

INTRODUCTION

TAMIL-MUSLIM ETHNIC CONFLICT IN THE NORTH EAST

Contrary to popular claims from various quarters of peace, amity and sense of co-existence among the Muslims and Tamils in the North East, resentment and antipathy among the Tamils have been growing towards the Muslims for the last half a century, particularly after the independence to Sri Lanka in 1948. In fact they feel that the Muslims were better placed economically than the Tamils. Muslim youths were advancing in education and out-pacing the Tamils in higher education at the universities and technical institutions. Muslims were able to obtain more government and private sector jobs thus pushing the Tamil youths into the cadre of unemployment. Muslims were more favourably placed with the Government in power on the strength of their leaders disclaiming separatist policies, while the Tamils caught in the web of “Eelam” activities, were left in the lurch and thus alienated from the government with the onset of struggle for a separate state for the Tamils. Muslims were unsympathetic towards the division of the country and their separate state demand and therefore constituted a danger in their midst.

Owing to the geographical location and economic interdependence of the two communities Tamil and Muslims in the North East, there have been intermittent clashes over the years over comparatively trivial issues such as Muslim farmers being harassed by the Tamils when they pass through Tamil areas, waylaying of vehicles, and robbing of paddy and heads of cattle belonging to the Muslims.

However, after the 1983 ethnic violence in Sri Lanka, it was found that the Tamils in the North East, have been openly giving expressions to their feelings of resentments and antipathy towards the Muslims by verbal

insinuations, deprecations and even insults regarding the position of the Muslims as “Usurpers” of their lands “Exploiters” of Technical Education and Employment. Tamils began to harass the Muslims, waylay and rob them when ever Muslim traversed the Tamil areas on their way and back home from their paddy fields.

This volatile atmosphere gave rise to suspicion and made the Muslims in the North East to realize that the prospect of sharing political and economic powers with the Tamils in the event of a separate state becoming a reality, are remote.

M.I.M. Mohideen
Executive Director

21 December 2013

1. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST NORTH EAST MUSLIMS

Before the Cease Fire Agreement of 22nd February 2002.

With the increased activities of the LTTE terrorists, in the early part of 1985, the animosity and resentment of the Tamils towards the North East Muslims took a more acrimonious turn. Consequent to it, numerous incidents of extortions of money, robbing jewelry, motor- cycles and other valuables at gun point, and threats for co-operations with the separatist movement took place. When such atrocities escalated, the Muslims tried to assuage the situation not by open warfare but by humane methods as prescribed by the laws of Islam.

The breaking point of the Muslims came when the LTTE terrorists tried, in the course of robbing a rich Muslim trader, to take his daughter as hostage in Akkaraipattu, a predominant Muslim Town, 14 miles down South of Kalmunai, in the Amparai District. Angered by this, the Muslims registered their protest by peaceful hartal in Akkaraipattu, from 08th to 12th April 1985. All the shops reopened for business on the 13th of April 1995. The Sri Lanka National Flag was hoisted in the bazaar, declaring solidarity of the Muslims with the government and rejection of the division of the Country.

On the 14th of April 1985, at 9.00 a.m. thirteen LTTE terrorists came into Akkaraipattu by a jeep from Karaithievu, a Tamil village 10 miles North of Akkaripattu. They were fully armed and were firing, the first shot in the vicinity of the Town Mosque of Akkaraipattu. They then raced towards the junction in the main market place. Due to high speed, they were unable to negotiate the turn and the Jeep toppled. Most of them died on the spot and the rest were shot by the police.

With this unfortunate incident, the Tamil, Muslim ethnic violence started and swiftly spread to Kalmunai, Eravur, Ottamawadi, Valaichenail, Muthur and Kinniya. Hundreds of Muslims were killed by the armed LTTE terrorists and many billions of Rupees worth of properties belonging to both the

Tamil and Muslims were burnt and destroyed. It is during the April 1985 riots, that the Tamil and Muslims fought each other as separate communities for the first time in the East.

