



தமிழீழ விடுதலைப் புலிகள் Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

10 August 2006

Press Release

The plight of the Tamil community under GoSL oppression

The Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL) actions against the displacing civilian population of Trincomalee are considered a major violation of the Ceasefire Agreement and also places the peace process in grave danger. Immediate action must be taken to address the needs of civilians trapped in the LTTE administered areas of Trincomalee district.

Close to 42,000 civilians are trapped and displaced, with no proper food, water, or medical assistance in LTTE areas of Eachchilampattu, Sampoor, Verugal, Kathiraveli, Vaharai and surrounding villages.

GoSL military strikes and embargo against displaced civilians

For the last three months the GoSL imposed an undeclared embargo on food and other essential items to the LTTE areas. For the last three weeks the GoSL has imposed an even more severe embargo on relief items sent by ICRC, UN and international aid agencies, aggravating the humanitarian situation in LTTE areas. While attempting to escape from this dire situation again, civilians were targeted by GoSL's shelling and aerial bombardment. Displaced civilians who have reached safer areas in Vaharai continue to be without food and water due to the continued GoSL military offensive and embargo on food items coming from Batticaloa district.

The blockage of relief coupled with the GoSL military strikes have made it impossible for civilians to seek any safety or normalcy.

ICRC, UN and international agencies' attempts

ICRC relief has been blocked at the Mankerni checkpoint and the Panichchankerni checkpoint for the last two days, leaving displaced civilians in and around Vaharai with close to nothing.

UN agency officers in a meeting in Kilinochchi on 7 August expressed their concern over the aid being blocked to civilians in LTTE areas by SLA checkpoints in Somapura and Kiliveddi.

A UNHCR statement on 8 August revealed that they did "not have access to Mutur, where 4,000 people are said to be trapped, or to Eachchilampattu, where some 11,000 people are said to be in dire need of humanitarian help."

UNICEF estimated that of the 40,000 civilians displaced half are women and children. UNICEF also stated, “There are two areas we haven’t had access to, but we believe the number of displaced in those areas to be up to an additional 25,000.”

International news services reported from Trincomalee that “no international agency has reached ‘Tiger’ territory.”

The GoSL is making full efforts to provide relief and shelter to the 21,000 civilians that have displaced from Mutur East to the government controlled area of Kantalai, consisting of mainly Sinhala and Muslim civilians. However no attempts are being made by the GoSL civil authorities to address the needs of the Tamil population trapped in and displacing from LTTE areas.

GoSL’s duplicity

We hope the international community can understand the duplicitious actions of the GoSL in their efforts in trying to cover up this humanitarian disaster that was created by their unwarranted military strikes. In recent discussions with Special Peace Envoy Mr Jon Hanssen-Bauer and per the request of International Development Minister Mr Erik Solheim, the LTTE was focused on taking a peaceful route to solve humanitarian issues of the civilians by opening the Mavilaru water sluice gate without any conditions. However, the GoSL has made clear by their military actions that they are operating with a different agenda.

The plight of the Tamil civilians in Trincomalee clearly shows that the Tamil people are unable to survive under an oppressive Sinhala regime.