

Mullivaikal Commemorative Programme

18.05.2009 – 18.05.2018

**Remembering the dead during the conclusion of the war at
Mullivaikal**

Meeting at 11am at Mullivaikal on 18.05.2018

Chief Minister's Statement

My beloved people!

This is the fourth Mullivaikal Commemoration organized by us.

Even though we have not been able to seek justice for our affected people who are steadfastly continuing to agitate in street corners for justice for their basic human rights and security and when a process of intensive Buddhist infiltration takes place in the North and East amidst the large contingents of occupied Military who have usurped our lands and resources, we are gathered here today with heavy hearts to remember the genocide that took place nine years ago at Mullivaikal.

The human civilization has developed to great heights in this 21st century. It was the civilizational excellence of the world community that set up in the year 2006 a separate United Nations Human Rights' Council directed to deter genocide aimed against the human race, ethnic cleansing and human rights' violations.

Within three years of the Council being set up our people were subjected to genocide. Conducting a war without witnesses thousands of innocent people were brutally killed. No journalists nor human rights' activists were allowed into this area. Having conducted successfully the genocide against the Tamil community by their war without witnesses, the government of that time was able to utter deliberate falsehoods in the world arena to misguide sovereign states. Such distorted deliberate utterances such as "zero casualties" by the government of that time restrained the International Community from preventing the genocide and allied crimes committed here. But no country could continue to shield themselves with lies and falsehoods and expect to travel far.

Today the International Community is wiser in that sufficient evidence has been posted to them buttressing the fact that what took place on 18th May 2009 was indeed genocide.

Though belated we are positive that the clear conscience of the world community would open up to the reality of the situation and opt to find justice for the genocide practiced here. Our people patiently await such enlightened activities on the part of the International Community. We are sad despite the passing of nine years such a transformation has not come over the International Community yet.

Many point to Ruwanda and Bosnia and discourage our people saying that justice will take decades thereby trying to convince us to consent to half baked solutions.

But we must remember that genocide took place in Bosnia and Ruwanda at an earlier era unlike the Mullivaikal debacle. When the International Community had learnt lessons from previous genocides and allied offences they resolved that plausible preventive methods be planned to deter genocide and allied crimes in any community.

Indeed it was after the United Nations took noticeable steps in this direction that the Mullivaikal episode unfurled. When laws were in place such a distressful episode had been enacted.

According to International Covenants and Agreements it is now accepted that the International Community has a right to prevent such brutal incidents taking place in individual Sovereign States.

If a country ignores human rights' violations or shows tolerance towards such violations or prevents accountability such country cannot be considered mature and responsible. Not only that. Such countries would be identified as directly acting contrary to the expectations of the International Community. Toleration of such acts on the part of States would no doubt lead to Human Rights' violations world over. Delayed justice is of course denied justice.

Today in this country even a murderer is not looked upon as an offender. If need be depending on their race and identity even murderers would be made into heroes. Those in the highest echelons of power have been heard to say that they will not allow even a single Sinhalese soldier to go to jail. Does that mean criminality depends on one's race and community?

Sri Lanka consented to install a hybrid Inquiry Panel before the world body. Now they refuse to abide by their promise and undertaking. This would point out to the world the manner in which our successive governments for 70 years have deceived and fooled our Tamil people.

Still steadfast in their Mahawansa oriented perception the Sinhalese politicians consider the Mullivaikal debacle as the end of a Tamil - Sinhala war. That is why commemorative victory festivals are held in the South during this period.

We have no paucity for Sinhala politicians who consider any offence committed against the Tamils by a Soldier is no offence at all.

This is why we have been agitating that further extensions of time should not be granted to the Sri Lankan Government by the International Community to fulfill their obligations. They never would. Giving time would not make any difference.

I like to refer to what the Commissioner said at the UN Human Rights' sessions the other day. He asked "to explore other avenues including the application of universal jurisdiction, that could foster accountability." May I join the Commissioner in making the said request of the International Community?