LTTE terrorists brutally murdered Mr. Habeeb Mohamed, the Assistant Government Agent of Muthur on the 3rd of September 1987, which led to widespread protest – demonstrations by the Muslims throughout the Eastern province. Annoyed by this the Tamil Separatists organized a counter demonstration on the 10th of September 1987 in Kalmunai, which resulted in the Tamils attacking and burning Muslims owned shops, rice mills and houses in the predominant Muslim Town of Kalmunai, in the presence of the IPKF. Properties belonging to the Muslims damaged by the Tamils were valued approximately Rupees 67 Millions.

Mr. A.L. Abdul Majeed, a former M.P., and Deputy Minister of Muthur was killed on the 13th of November 1987. Mr. Abdul Majeed was actively involved in the relief assistance of the thousands of Muslim refugees who came from Muthur, consequent to LTTE armed terrorists attack on the Muslim on the 12th of October in the presence of the IPKF.

About 26 Muslims were killed and another 200 were injured when the IPKF shelled Ottamawadi, a predominant Muslim Village in the Batticaloa District on 02nd December 1987. A Number of houses and shops belonging to Muslims were burned and destroyed. Some Muslims women were also reported to have been raped by the IPKF. About 14,000 Muslims became refugees and fled to the North – Central Province, Polonnaruwa.

Kattankudi, the home of nearly 60,000 Muslims, situated 4 miles down South of Batticaloa, was attacked by the armed LTTE terrorists on the 30th of December 1987. In this fierce attack, nearly 60 Muslims were killed and more than 200 were injured. Properties worth 200 Millions belonging to the Muslims were burned and destroyed by armed LTTE terrorists. All

these happened in the presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces – IPKF. Although the attack lasted for two days, Kattankudi was under siege until the 8th of January 1988. During this period, all movements, in and out of the area were blocked by the armed LTTE terrorists while the IPKF was supposed to be in control of the area.

Because of the attacks launched by the IPKF and armed LTTE terrorists, nearly 65,000 innocent Muslims who have lived for generation in Mannar, Jaffna, Mullathievu and Vavunia have abandoned their homes and are now living in refugee camps outside their homes.

Muslim Refugees in Sri Lanka in December 1987.

Muslim Population and Refugees of the Northern and the Eastern Provinces
According to AGA Divisions.

<u>Eastern Province</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>Muslim Refugees</u>
Ampara District	161,754	193,797	-
Kalmunai	45,480	54,576	-
Sammanthurai	37,996	45,592	-
Ninthavur	20,716	24,860	-
Addalachchenai	20,140	24,168	-
Akkaraipattu	22,941	27,529	-
Pottuvil	13,433	16,120	-
Batticaloa District	79,662	94,939	10,225
Batticaloa Town	3,725	4,432	-
Kattankudy	26,509	31,546	-
Eravur	21,582	25,683	-
Ottamawadi/Valachchenai	27,291	32,476	10,225

Trincomalee District	49,280	87,428	49,280
Trinco Town & Gravat	7,979	9,176	5,000
Mutur	19,184	22,062	16,000
Kinniya	28,669	32,969	18,000
Thambalakamam	8,008	9,209	6,280
Kuchchaveli	2,088	2,401	2,000
Kanthalai	4,406	5,067	2,000

Northern Province

Jaffna District	14,169	13,306	13,160
Jaffna Town	10,925	10,270	10,100
Chavakachcheri	601	565	560

Mannar District	30,079	37,933	13,650
Mannar Town	14,517	18,291	6,250
Musali	8,716	10,982	4,720
Nanattan	1,736	2,187	1,212
Manthai West	5,110	6,439	1,468

Mullaithivu District	3,816	5,304	3,040
Maritimepattu	2,852	3,964	2,560
Mullaithivu Town	690	959	480

Vavuniya District	6,764	8,876	4,845
Vavuniya Town & VST	2,973	3,895	2,233
Vengalachettikulam	3,655	4,788	2,612

Eastern & Northern Provinces

<u>371,405</u>	<u>432,310</u>	<u>94,200</u>
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The Tamil refugees voluntarily left the Northern and Eastern Provinces because of the Tamil Eelam war and went to India and other Western Countries. But the Muslims were forcibly evacuated by the LTTE terrorists.

