



Rajapaksa Returns; Chauvinism Prevails

Former President Rajapaksa was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka by President Sirisena after his faction of the ruling coalition decided to withdraw and quit the current government.

Even if the legality of the procedure and the clarity and meaning of the relevant constitutional provisions can be debated, it has taken the country by total surprise and points to some extremely questionable motives.

In 2009 the Rajapaksa regime orchestrated a military offensive, which cost the lives of thousands of Tamil civilians, estimates have the civilian death toll at over 140,000. The onslaught left 70,000 people displaced due to aerial bombardments and artillery attacks by government forces in Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi.

The news has sent shock waves across the world, bringing traumatic impressions of war crimes and genocide that unfolded in 2009, with a Tamil community experiencing severe trauma from the devastation of the past. Rajapaksa reminds a fractured community about annihilation, slaughter, terror and hopelessness. The genocide of the Tamil community still continues, and the Sirisena government is in part responsible for this. The Sirisena government has done nothing about the largest open-air prison in the world, done nothing about the disappearances, and done nothing about the colonization of traditional Tamil Lands.

The Rajapaksa regime is not solely responsible for the ongoing genocide. The Sinhala Buddhist State and Sinhala Buddhist chauvinist ideology are to blame. Regardless of who vaults to power, the Sri Lankan Buddhist state agenda has always been to eradicate and assimilate the Tamil population into a Sri Lankan Buddhist identity. This incident isn't the first time a government has quit parliament or the first time a person assumed roles in the government without an election. An ongoing struggle for corrupt power that leaves the Tamil body most vulnerable.

Tamils continue to be a voice of resistance and resilience. Communities have called for an end to the increase in militarization and Sinhala settlements in occupied Tamil areas. Tamils have called for the revoking of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), and release of the hundreds of political prisoners still being kept under detention unjustly. Tamils are demanding to know what has happened to their loved ones who have disappeared.

What does this mean to the work that is ongoing by many diaspora groups and grassroots organizations in the North and East? What does this mean for the Tamils living under constant surveillance and militarization? What does this mean to the daily lives of the ones most affected by the ongoing assimilation of Tamil Culture and extermination of Tamil identity? What are we going to do about it?

10 years later - The Sri Lankan state continues its agenda of genocide, with history as our guide, we will again see an overt version of Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism.

Tamil Freedom Coalition (TFC)

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