

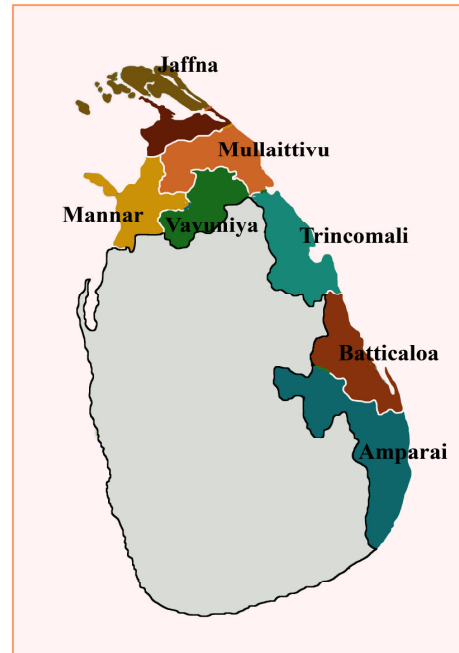


Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil homeland for January 2008

Press release of LTTE Peace Secretariat

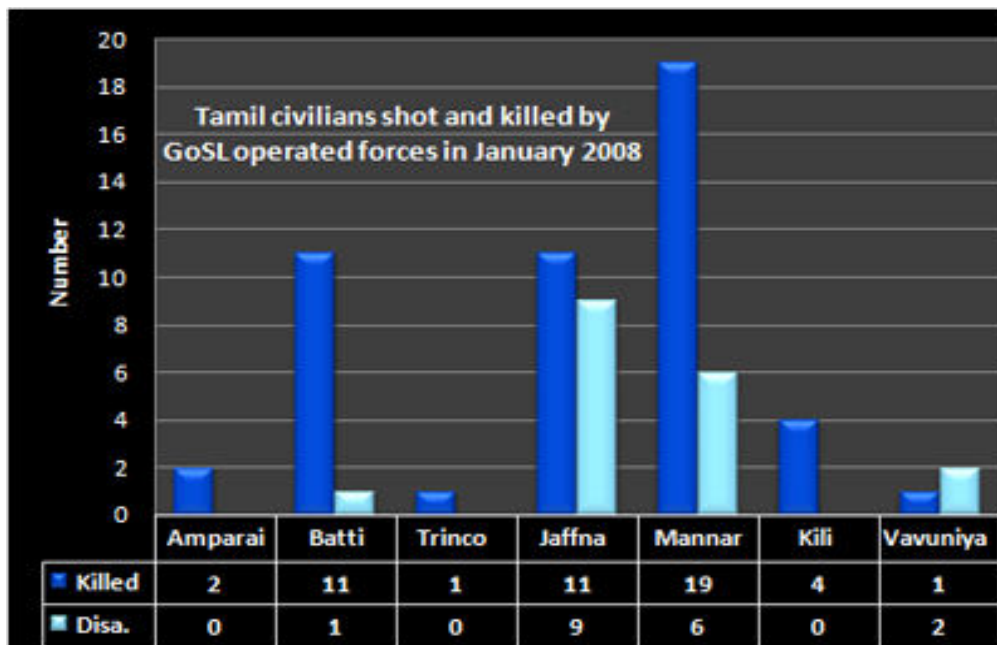
Civilian casualty during Cease fire – 2002 till present

Type	Number
Killed	2134
Disappeared	1026
Displaced	340,000
Militarized	300,000



January civilian toll

49 Tamil civilians were killed and another eighteen civilians were disappeared by the Sri Lanka government operated forces in the Tamil homeland in the month of January 2008.



19 civilians in Mannar, 11 civilians in Jaffna, 11 civilians in Batticaloa, 4 civilians in Klinochchi, 2 civilians in Amparai, and another 2 civilians from Vavuniya and Trincomalee were killed by the GoSL operated forces within this month. Among the 18 disappeared, nine civilians are from Jaffna and six are from Mannar.

This report includes the 'Thadchanamaruthamdu massacre' in which 18 civilians including 12 children were killed in a claymore attack by the Sri Lankan military Deep Penetration Unit, just a few meters from the famous Madhu church in Mannar.



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Also included in this report are, the killing of Panchadcharam Kunenthiran, a former head of Jaffna University student union and an external student in the University, killing of three siblings by paramilitary members inside their house, and the killing of four civilians in a cycle bomb attack by the paramilitary in Thirunelvely, Jaffna.

Also during this month, four civilians were killed in indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombing by the Sri Lanka government forces in Kilinochchi.

Among the reports on 18 disappearances, abduction from Thalikkulam IDPs camp and the ongoing 'White Van' abduction by GoSL operated forces are highlighted.

Aerial bombing

Aerial bombing has become part of the social life for the Tamil people, especially for the 400,000 people living in Vanni that is administered by the LTTE. Daily bombing and rushing to the mud bunkers is making even two year old toddlers to speak of bombers and bunkers.

Kanahapuram bombing

On 17 January, Sri Lankan Air Force bombed Kanahapuram area close to Kilinochchi town killing one young man and injuring six more including one child from the nearby Kanahapuram school. The bombs fell very close to this school, one of the largest schools in Kilinochchi. Many students of this school sustained injuries during the bombing that was caused by fleeing in panic and falling over. Parents said that their children came home with blood stained uniforms and injuries.

It is noteworthy that January 17 was the day announced by the Department of Education as the day for welcoming the new students who are just starting school. These are the six year olds. The very young children are given special treatment on this day so that they remember their first day at school with pleasant memories. It was during this ceremony at this school that the bombs fell. Following this bombing all schools and shops in Kilinochchi town were closed for a few days.