The armed LTTE terrorists gave only two days for the Muslims in the North to vacate their homes and leave. Muslim refugees had no place to go. None of the Muslim or Arab countries have accepted any Muslim refugees from the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. Government security forces and the Rehabilitation Ministry were prepared to resettle the refugees but the armed LTTE terrorists were obstructing the Muslim refugees returning to their homes which are only 20 to 30 miles away from the refugee camps, whereas thousands of Tamil refugees are freely returning to the Northern and Eastern Provinces from India and other Western Countries and unlawfully occupying the properties of the Muslims with the help of the LTTE terrorists.

Ethnic Cleansing of Muslims by the LTTE

The Muslims from the Northern Province were forced to leave their homes in the third week of October 1990. The ultimatum in many places was that they should leave the region within 48 hours. Most Muslim refugees continue to live in abject conditions outside the North. Contrary to many other situations of displacement in the country, the majority of the displaced Muslims as a result of the ethnic cleansing by LTTE have not been able to go back to their places of birth in the North. There were about 65,000 Muslim refugees living in the North-Western coastal region in the Puttalam district. The report on assets of Muslim refugees was submitted to the Parliament in 1992 contained a detailed estimate of the losses suffered by these people. According to the estimates, the Muslim families have lost wealth to the tune of Rs. 5,408 million.

Unlawful Occupation of Lands and other Properties of Muslims In the North – East

This is related to the forced eviction of Muslims from the Northern and the Eastern provinces. To a larger extent, it applies to Muslim-owned paddy lands adjoining predominant Tamil areas. Nearly 45,000 acres of paddy lands belonging to Muslims of the Eastern province were forcibly taken over by the LTTE and agricultural produce confiscated. The lands belonged to the displaced Muslim from the Northern Province continues to remain

under the control of the LTTE. Besides, agricultural implements, motor vehicles and cattle were taken away by force by the LTTE. Under the law of property in force in the country, a land owner loses his right to possession if his property is occupied by a usurper for 10 years. It is now 23 years since Muslims in the North have been forcefully displaced from their properties.

Economic Destabilisation of Muslims in the North – East

A politico-military strategy of the LTTE has been to weaken the economic strength of the Muslim community. In order to realize this objective, the LTTE have targeted economic ventures and business places of the Muslims. Robbing of business goods and abduction of business men for ransom remain the common specter in the North-East.

Denial of Fishing Rights

With the eviction of the Muslim community from the North, a considerable section of the Muslim fisher-folk have been rendered unemployed. In areas such as Valaichenai, Ottamavadi, Eravur and other coastal areas in the East, boats and fishing gears were routinely robbed by the LTTE. Many Muslim fishermen have also been killed while at sea by the sea tigers.

Non-respect for Religion and Culture

In many instances, in the North East, the cultural and religious symbols of the Muslim community have come under attack from the LTTE and other Tamil militant groups. The grenade attack on the Akkrappattu Town Mosque and massacre of Muslims at congregational prayer at Kattankudy and Eravur, as well as cold-blooded murder of Hajj pilgrims returning in 1990 in Kaluwanchikudi, demonstrate the extent of intolerance shown by the LTTE terrorists towards the religion and culture of the Muslims.

Ethnic Cleansing

The armed conflict between the Sri Lanka Government and the LTTE has led to ethnic cleansing of Muslims from the North East. The Muslims in the

North-East have been caught in the middle of the civil war and it has been difficult to maintain their neutrality.

