, all this must add up to something! Maybe, but my view is that the international response to the humanitarian situation is so half hearted, lethargic and lacking in robustness, that maybe these most honourable gentlemen will all, only be just in time to close the coffin lid on the IDPs. Maybe toothless India will have the last laugh after all if Colombo succeeds in taking the West as well for a well-earned right royal ride.



# GATPAHAM

Golden Name on the Fastest Finance



**Short term & bridging loans  
for commercial properties**

**T: 0203 178 5771**

**F: 0203 178 5772**



Registered office:

788 - 790 Finchley Road, London NW11 7TJ

Registered in England No. 04987209

E: [info@gatpaham.com](mailto:info@gatpaham.com)

W: [www.gatpaham.com](http://www.gatpaham.com)

Gatpaham Capital Limited

Avanta House, 1 Hammersmith Grove

London W6 0NB

Offices  
Shops  
Off Licenses  
Newsagents  
Restaurants  
Petrol Stations  
Hotels  
Pubs  
Nursing Homes  
Commercial Buy to  
Residential Buy to  
Property Developments  
Industrial Units



## Commercial Mortgages

Subject to Status

### Goldinvest Ltd.

10th Floor, St Martins House, 1 Lyric Square, London, W6 0NB

T: 0203 178 5771, F: 0203 178 5772, E: [goldinvest@amitex.co.uk](mailto:goldinvest@amitex.co.uk)

Registered Office: 788-790 Finchley Road, London, NW11 7TJ – Registered in England No. 6346260

CALL US NOW ON

**0203 178 5771**



\* **Had a car accident?**

\* **Need a Courtesy car?**

\* **Need help getting compensation?**

\* **We deal with All kind of vehicle accidents**

\* **We provide FREE service!**

\* **We charge NO FEE!**

**0845 8710 196 | 07903 810 196**