

உலகத் தமிழர் பேரவை

Global Tamil Forum



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## Commemorating the Wannu Massacres up to May 2009

### 1. First Anniversary: Unforgettable Memories and Unanswered Challenges

My dear Sisters and Brothers! It is one year after the horrendous crimes were committed against the Tamil people and their leadership in Wannu. We Tamils, still surviving within Sri Lanka and those living across the globe are filled with the horrific memories, which neither time nor any power on earth can erase from our history.

The heroic spirit and determination of the warriors and victims will live on in us till we achieve those values of truth, justice and freedom for which they died. Their spirit will strengthen our commitment not only to dedicate ourselves to fight for justice and freedom, not only to bring the perpetrators of the crimes against our people to accountability and justice, but also to discern genuine efforts of the Sri Lankan Government from their false moves against us Tamils and our homeland.

### 2. Even after an Year, the Tragedies continue...

In just a few months before May 18th 2009, the Government forces massacred tens of thousands of civilians, including even those who surrendered with white flags, with the use of even chemical weapons. Although it was declared by the Government that the war ended and celebrations continue up to date, what is happening still to the victims of war is shocking and shameful.

\* It first kept 300,000 civilians including the aged and children in concentration camps without access to international NGOs and the media. Only after seven months they allowed two thirds of them to move out, not back to their homes but to find their own shelters with friends and relatives if not under trees.

\* Almost a hundred thousand are still in camps and over eleven thousand youth are in military custody without access even to UN observers.

\* Even the cemeteries of militants killed in war and venerated by the still surviving parents, relatives and people are bull-dozed by the army.

Australia

Belgium

Canada

Denmark

France

Germany

India

Italy

Malaysia

Mauritius

Netherlands

New Zealand

Norway

South Africa

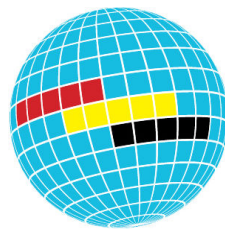
Sri Lanka

Sweden

Switzerland

United Kingdom

USA



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In a civilized world, war-cemeteries are only second to churches and temples.  
But in Sri Lanka such values are trampled with racial hatred.

\* While those released from the concentration camps are without proper shelter, the Government is building hundreds of new houses for the families of soldiers for a permanent militarised occupation of the North.

\* while the Tamil fishermen are debarred from fishing, government forces are creating new settlements of Sinhala fishermen to deny and rob Tamils of their livelihood

### **3. And worse still a hidden Project to erase and reduce Tamil identity!**

The Government is hastening to utilise the weakened condition of Tamils as “the conquered” for consolidating and furthering more evil intentions. Instead of going to the roots of the ethnic conflict and resolving it, the government is destroying and uprooting historical evidence of Tamil presence, heritage and culture.

It is engaged in a double-pronged programme for its genocidal agenda. On one side the state Forces are engaged in destroying the signs and monuments which are historical evidence for the ethnic and religious presence of Tamils for over two thousand years in the Northeast. And on the other side they are building hotels, banks and houses for the Sinhala investors and tourists, directors and businessmen who will have only cheap coolie-labour from the Tamils. This is naked Sinhala-Buddhist colonialism akin only to British colonialism centuries ago on the estate-frontier.

We Tamils have nothing against our Sinhala brothers freely settling down in the Northeast as citizens and businessmen. But state-aided Sinhala-settlements as well as lopsided “development-projects” with a conquerors mentality we condemn and will resist.

We Tamils of the Diaspora will welcome any genuine efforts of the Government at rehabilitation, reconstruction and normalisation of life for the victims of war but will resist with all our might any of their pseudo-efforts to use the weakened position of the Tamils for any state-aided colonisation and “Sinhalisation” of the North aimed at displacing the Tamils from their homeland and erasing the identity of the Tamils.

Similarly, we will welcome genuine Development of the North which can benefit all the people in Sri Lanka, and not just the Sinhala majority only. We will oppose attempts to impose certain “Developments” mainly for the benefit of the majority community.

### **4. Militarisation and Sinhalisation prior to any Political solution!**

Instead of recognising the Tamils, who have been living in the north-eastern part of the island as a distinct people with their own culture and their homeland for over two thousand years, and



## Global Tamil Forum

finding a peaceful way of all living and working as equal citizens, the majority Sinhala Buddhists and their government are trying

- a) to erase the historical and cultural identity of the Tamils by destroying the historic monuments by which Tamils venerate their ancestral wisdom and heroic sacrifices and impose a pseudo or an unjust form of development
- b) to strengthen its military grip of the tamil homeland into a permanent one
- c) and to "Sinhalise and Buddhistise" the Tamil homeland.

### 5. A Wake-up Call for us to engage the international community

A phase of our long struggle has been brought to a bloody and brutal end by the use of inhuman weapons and with the connivance, if not the collaboration, of some from the international community. One year has gone by, and some from the international community appear to see at last their mistake in believing and helping the Sri Lankan Government in its agenda of a war against terrorism. The post-war attitude and actions of the Government with regard to the Tamil victims of war seem to open the eyes of the international community and showing at least the tip of the hidden intentions of the Government to execute a long term and multifaceted genocide of the Tamils.

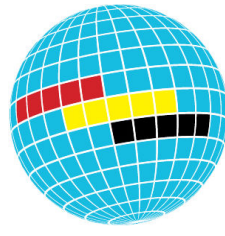
It is up to us Tamils of the Diaspora to use the present climate in the international community, to help foreign governments and international organisations understand the whole truth about our just struggle against the evil intentions and attempts of the Sri Lanka Government.

### 6. Conclusion: In the face of all these, we of the Global Tamil Forum

1. Assure our suffering brothers and sisters in the island our continued solidarity and humanitarian help.
2. Call upon the Tamil Diaspora to unite and to double up their efforts in informing and engaging their respective governments and international human right and humanitarian organisations about the current developments in Sri Lanka.
3. Call upon the Sri Lankan Government
  - a) To stop immediately the destruction of war-cemeteries, historic monuments and signs aimed at erasing the identity of Tamils, their cultural heritage and history of their struggle.
  - b) To free and render justice to all the thousands kept in camps and military custody as well as do meaningful rehabilitation and reconstruction of the war-victims and their lands.
  - c) To desist from pseudo-developments which benefit only the majority at the cost of robbing resources and land of the Tamil people.

உலகத் தமிழர் பேரவை

## Global Tamil Forum



- d) To be realistic in accepting the truth concerning the multi ethnic multi religious character of the population, and move towards a political solution based on equality and justice for all people

**Father S.J. Emmanuel**

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