Details of the forcibly displaced Muslims from the North East who are now languishing in the following districts - Year 2002

<u>Districts</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Peoples</u>
Puttalam	15,500	74,140
Anuradhapura	865	4,070
Kurunagala	487	2,311
Gampaha	1,050	4,725
Colombo	425	1,912
Kalutara	395	1,856
Matale	85	517
Kandy	110	517
Galle	5	23
Kegalle	32	150
Ampara	110	523
Trincomalee	2,207	10,492
Batticaloa	343	1,631
<u>Total:</u>	<u>21,614</u>	<u>102,867</u>

The value of assets robbed by the LTTE during 1990 ethnic cleansing is more than Rs. 10,256 Million or US\$ 110 Million.

Muslim properties robbed by the LTTE terrorists.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Value in Millions</u>
Residential properties	22,000	5,500
Commercial establishments	2,402	2,100
Religious Institutions	340	1700
Agricultural Lands	39,400 Acres	200
Gold Jewelleries	475,000 Grams	300
Cattle	211,000	150

Motor Vehicles	320	160
Motor Cycles	800	20
Carts	750	4
Bicycles	4000	25
Fishing Boats	850	40
Engines (Boats)	400	16
Fishing Nets	1200	8
Refrigerators	200	2
Television sets	2000	40
Radio Sets	600	1
<u>Total:</u>		<u>Rs.10,256</u>

Identified Muslim Civilians Killed by LTTE terrorists in the North-East Sri Lanka.

- ♦ 26 Muslims were killed at Ottamawadi in December 1987
- ♦ 41 Muslims were killed at Karaitheevu in November 1987
- ♦ 35 Muslims were killed at Kinniya in April 1987
- ♦ 52 Muslims were killed at Mutur in October 1987
- ♦ 21 Muslims were killed at Sammanthurai Mosque in April 1989
- ♦ 67 Muslims were killed at Valaichchenai from April 1985 to July 2002
- ♦ 67 Muslims were killed at Kattankudy in December 1987
- ♦ 168 Muslims were killed at Kattankudy in July 1990
- ♦ 147 Muslims were killed at Kattankudy Mosque in August 1990
- ♦ 58 Muslims were killed at Akkaraipattu in July 1990
- ♦ 14 Muslims were killed at Kattankudy Mosque in July 1990
- ♦ 13 Muslims were killed in November 1989
- ♦ 19 Muslims were killed at Alimnagar in August 1990
- ♦ 126 Muslims were killed at Eravur in August 1990
- ♦ 53 Muslims were killed at Ambalanthurai in August 1990
- ♦ 23 Muslims were killed at Sainthamaruthu in September 1992
- ♦ 15 Muslims were killed at Addalachchenai in May 1990
- ♦ 37 Muslims were killed at Pallitthidal, Akbarpuram in October 1992

- ♦ 200 Muslims were killed at Kalmunai, Akkaraipattu and Pottuvil in June 1990
- ♦ 33 Muslim farmers were killed at Ampara in August 1990
- ♦ 186 Muslims were killed by Police in June 1990
- ♦ 147 Muslims were killed at Alingippottanai in April 1992
- ♦ 30 Muslims were killed at Pottuvil in June 1991

Total 1578

After the Cease Fire Agreement of 22nd February 2002.

On Thursday the 20th June, 2002; a Muslim three wheeler driver called Faizal was surrounded near the 64th mile in Muthur - Thoupur road and brutally beaten by LTTE Ranjan and few others on suspicion of the damages caused to the concrete crosses in the Pachchainoormalai in Muthur. Faizal pleaded innocent and said that he had nothing to do with the damages to the concrete crosses. LTTE Ranjan is well known in the area because he is the one who collect taxes for the LTTE and issue receipts. When Faizal came home bleeding, his family members were provoked. They collected few others and went looking for Ranjan to the LTTE Office where he usually stays. For Ranjan's luck he was not there at that time. The Muslims caused some damage to the LTTE Office in retaliation for what LTTE Ranjan and others have done to Fizal.

