

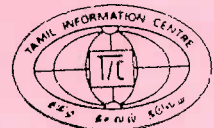
S O S

SRI LANKA

AN ISLAND

IN

PERIL



SRI LANKA is an island where the Government is waging war against its minority citizens, the Tamils.

SRI LANKA is a country whose government is now engaged in bombing a part of its own territory - the north-eastern part where Tamils have traditionally lived for centuries.

SRI LANKA is a multi-racial, multi-linguistic, multi-religious country populated by Sinhalese, Tamils, Tamil-speaking Muslims, a small number of Malays and Burghers, Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and followers of Islam. the official language is Sinhala (the language of the majority) and the officially recognised religion is Buddhism (the religion of the majority).

SRI LANKA is a country which claims to preserve Buddhism in its purest form, but has a Buddhist clergy which is aggressive, militant, anti-Tamil, actively involved in the political life of the

country. A former Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was killed by a Buddhist monk.

SRI LANKA is where a minority (indigenous) Tamil people whose origins in that island date back to the same 2,000 years or more as the majority are being told that they do not belong there as equals.

SRI LANKA is a country which pretends to be a Democracy but is in fact ruled with an iron fist by one man - President Junius Richard Jayewardene. He is both Head of State and Head of Government and his actions cannot be questioned either by Parliament or by a Court of Law. He is above the Law.

SRI LANKA does not permit political protests, processions (except those organised by the government itself), independant Trade Unions, and any form of dissent. The Radio, Television and a section of the Press is State-owned and other newspapers State-controlled. Over a period of 4 years - since May 1983 - the country

is being ruled under a continuous State of Emergency.

SRI LANKA has a Government which finding it difficult to crush Tamil resistance with force is constantly engaged in exhorting its majority citizens, the Sinhalese into joining in the war, by arming civilians and sending them to Tamil-majority areas under the guise of "Home Guards". It is trying hard to convert a governmental war against Tamils into a Civil war between the two communities.

SRI LANKA is a country where 10 years of continued violence under the rule of the same man - President Jayewardene - has brought it to the brink of economic disaster.

SRI LANKA is an island, despite being richly endowed with natural resources is totally dependent on aid given by Western governments and Japan for her survival.

SRI LANKA is a unique example of a poor country which spends over 30% of its annual budget

on arms expenditure, not for defence against external threat, but to subjugate its own citizens, the Tamils, who constitute barely 20% of the population.

SRI LANKA spends US \$750,000 a day to carry on the oppressive war, leading to a massive (US \$1 billion) budget deficit resulting in serious inflation and an alarming escalation in the national debt.

SRI LANKA is an island of just over 65,000 square kilometres in which nearly 10,000 Tamils have been killed by Sinhala mobs and government forces within the last 10 years. The notorious Government-backed pogrom of July 1983 alone took over 2,000 Tamil lives. The killing of Tamils is going on, every day, unceasingly, even as you read this.

SRI LANKA is the country which in proportion to its population (15.6 million) has the highest ratio of Refugees, both within (in camps organised not by the

Government but by Tamil, Church and social service organisations) and outside the country, in India and in several European and western countries.

SRI LANKA is a country which at its international airport in Colombo maintains a "Black List" of persons, a register running into about 200 pages, containing names of western media men, Human Rights activists, scholars, and politicians, as well as Tamil activists now living in exile in other countries, whose entry into the country is considered inimical to the country's interests. A recent victim who was turned back at the airport despite his possession of a 6-week visa is Professor Peter Schalk of Sweden whose area of research is basically Buddhism.

WHAT GOES ON IN SRI LANKA, HAS LONG CEASED TO BE AN "INTERNAL AFFAIR". WHILE VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES, CHURCH GROUPS AND LIBERAL OPINION WORLD-WIDE HAVE CONDEMNED SRI LANKAN VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN OFFERING MILITARY AID, BOTH DIRECT AND INDIRECT, THUS DESTABILISING THE REGION AND DEBILITATING SRI LANKA ITSELF; SUPPORTED BY PRIVATE ARMS DEALERS AND FOREIGN MERCENARIES. A 4-YEAR EFFORT BY THE IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOUR INDIA TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM THROUGH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT HAS FAILED; IT HAS NOT ONLY FAILED BUT THAT FAILURE HAS BEEN CONVERTED BY THE SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT THROUGH ITS KEPT MEDIA, INTO ANTI-INDIA HYSTERIA.

AS MEMBERS OF A PEACE-LOVING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, YOUR CONCERN IS VITAL. OPPRESSION ANYWHERE IS A BLOW TO PEACE EVERYWHERE. THE THREE MILLION SUFFERING TAMILS IN SRI LANKA NEED YOUR HELP!

HOW DID SRI LANKA
COME TO THIS PASS?

“SRI LANKA: 10 YEARS
OF JAYEWARDENE RULE”

READ THE FULL STORY

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH
AND OTHER LANGUAGES
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