



தமிழீழ விடுதலைப் புலிகள் Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Press release

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Tsunami affected Tamils continue to be subjected to more devastation

26 December 2004 marks an unforgettable day in the history of the Tamil people for the deep scars it left in the Tamil psyche. In the early hours of that day, within a few seconds, in excess of 17,000 Tamils died. Many more thousands were injured. 344,000 people became refugees having lost their homes. Tamil cities and villages were razed to the ground.

About ten countries in the Indian Ocean faced similar devastation which was caused by an earthquake in Indonesia. In the island of Sri Lanka it was not just the Tamils but the Sinhalese also faced the devastation. It affected the people within the fold of the Sinhala Buddhist hegemonic philosophy that was promoting the destruction of people of other ethnicity and religions. It also affected the people who were already struggling amidst destruction and misery. The tsunami did not discriminate between ethnicity, religion or language.

The devastating tsunami also brought out, in an unprecedented manner, the concern of the humanity to fellow human beings. As the media took the news of the devastation to all corners of the world, the tragedy shook the conscience of fellow humans all around the world. The world saw the unique coming together of the human kind to share in the misery and assist the affected.

Humanitarian agencies and many governments with the enormous sums of money collected to assist the people began their work. The island of Sri Lanka had a unique place in their plans. The attention of the international community was drawn towards the island because it was affected by the tsunami during a period of peace process following several decades of brutal war. The international community planned to use the opportunity to also create goodwill between the divided ethnic groups.



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The tsunami waves that shook the conscience of humanity failed to wake the conscience of the Sinhala government immersed in the Sinhala Buddhist hegemonic philosophy. This government treated the tsunami as a welcome means of destroying the Tamil people. It failed to notice the thousands of Tamils who lost their lives, their destroyed, homes, schools, hospitals and offices, and the hundreds of thousands of Tamil refugees. Instead it imagined and celebrated that the Tamil leadership and the naval wing of the Tamil force lay destroyed by the tsunami. The Sri Lankan media was totally occupied with reports of this nature.

The Government of Sri Lanka, ignoring the fact that two thirds of those affected in the island were from the Tamil homeland, channeled all international tsunami aid to the Sinhala areas. It used the volunteers and the security forces that came to assist from several countries to rebuild the Sinhala areas.

The responsibility of caring for the devastated Tamil people fell on the shoulders of the LTTE. It is well known to the world that the recovery work in the Tamil homeland was exemplary. The structures put in place by the LTTE for tsunami reconstruction was praised world wide. The assistance from their Tamil brethren living around the world went a long way to help the affected Tamil people. Many international humanitarian agencies also came forward to channel their assistance through the structures put in place by the LTTE. The Government of Italy also gave its assistance directly to the LTTE. All of this assistance went a long way to alleviate the misery of the Tamil people. Not even a drop of the international assistance given to the Government of Sri Lanka reached the Tamil homeland. In particular, relief convoys sent from the northern parts of the Tamil homeland to the eastern parts of Tamil homeland of Trincomalee, Batticaloa, and Amparai, were stopped and redirected to the Sinhala areas by the Sri Lankan military and members of the JVP political party.

International community knows very well that the Government of Sri Lanka neglected the Tamil people affected by the tsunami. When the UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan, and the UN Special Representative for tsunami reconstruction, Bill Clinton expressed interest in visiting the northern parts of the Tamil homeland during their visit to the island the Government of Sri Lanka denied them permission.

In the end, the LTTE came forward to create a joint structure with the Government of Sri Lanka to implement reconstruction projects with international aid and facilitation. This too was thrown to the dust bin by the Government of Sri Lanka even though this joint structure was promoted by the international community.



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Just like, the right to their language was denied, like their right to education and employment was denied, like their right to livelihood was denied, their right to accept the assistance given by the international community for tsunami reconstruction was also denied to the Tamils. Tamil people are deeply hurt that the international community condones the Government of Sri Lanka to continue to claim the right as a “sovereign government”.

In the Tamil homeland, even now, assistance to the people devastated by the tsunami has not progressed beyond the temporary shelter phase. Tamil people are increasingly doubtful if, they will ever get permanent homes or their destroyed cities will ever be rebuilt. Not only that, the Government of Sri Lanka has begun to openly stage another war on a people who have been devastated by decades of war and the tsunami.

While, tsunami affected Sinhala people are resettling in new homes, the worst affected Tamils are being chased even from their temporary shelters. This is particularly so in Vaharai in Batticaloa and the eastern coast of the Jaffna peninsula.