

# SRI LANKA

**A MAN MADE  
DISASTER**

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The situation in Sri Lanka is a concern of all good-wishing people.

"India watches with serious concern, of the developments in Sri Lanka, where many innocent Tamils are being killed during military operations".

Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister

"The Tamil minority have reasonable grounds to fear that they may fall victim to arbitrary killings by members of the security forces, could be subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions, and could, following arrest, be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment..."

Amnesty International

"Methods of torture includes, hanging people upside down while beating them all over the body, and insertion of chilli powder in the nostrils, mouth and eyes and on the genitals..."

Amnesty International

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- \* Tamils have been living on this Island for more than 3,000 years. Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are their major religions. About a million Tamils are in the hill country, brought from the southern state of Madras, nearly 200 years ago by the British to work in the plantations. Together they number 5 million.
- \* Before the arrival of the British, Tamils had their own state, in the north and east of the Island.
- \* Since 'Independence' Tamils have suffered racial pogroms periodically; 1948,56,58,66,67,72,77,81,83.., during thousands have lost their lives horrendously.
- \* In 1948 the plantation Tamils who had several representatives in the parliament were disfranchized, thus lost their citizenship.
- \* Successive Sinhala governments used the Tamil issue to come to power, whipping up Sinhala chauvinism in order to win votes.
- \* Negotiations between the Tamils and Sinhalese to bring about a peaceful solution to the crisis came to nothing, but, when certain agreements were made, they were subsequently squashed, due to the chauvinist pressure within Sinhala politicians. Banda-Selva pact, Duddiy-Selva pact are irritant examples to that.

The recent attempt at Thimbu with the help of the good offices of India ended in failure due to the intransigence shown by the Sri Lankan government. A statement by the president, "Military solution first, before considering a political solution...", shows the pretence and the futility of the exercise by the government at the Thimbu talks.

Then, what is the present predicament?

#### SITUATION REPORT

- \* There are more than 150,000 Tamil refugees in the Island, another 100,000 in India and a further 100,000 in Western nations seeking asylum.
- \* More than 5,000 Tamils have been massacred since the Black July of 1983 and several thousand more were injured.
- \* More than 6,000 Tamils of all ages are in special military camps, without trial. But, no records of many hundred taken into custody by the 'security' forces.
- \* Exclusion zones, security zones, surveillance.. are all present day reality in the Tamil areas, prohibiting normal activities such as trading, fishing, farming etc.. In these zones, one cannot own a vehicle or use it without permission, enter or leave without permission or an identity card, security forces have the power to demolish anything that obstructs sight, search and destroy 'enemies' with impunity, or without a threat of a judicial enquiry.
- \* Thousands of Sinhala settlers (since 1948), have been armed and are termed as 'Home-guards' to harass the local Tamil population. A further 200,000 would be sent to the Tamil areas says the government.
- \* Passengers travelling to the Tamil areas (Tamils of course) by Railways - a government corporation, have to pay more.
- \* Several hundred Sinhala youths and intellectuals belonging to various political and pressure groups are put in jails under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), the very same notorious law under which hundreds of Tamils have disappeared.
- \* Foreign journalists are prevented from entering Tamil areas, for 'their own safety'.

#### FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT

- \* Israeli Mossads, 'Ex SAS men' supplied by a Channel Island Security Firm KMS, and other mercenaries are training and advising the security forces as admitted by the government, but, in reality with recently arrived Pakistani military personnel, directly participate in military operations.
- \* The USA through Pakistan and UK and the FRG through Singapore have supplied the Sri Lankan government more than 100 gunboats, 50 helicopter gunships and several crates of arms and ammunition.

- \* Israel, South Africa and China have also supplied the government, several dozens of gunboats, helicopter gunships, armoured cars and crates of arms and ammunition.
- \* Further arms purchases are being made, with funds and loan generated in the West, from Brazil, Italy, Portugal and Thailand, mostly from subsidiary companies of the USA, UK and FRG.

#### 'FIVE STAR DEMOCRACY' SRI LANKAN STYLE

- \* No general elections since 1977, no prospect in the near future says the government. While the only Tamil political representation in the parliament - the TULF has its members exiled in India.
- \* One can be arrested and put in jail to rot, just for carrying an anti-government placard, without trial (a Tamil can disappear without trace). And judges can be replaced or physically abused if their rulings are not partial towards the government.
- \* Trade union activities are considered anti-state manouvers and suppressed without mercy.
- \* The number of unemployed have gone up several fold and the majority of the population are getting poorer by the day, while the defence spending has increased by 800% (from RS 750 million to RS 6 Billion, that is, currently \$3/4 million a day)
- \* Resignation letters of all the ruling party members in the parliament are in the pockets of the president as claimed by himself.

Today the world is faced with the obscenity of an illegitimate regime in Sri Lanka conducting a war of genocide against the Tamil people, while using the climate to suppress all civil and democratic rights of the Sinhala people as well.

It is the responsibility of every decent human being, to use their intelligence to see through the 'informations' in front of them to distinguish between false propaganda and evidence. Read what Mr Don Mithuna, leader writer of influential weekly - the Weekend, states "We have spent millions of taxpayers' money on propaganda that have boomeranged on our doorstep. We hired the wrong people to do the right thing to damage our image".

Such is the state of affairs, where by every aspect of the state machinery is pitted against a Tamil community, helpless and scattered throughout the world.

We, thus can say, the history will not forgive the global community if it sits idly by without making efforts to reverse these trends and create the conditions for social, economic and political justice in Sri Lanka.

VICTORY TO THE TAMIL PEOPLES' STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION.

VICTORY TO OPPRESSED SINHALA MASSES TO WIN THEIR TOTAL LIBERATION.

VICTORY TO ALL THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

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