On Friday the 21st June 2002 some LTTE cadres about 50 in number gathered with knives, sticks and iron bars close to the 64th mile post on Muthur – Thoupur road and harassed the Muslims. They blocked the road and did not allow any Muslims to go to or come from Muthur. This was in retaliation of the attack on the LTTE office by the Muslims in Muthur.

On Saturday the 22nd June 2002, Mr. K. M. (Thideer) Thaufeek, an SLMC Parliamentarian from Muthur met the LTTE local leader Ruban and discussed the incident in detail and requested him to take immediate steps to prevent the escalation of violence between the Tamils and Muslims and conduct a proper inquiry to find out who was really behind the incidents. LTTE Ruban did not show any interest to maintain peace in the area or to

have an inquiry. The street block and the harassment of the Muslims by LTTE continued.

On Wednesday the 26th June 2002, a hartal was organized by the LTTE in the North East to protest over some incidents in Velanai – Jaffna by Government Security Forces and the attack on the LTTE office by the Muslims in Muthur. A procession with about 500 LTTE cadres started from Pachchainoormalai and came to Muthur.

Although it was said to be a peaceful hartal procession, the Tamil youths were carrying knives, sticks and iron bars and forced the Muslims to close their shops and business places and they threatened to set fire to a petrol pumping station in the Muslim area. The Muslims co-operated and closed their shops but resisted any attack on the petrol pumping station and the clash between the Tamils and Muslims started. Five shops and seven houses belonging to the Muslims were destroyed by the LTTE who came in the peaceful procession. They also removed the barbed wire fence to the paddy fields and drove the cattle in to destroy nearly 700 acres of paddy belonged to the Muslims. Police imposed an unofficial curfew in the area. Although the violence in Muthur subsided, the area was tense as people left their homes and sought refuge in temples and mosques.

On Thursday the 27th June 2002, few Muslims Theologians “Ulemas” organized a meeting with some Catholic priests to maintain peace in the area. SLMC leader and Minister Hakeem also spoke to LTTE Pulithevan regarding Muthur crisis.

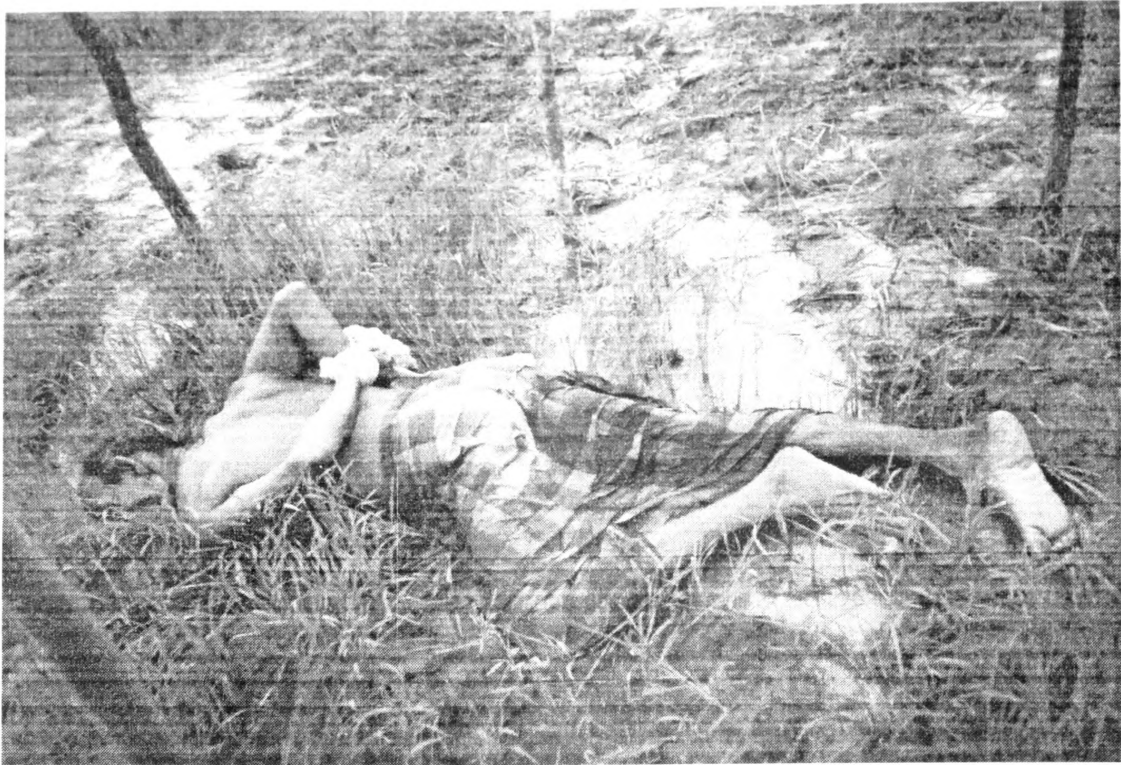
A peaceful hartal was organized by the North – East Muslim Brotherhood Movement and Muslim Students Union in the East to protest over the LTTE attack on Muthur Muslims and unlawful extortion and abduction by the LTTE in the East. What worried the Muslims most is the extortion of money from the Muslims after the ceasefire agreement (MoU) in the areas under the control of the government and when complained the government

