

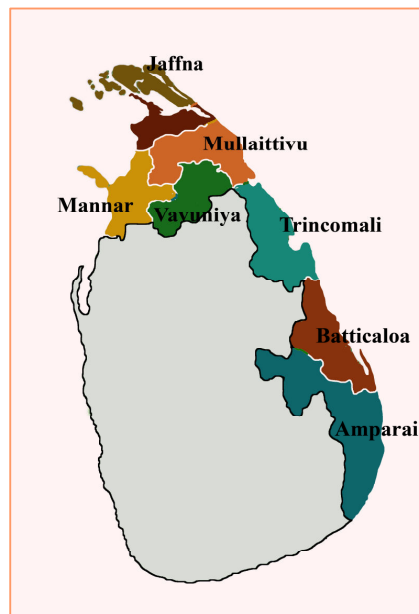


Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil homeland for **March 2008**

Press release of LTTE Peace Secretariat

Civilian casualty since the 2002-Ceasefire till present

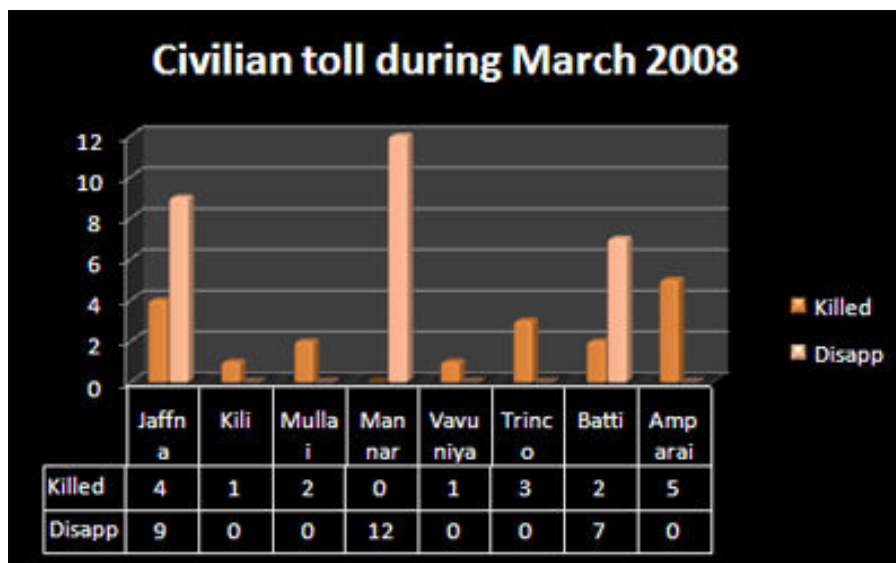
<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
Killed	2241
Disappeared	1071
Displaced	340,000
Evicted	300,000



Summary: Civilian toll

Tamil civilians continued to be killed, disappeared, injured and arrested by the armed forces operated by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Twenty eight civilians were disappeared and eighteen civilians were killed in the Tamil homeland by the armed forces operated by the government of Sri Lanka during the month of March 2008. Among the casualties were twelve fishermen who disappeared in the Mannar seas within period of two weeks. A further number of Tamil civilians were disappeared and killed outside the Tamil homeland. These statistics are not included here.





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Food a basic human rights denied to Tamils in Vanni

Ever since the Sri Lankan State took power from Britain, it has controlled the Tamil affairs by maintaining military checkpoints into Tamil areas. As the Tamils began demanding their rights to govern themselves the ferocity of these Sinhala checkpoints increased. Tamils suffer regularly at these checkpoints. This is the first level checkpoint blockage that Tamils face.

Even essential items like medicine, food, and fuel to Tamils areas are regularly blocked using these checkpoints. The Sri Lankan State began re-enforcing restriction on fuel and cement to Tamil areas as far as 2006. Many non-government organizations involved in war and tsunami reconstruction were forced to leave the Tamil areas because these restrictions hindered their reconstruction work. This gradual screwing up of life saving items has been going on ever since. Vanni has faced this during Eelam War III. The dreadful effect of this, child diseases due to malnutrition, stunted growth, etc, was visible to the visitors who came to Vanni during the ceasefire period. The Sinhala State activities have reached such alarming levels again as the statistics in the Table below reveals. The Table shows the amount of food received by Vanni through the Omanthai checkpoint for a population of around 460,000 people.