The traumatized students of the school were given counseling the following week by Annai Illam counseling services.

Udupukkulam bombing

Thirteen civilians, including seven children who were playing in a playground after school, were injured in Udupukkulam in Mullaithivu by Sri Lankan Air Force's indiscriminate aerial bombing. The other injured civilians were at a Kali temple praying during the evening pooja time.

Civilians homes and plantations have been also destroyed by the bombing.

Ampalahaman bombing

In three separate sorties spread over 20 hours, Sri Lanka military carried out extensive bombing over Ambalahaman forest area in Kilinochchi destroying vast extents of forests.

At 11.30 am and at 5.20pm on Wednesday and again at 6.45am on Thursday Sri Lanka military dropped more than 16 bombs over the Ambalahama forest area damaging 10 hectares of forest land.



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The Forest Protection Division of the LTTE has undertaken extensive forest replanting in recent times. These young plants as well as many old forest plants were destroyed in this mindless bombing of the Sri Lanka military.

Speculation is rife among Kilinochchi residents about the rationale behind the bombing of forest areas which only results in the destruction of the environment.

Claymore attack on school bus kill thirteen children



The regular private bus service from Palampiddy to Madhu at 2.00pm on week days mostly carries school children and teachers returning home from school. So it was on 29 January.

When the bus was very close to the famous Madhu church for Mother Mary, the bus was hit by a claymore mine exploded by the Sri Lanka military.

Thirteen school children in the bus were killed and a further seven adults, including the principle of the school, were killed. Eight children and seven adults were injured.

The location was a forest road, 15 Kilometers from the nearest hospital. With depressed health facilities in the area that has been under constant artillery fire from the Sri Lanka military the arrival of an ambulance to remove the injured to several hours while the injured children waited on the

forest ground.

Among those who came to rescue the injured and remove the dead were Catholic priests of the nearby Madhu church.

Mass graves with seventeen bodies

Mass graves are another common theme in the recent history of the Tamil people. Many such mass graves of the last two decades still remain uncovered because the Sri Lankan military is still occupying the area.

The first new mass grave since the signing of the ceasefire in 2002, which was unilaterally abrogated by the Sri Lanka Government this month, was discovered on 24 January 2008, in the Anuradhapura district following information from locals who said that they can see a human hand sticking out from the ground.

The two mass graves next to each other were dug up and 16 bodies were recovered. The judge present during the digging noted vehicle tire marks leading to the graves. The bodies were removed to the Anuradhapura district hospital for forensic examination. According to the forensic report submitted to the judge, six of the bodies in one grave were buried two weeks prior to the exhumation and the other ten bodies in the other grave were buried ten days prior to the exhumation on 24 January. The forensic report also said that the hands were tied behind the back, some of the bodies had gun shot marks and some of the bodies had torture marks.

Unable to identify the bodies, they were ordered to be buried in the Anuradhapura cemetery for future exhumation, after video recording and photographing the bodies added the hospital report.

There is no doubt that if the bodies are that of the local people it would have been identified immediately. It is therefore beyond much doubt that these are the bodies of young Tamils who have disappeared in scores in

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recent weeks and months. The burial of the bodies on two occasions four days apart and the presence of tire marks point to the Sri Lankan military as the culprits.

Arrest of another university student in Jaffna

An external student of the Jaffna university, Panchadcharam Kunenthiran, was shot and killed inside the university complex by Sri Lankan military on 21 January 2008 when he went there to meet friends. Another University student was arrested from his home by the Sri Lanka military in Jaffna.

In recent times, three university students have been murdered after arrest by the Sri Lanka military and another three were released after severe torture. One university student arrested by the Sri Lanka military is still missing.

According to university students, they have been hunted by the Sri Lanka military like animals. The following incident typifies what the university students are subjected to by the military.

One night, twelve people, some in Sri Lanka military uniform and some in civilian clothing with rifles, knives and swords, entered a home where a university student was boarding. The time was 7.30pm and people in the neighborhood clearly identified the intruders. There was no doubt that these intruders passed the Kallady military camp to come to this neighborhood.

The intruders broke the door of the house where the student was boarding. The student himself realizing what was to happen jumped the back fence and escaped. Many other university students who were boarding in this neighborhood also jumped fences and escaped.

The Sri Lanka military, took away the possessions of the student including his computer. The hunting down of university students is perhaps one of the clearest indicators of the degree of abuse of the people of Jaffna by the Sri Lanka military.

Restriction on life saving items to Vanni

Blockade of pediatric syrup

Paracetamol syrup, which is used as pain killer and fever control for the very young children were blocked by the Sri Lanka Ministry of Defense according to Mullaithivu hospital sources for this month. The hospital sources said that they are baffled by the blockade of pediatric medicine into Mullaithivu.

Blockade of kerosene

Government Agents of both Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu District Secretariats have said that the Sri Lanka Ministry of Defense is blocking fuel supply to Vanni. They have both said that the kerosene quota for January for Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu districts have not been allowed past the Vavuniya border checkpoint by the Sri Lanka Ministry of Defense.

With restriction on other fuels like petrol and diesel, kerosene is the primary fuel in use by farmers, fishermen, home owners and travelers. Even a short delay in the supply of kerosene will throw back any remaining normalcy in the lives of the people of Vanni.

Note: For extensive information on the above and other human rights topic in the Tamil homeland please visit: <http://www.ltteps.org>