



Sinhala colonisation in sacred land of Tamil martyrs

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Puthu-maaththa'lan, a part of the Mu'l'li-vaaykkaal sacred land of the Eezham Tamil martyrs, was subjected to Sinhala colonization this week with the protection of the Sinhala military occupying the land, news sources in Vanni said. The resettled Tamil fishermen at Ira'naip-paalai and Puthu-maththa'lan resisted the arrival and colonisation of their coast by Sinhala fishermen from the South on Tuesday. The Sinhala fishermen, keeping their equipment for safe custody with the SL military, vowed that they would come back and colonize the land during the scheduled visit of Mahinda Rajapaksa to Mullaith-theevu on Sunday. But they didn't go back. The Sinhalese were hiding in the SL military camp, and on Wednesday when the Tamil fishermen returned from the sea, to their surprise they found their coastal stretch was colonised by the Sinhalese.

The original Tamil inhabitants of Ira'naip-paalai, who went into the barbed-wire detention camps after the war, were allowed to resettle only after one and a half years. Around 436 families resettled.

More than 75 per cent of the inhabitants of this village are fisher folk. But the coastline belonging to them at Puthu-maaththa'lan, roughly 3 km away, was allowed for fishing only three months back.

In the mean time, around 20 Sinhala fishermen families arrived at the scene on Tuesday. Some of them were claiming that they used to have their fishing camps there decades ago, before the 1983 pogrom.

The colonizing Sinhalese started intimidating the local fishermen and destroyed their sheds at the shore. When the situation became tense, officials arrived at the scene started luring the local Tamil fishermen, saying that both could jointly carry out fishing and the Tamil fishermen will have the benefit of using the boats of the Sinhala fishermen.

The colonizing Sinhala fishermen came prepared with deep-sea fishing craft. The war-affected Tamils have lost all their fishing boats and now they restart their profession only with catamarans.

The protesting Tamil fishermen pointed out that how a similar colonisation started at Kokku'laay, some kilometres south, has now become a major Sinhala colony depriving local Tamils of their land, sea and livelihood.

The Sinhala colonisation at Kokku'laay, a demographically strategic location for the contiguity of Northern and Eastern Provinces, started with 30 Sinhala families. But now there are over 300 Sinhala families.

Tuesday noon to evening witnessed a scene of arguments at the Puthu-maaththa'lan beach, where the occupying Sinhala military took position to safeguard the colonising Sinhalese.

At the end of the day, keeping their equipment at the SL military camp, the Sinhala fishermen intimidated the Tamils saying that they would return with 'permission' when Rajapaksa visits Mullaith-theevu on 03 February.

But, on Tuesday night the colonising Sinhala fishermen were hiding in the SL military camp.

On Wednesday morning, when the Tamil fishermen had gone for fishing, a fully armed Sinhala military contingent commanded by a Major, 'settled' the Sinhala fishermen families at Puthu-maaththa'lan and was giving full protection to them.

The local fishermen returning from the sea protested, but they were chased away by the occupying Sinhala military.

In the distant past, the Tamil fishermen were not bothering much of the arrival and camping of Sinhala fishermen from the South. But now they come with a military-abetted agenda of permanent colonisation and structural genocide. While most of the potential coastline is occupied by the SL military the colonizing Sinhala fishermen occupy even the remaining patches. The Tamil fishermen who just now limp back to their profession are systematically ruined, commented gagged Tamil officials in the district serving the Colombo regime.

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