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'Hit and run' attacks not the answer: PLOT

Express News Service

Bangalore, May 17: The People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) would continue to strive to bring together the Tamil groups fighting for a separate State in Lanka despite the setback to their unity efforts.

The general secretary of PLOT, a major militant Tamil group led by Mr. Uma Maheswaran, told newsmen here on Thursday that the efforts for programmatic unity among the Tamil groups were "spoiled" by certain forces.

"As far as the cause is concerned we have no differences. The question is the strategy to be adopted for the liberation of Tamils", he said.

In February this year six major Tamil militant groups — PLOT, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Prabhakaran, Sabaratnam's Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), Balakumar's Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) and Padmanabhan's Eelam People's Liberation Front (EPRLF) met at Madras several times to map out a common programme for the struggle for Eelam. The LTTE later kept out of the talks.

Consequently, a liberation council for Tamil Eelam was formed which even discussed the nature of the polity of future Eelam and the delimitation of Tamil boundaries. The groups were scheduled to meet in the first week of March to approve the programme formally. A couple of days before the talks, PLOT's military secretary was kidnapped stalling the unity efforts. The PLOT leaders who accompanied Mr. Maheswaran, said the real impediment to talks however was the insistence of some groups to keep out the Tamil Eelam Liberation Army (TELA) from the front.

Explaining the differences between

the PLOT and other groups, Mr. Umamaheswaran said individualistic terrorist attacks against police stations and military convoys would prove "counter-productive in the long run though they might temporarily sway the emotions of Tamil youth".

As opposed to the "hit and run" attacks of Tiger groups PLOT believed in a mass armed struggle with the participation of the oppressed workers, peasants and students. Guerilla tactics would not bring a separate Tamil nation and it was vital to hold on to the territory and fight. This would enable the activists in protecting the people also from the military attacks, he said.

"There is no alternative to Tamil Eelam, he said. "We tried our best since independence and signed pacts more than thrice with both Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Mr. Jayewardene but each time we are the losers". As for the repression of Tamils both the Governments were equally ruthless, he said.

Explaining that their struggle was not against the Sinhalese who were themselves oppressed, he said the armed struggle was against the brute power of the State which was dividing the Sinhalese and Tamilians.

Mr. Jayewardene, he charged, was shamelessly selling out the country to US imperialists. Racism had deeply seeped into the psyche of the Sinhalese and there was no alternative to a separate Tamil nation.

PLOT, he said, had 6000 disciplined armed youth, some of them trained outside Lanka. He denied that they were being trained in Tamil Nadu or in any other part of India. He said the militant Tamil groups expected material help and arms from India but there was no need for a direct military intervention on the lines of what the Indian army did in Bangladesh. The Tamil groups could

take on the Sri Lankan army themselves.

PLOT leaders visited Sri Lanka almost every week despite the heavy Lanka naval alert. The leaders very often broadcast their speeches over a transmission centre in the north which they claimed was the most popular all over the Island.

NEWS

'Guerilla warfare won't get Eelam'

Express News Service

Bangalore, May 16: Though guerrilla raids on army units played on Tamils' emotions, they are not the right tactics, Mr. Uma Maheswaran, general secretary of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) said in Bangalore on Thursday.

Explaining the differences between PLOT and other groups, Mr. Uma Maheswaran said individualis-

have no differences. The question is the strategy to be adopted for the liberation of Tamils".

In February six major militant groups PLOT, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Prabhakaran, Sabaratnam's Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), Balakumar's Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) and Padmanabhan's Eelam People's Liberation Front (EPRLF) met at Madras several times to chalk out a common programme for the struggle for Eelam. The LTTE later boycotted the talks.

Consequently, a liberation council for Tamil Eelam was formed which even discussed the nature of the polity of future Eelam and the delineation of Tamil boundaries. The groups were scheduled to meet in the first week of March to formalise the programme. But, a couple of days before the talks, PLOT's military secretary was kidnapped stalling the unity efforts. The PLOT leaders who accompanied Mr. Maheswaran said the real impediment to unity talks however was certain groups insisting on keeping out the Tamil Eelam Liberation Army (TELA) yet another militant group from the front.

Explaining that their struggle was not against Sinhalese who themselves were oppressed, he said the armed struggle was against the State which was dividing the poor Sinhalese and Tamilians. Mr. Jayewardene, he charged, was shamelessly selling out the country to US imperialists. Racism had deeply seeped into the psyche of Sinhalese and there was no alternative but a separate Tamil nation.

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UMA MAHESWARAN

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As opposed to the "hit and run" attacks of Tiger groups, PLOT believed in a mass armed struggle with the participation of the oppressed workers, peasants and students. Guerilla tactics would not bring a separate Tamil nation and it was vital to hold on to the territory and fight. This would also protect the people from the military attacks, he said.

Mr. Uma Maheswaran who is in the city to mobilise sympathy for Eelam cause told newsmen without naming any group, that unity efforts were "spoiled" by certain forces.

"Unity for what?", he asked. "As the cause is concerned we

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