

Amid Protests – Sri Lankan Leader cancels his visit to Tamil Areas to celebrate a Hindu Festival

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Amid widespread protests by Tamils, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena cancelled his scheduled visit to Tamil areas to celebrate an annual Hindu festival of Thai Pongal on January 15th.

Elaborate arrangements were made to organize this festival, but at the last minute Sri Lankan President cancelled his visit and instead sent his Prime Minister Ranil Wikramasinghe. Visiting British Foreign Minister Hugo Swire, and several diplomats also joined this festival.

Tamils were protesting for not giving equal rights in the current Constitution, including special rights given to Buddhism, which is the only State religion in Sri Lanka. There are calls to give equal rights to all religions and to remove special status given to Buddhism in the new Constitution.

Protests are also held to highlight the failure of the Sri Lankan Government - even after one year in power - to address the plight of thousands of Tamils who disappeared, continued imprisonment of Tamil political prisoners and overwhelming presence of Sri Lankan military in Tamil areas.

Tamils Protest against Sri Lankan President's visit to Northern Province:

http://world.einnews.com/pr_news/305770812/tamils-protest-against-sri-lankan-president-s-visit-to-northern-province

As Sri Lankan leader celebrate Hindu Festival - Calls to give Hinduism equal status as Buddhism in the New Constitution:

http://world.einnews.com/pr_news/306172914/as-sri-lankan-leader-celebrate-hindu-festival-calls-to-give-hinduism-equal-status

There are also concerns that the Sri Lankan Government is ignoring a UN request to hold an investigation of war crimes and crimes against humanity, for the large scale killings of Tamils and rape of Tamil women by the Sri Lankan military.

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