Presently Vanni people are facing shortages of not only the four essential items listed in the Table below but are also facing shortages of medicine and school books.

**The six month history of limiting essential supplies to
Vanni people by the Sinhala State**

Item	Requirement per person per month estimated by the Government Agents (Kg)	Requirement for total population per month (MT)	Permitted by defense ministry per month (MT)	Number of lorries required per month to transport	Actual number of lorries/bowsers permitted					
					Sep-07	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08
Milk powder	0.900	415	150	80						
Flour	3.000	1382	250		45	54	62	50	44	22
Dhal	1.000	460	100							
Sugar	2.000	922	300							



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Schools in Vanni under siege

More than 200,000 people are displaced in Vanni as a result of Sri Lankan military shelling. Invariably the education of the displacing children is badly affected. Principals, teachers and the education authorities in Vanni try and combine the displaced schools with the schools that have not displaced and try to run them as one school. This invariably brings enormous number of problems not the least is the shortage of furniture for the doubles and even tripled student numbers. It is not hard imagine how these swelling numbers from three or four schools in an already under resourced school would create extreme shortage of resources.



Class rooms in temporary sheds without fence often invites stray livestock to sleep their at night dirtying the class room. The children in such cases must allocate time in the morning to clean the class room before they can start their learning.

For example, Iluppakadavai school is functioning in many temporary sheds. This school was formed by combining the students of Adampan and Karunkandal schools who were displaced from Manthai West AGA division due to SLA shelling over the last few months. The sheds in which they are learning have no side walls and no surrounding fence. Due to the heavy rain the students are forced stop learning because the rain comes into the class from the sides.

Vellankulam Tamil Vidhyalayam in Mannar has a permanent enrolment of 366 and a further 336 displaced students are attending this school. The school lack adequate teacher numbers. There are only 12 permanent teachers working in this school. The rest of the teaching load is undertaken by volunteer teachers. There are no desks and chairs for these students who are forced to learn by sitting on the floor.

Similarly, many of the thirty six schools in the Madhu Education Zone are displaced. Two displaced schools combine with one school that is not displaced in an effort to provide at least a minimal education for the displaced children.

In the meantime text books destined for the schools in Vanni are being blocked by the Sri Lankan military. As the term one of a three term year is coming to an end many children are still without text books. This especially hurts the children who will be sitting the G.C.E .OL examinations at the end of the year.



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Denying livelihood to a people

Sri Lankan State denies livelihood to the people living in Vanni in many different ways.

The tightening of fishing in many parts of the Tamil homeland has basically impoverished a once thriving community. Ad hoc restrictions continued to be placed on the fishermen, especially those in Jaffna. Sometimes fishing is banned entirely for days on end.

The shortage of fuel affects the livelihood of fishermen and farmers very seriously as fuel is needed for the fishing boats, for irrigating the farms and for travel to market their products.

Livestock farmers in Vanni are unable to market the large quantities of the ghee they have produced, due to the restrictions imposed by the Sri Lankan State on the number of convoys that can pass the Omanthai checkpoint on a given day. President of the Union of Livestock Farmers in in Mullaithivu, S Easwaran, lamented the inability of its members to market the large quantities of ghee they have produced hoping to send it to the rest of the island.

Sri Lankan State also banned the tree climbers in Thenmaradchi Jaffna from climbing trees to gather the tree produce. This is a traditional livelihood of the people. SLA banned tree climbing, claiming that it is a security threat to their camps.

Due to the continuous and indiscriminate shelling by the Sri Lankan military from its Manalaru camp, fresh water fishing is affected in the Thannimurippu tank in Mullaithivu. Many shells have fallen and exploded in the Thannimurippu tank killing fishes. Dead fishes are floating in the tank in large numbers. The fishermen who depended on this tank for fishing have lost their livelihood at a time when life has already become difficult for the people of this area due to artillery fire and Sri Lanka Government imposed blockades.

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