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"From roofless prison to criminals' prison"

Twentyfive innocent civilians who ventured to report that they face life threats from Sri Lankan military and its appendages, the para-militaries in the roofless prison – the Jaffna peninsula, are put into Jaffna prison with the condemned criminals for their perceived security.

These are Tamil civilians who decided to seek judicial intervention and by extension its security from threats posed by an occupying hostile military and the para-militaries 'kept' by it. Logically it would appear that the prison security provided for by the Judge is sufficient for these threatened civilians. Reality and historical experience however dictates otherwise. In so far as detention in the prisons of Sri Lanka, whether as convicted of offences or held for investigation after arbitrary arrests, vis-à-vis Tamils, is bitter and very bitter at that. Commencing Welikada during the infamous 1983 genocide running through Kalutara to Bindunuwewa, theses so-called Tamil suspects kept in these prisons were butchered, both by the condemned criminal inmates and the jail authorities, and the Tamil psyche cannot at any time take it off from memory as just past history. It is there.

Those that are conscious of this horrendous phenomenon, may be thousands in number, are still there within the 'iron-curtained' confines of the occupied Jaffna peninsula. They are in fact running after 'catchers' to find a seat in the flight or a sea-passage out of the roofless prison, the Jaffna peninsula. What else can a people living in a peninsula that has only one land outlet, i.e. the A-9 thoroughfare being kept closed by a stubborn government in Colombo in spite of its obligation to keep it open by virtue of the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) clause that provides for unimpeded flow of persons and goods through this mainland route?

One cannot also overlook the stark reality that it is the marauding military and its killer-para-militaries that are positioned to grant approval and 'exit pass' for their passage to freedom. It is here the witch-hunting starts and selective killings, which are more often described as by mysterious men, takes place.

The NorthEast Secretariat on Human Rights (NESoHR) consider it as its solemn duty to draw the attention of lovers of humanity and the international community at large for redemption of the Tamil people caught up within military occupied roofless prison, the Jaffna peninsula.

It is also pertinent to stress here that it is an obligation and not an option for the international community to ensure that the process of belittling and degrading of a people by Colombo gloating that 'essentials' like rice, dhal, sugar, flour etc etc are being supplied and that it is sufficient for human life. Colombo cannot be permitted to wash off its hands with this petty 'supply' and camouflage its 'rogue-failed-state' status.

The international community needs to look beyond the façade and act, and ACT now.

Chairperson
NESoHR
13 December 2006