

# While Saluting The Martyrs Tamils' Strategy Should Be To Prevent Colombo As Only Power Center In Sri Lanka: Rudrakumaran

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*Visivanathan Rudrakumaran*

Today is our Maaveerar Naal!

An immensely symbolic day marking the fervour of those who made history with unswerving belief in an independent sovereign State of Tamil Eelam as the only solution for the Tamil people so they could live with freedom, dignity, equality and safety, and without being subjected to genocide.

It was through exceptional sacrifice and abnegation that

our 'maaveerar' carried forward the Tamil national question of the people of Tamil Eelam to the centre of the international stage.

Our fighters were branded as terrorists in many states. Their single real motive was to weaken our Nation's freedom struggle.

Global powers colluded in the genocide of Tamils by the Sinhala state due to their geopolitical interest in conjunction with Sinhala supremacism, just because it had a state of its own.

This does not mean that we construe these international states as our enemies. Instead, our stance has been consistent in how we look upon India and the western powers as friendly forces.

Yet it behoves us to combat to the best of our ability the charge against our liberation movement and our nation's heroes of being 'terrorists'.

It is, therefore, a legitimate political struggle to be viewed alongside our long liberation struggle

for Tamil Eelam, when we question the validity of the terrorists list drawn by these states, and to do that within all political and judicial mechanisms available to us.

Our recent efforts in Great Britain are a case in point. We shall be pursuing the same in India too. The Appeal Commission in Britain has ruled that the manner in which the terrorism tag was tied to the Liberation Tigers was erroneous. This is but a small win, but it is significant since it is held that a procedure employed by a state was materially flawed. The final decision may well go in favor of the UK Government. However, we shall continue with our strategy of questioning the decisions of governments and seeking to effect changes in their political decisions.

We have now reached a critical era in politics. Recent parliamentary and presidential elections in the island of Lanka have demonstrated how Sinhala hegemony has hardened itself.

Sinhala politics has surpassed the historic Senanayake and Bandaranaike dynasties and its centre is resting today with the Rajapaksa family.

The Rajapaksa brothers are portraying themselves to the Sinhala masses as the victorious modern day Dutugemunu who defeated Tamil 'aggression'. They are bound to consolidate Sinhala-Buddhist hegemony by all means available to them. In other words, the Tamil genocide at the hands of the Sinhala State will intensify in the coming years.

By genocide we do not mean the physical annihilation of every one of the Tamil people. Rather it means the doing away with the distinct entity called Tamil Nation in the island of Lanka, and the total annihilation of the national characteristics of the Tamil people.

The Sinhala authorities would exploit the opportunities offered by the Corona pandemic to stifle the political voice of the Tamil nation and frustrate the progress of Tamils as a people.

They will further deny the Tamil people their right to pay their salutations to the martyrs. If the Tamil leaders still carry hopes of winning our rights through negotiations with this regime, they would be like the proverbial parrot waiting in vain to 'enjoy the fruit of the Kapok tree'!

The inevitable choice before the Tamil people now is to fight politically against Sinhala-Buddhist supremacism. This struggle should mean rebelling against the barriers of repressive laws. Token protests or symbolic resistance within the limits set by Sri Lanka's repressive laws will not yield the desired outcomes. It is our hope that the people would exceed the legal boundaries set at this time and display their thirst for freedom in saluting the martyrs.

On account of the role of the Indian Ocean in global trade, Rajapaksas seem to believe that the opportunities offered by the new circumstance of its growing importance, the strategic location of the island of Sri Lanka and the interest shown by India, China and the US in Sri Lanka, would open up avenues for them to deal with world powers.

The nation of Tamils should work out a strategy to prevent the big powers from exclusively turning on the Sri Lankan state. The Tamil Nation's policy on international relations should be drawn up on the basis of this strategy, and Tamil leaders in the homeland should act from the standpoint that the sovereignty of the Tamil Nation is in the hands of the Tamil people. Tamil leaders should fearlessly state that the NorthEastern region of the island of Sri Lanka and the adjacent seas make up the traditional homeland of the Tamil Nation. They also have to state that if international powers wish to engage in any activities in the Tamil homeland and / or adjacent seas, consent of the Tamil people needs to be obtained. Around actions taken not in conformity with the above, the Tamil leadership should organize protests in the Tamil homeland. When these protests take the form of parliamentary boycott, such actions will draw the attention of the international community.

The Tamil nation is duty-bound to recognise the opportunities offered and devise in strategy to align its political interests along with the geopolitical interests of the democratic powers.

In this respect, the people in the Tamil Eelam homeland, Diaspora Tamils, the people of Tamil Nadu and the world Tamils should be bound together as a single front. Such an initiative would gain international credibility when it is undertaken by the domestic Tamil elected representatives, who presented their Tamil national credentials at the recent elections, acting in solidarity as a force. The TGTE stands ready to offer necessary support to any efforts taken by them in this direction in the homeland.

Despite our enthusiasm for expressing ourselves as a nation, we still remain as a Nation without a State. The entire Tamil populace of nearly 90 million has no claims to a State of its own anywhere.

As a nation without a state, we are subject to the Sri Lankan State. This leads to us being conditioned to restrict our free thought. We must break out of this mindset and free ourselves.

Obama, who was the US President at the time of the Mullivaikkal genocide, has described the happenings there as 'ethnic slaughter' in his recently published memoir.

The demand for an independent international investigation into the Mullivaikkal genocide has not waned away.

Let us fight on with the belief and hope that a day will come when the Tamil genocide by Sinhala will rouse the conscience of the world and the road of opportunities for Tamil Eelam will be thrown open for the nation of Tamils.

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