No country chases their citizens to the street and usurp their habitations for their Armed Forces. It is exactly this that is happening in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Our people are agitating and demonstrating and protesting for years on the streets. But their habitations have been seized by force by the Military and they have set up Buddhist places of worship, set up Agricultural Farms, Sea Resources farms, Holiday Resorts etc and continuing to occupy them.

Having handed over their loved ones to the Army our people are yet to be told the fate of such persons. These relatives have now continued for years to demonstrate and protest in front of Army Camps. The Government just ignores their plight. The Southern media fail to publicize their protests.

Those arrested under the PTA continue to be remanded for years without any prosecution. The Government undertook to withdraw the PTA. But upto date it has not.

The Wannu area has become the citadel for Sinhala colonization. Specially in this Mullaitivu District both land and sea have been seized by force by the Armed Forces.

When releasing the Peoples' lands to them the Army obtains huge sums of money from the government given out of the funds earmarked for resettlement. We do not understand the logic behind this move. Money was apportioned by the International Community and the Sri Lankan government for resettlement of our people. How could such money be paid to the Armed Forces? The Armed Forces were not invited by us. They did not camp themselves here at our request. On the war coming to an end they should have withdrawn from the North and East. They usurped our lands and forcibly occupied them. They used all the resources and income from such lands themselves so far. When they are finally asked to hand over the lands to our people the Army demands compensation. And they are paid out of money earmarked for the resettlement of our people. The people are not interested in paying compensation for those who deprived them of their lands and enjoyed all resources, income and benefits from their lands. The Government has lost sight of the fact that such money belong to our people. We are wondering if the request of the Government under pressure from the International Community to hand back Peoples' lands have been turned down by the Army, and as a sop to get around the Army, the Government is using our money to pay bribes to get them out of our lands.

This is the present state of affairs in the North and East.

Any person who is familiar with the history of this Island during the last 70 years are aware that without pressure from the International Community or internal political pressure no government is prepared to tread the path of progress towards a political solution for the National Question.

I make bold to call upon the International Community on this occasion to resolve to give political pressure upon our Sri Lankan Government to coax them to fulfill their obligations. The International Community must realize nine years after the war had ended the successive Sri Lankan Governments have continued to keep a

determinable group of people, the Tamils under their military control in their area' of historical habitation.

My beloved people!

Let us not continue to be pawns in the hands of scheming individuals or institutions. Let us agitate in a systematic, organized way for Justice for our affected people. Let us move forward together to reach our political objectives. I make this request of you on this emotive day.

Let us identify ourselves as a determinable group of people, the Tamil People, who were subjected to genocide in this 21st century where human civilization has reached great heights.

I wish to move a few resolutions and expect all of you to support them. They are –

1. From this year onwards every 18th of May in the coming years must be identified as Tamil genocide day.
2. The International Community without delay should set up an International strategic mechanism to ensure justice for the people affected.
3. As a group of people who have faced institutional genocide, the International Community must come forward to assure us a sustainable political settlement based on our sovereignty, our homelands and our individuality.
4. Considering the suffering undergone by our community let the International Community identify our suffering as mass disaster situation and arrange the necessary infrastructures to rehabilitate our people by directly helping us.
5. It is our desire that the Armed Forces must withdraw from our areas of traditional habitation. The latest ruse adopted is that the Armed Forces have come forward to shower some facilities and benefits on our people in order to continue to occupy our areas. Let us beware of Trojan gifts.

6. Next year it would be the Tenth anniversary since brutal massacre at Mullivaikal. Let us dedicate 18th of May every year as a day of Mourning and as a symbol of our Unity. Let us resolve that in the coming years we would bring all interest groups among us together, appoint an appropriate committee devoid of political party affiliations and regional considerations to organize an appropriate Day of Remembrance on 18th May in the coming years.

Let us pray for peace to the souls of all those who died in Mullivaikal nine years ago.

We condole this day with the relatives of all who lost their dear ones!

May our prayers and sentiments soothen the affected hearts of those who are in grief and pain.

With a heavy heart I depart.

Justice C.V.Wigneswaran
Chief Minister
Northern Province