did nothing other than a formal complain by the Peace Secretariat to the Norwegian government and Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM).

In order to defy the hartal organized by the Muslims, the Tamils drove the buses from Tamil areas through Muslim Villages. These buses were stoned at Ottamawadi a predominant Muslim area. An ambulance went through Kattankudy was also attacked. Consequent to these incidents, violence erupted in Valachchenai between the Tamils and Muslims. LTTE abducted 12 Muslims and killed them. More than 100 were injured. 238 Muslim shops were burned and destroyed. 5 houses were also burned. The values of damages estimated to be well over a Billion Rupees.

On Friday the 28th June, 2002; Valaichenai Pradeshiya Sabha Office was set on fire and destroyed. In the grenade attack on Muslims returning from Friday "Jummah" prayers, 7 were injured – 2 critically. Additional troops and Special Task Forces were Airlifted after the mortar shells were fired and grenades were hurled at the Muslims by the Tamils. The Batticaloa and Ampara District were placed under curfew.

On Sunday the 30th June 2002, two bodies were found by the police in Kalmadu Village in Valichenai. They were the two Muslim cooks who went to the house of a Tamil in Valichchnai, on Wednesday the 26th June, to prepare the wedding meals. The LTTE cadres have abducted the two Muslims killed and threw them in a paddy field. The father and few members of their family went to identify the bodies. After the post-mortem, the police loaded the dead in a tractor trailer to be taken for the burial according to Muslim rites. But the LTTE cadres with arms objected the removal of the bodies and insisted the burning of them at the site. The Army Major Hettiarachi contacted the Head Quarters and he was given the orders from Colombo to leave the bodies and avoid any confrontation with the LTTE. Then the LTTE cadres put the bodies on a heap of tyres and burned them in front of the Army and Police and destroyed all evidence of the horrendous human rights violation of the LTTE during cease fire.



LTTE Military Camp in Kinniya, Kurangupanchan Mosque

The much talked about Kurangupanchan LTTE camp is not in Wan Ela area or Maniyarasankulam as reported in the Media. It is in the Government Controlled area Kinniya Divisional Secretary Divisions and about 14 km East of Wan Ela Tank and Police Station, 7 km South-East of Maniarasan Kulam and 12 km East of Katukuli Army Camp.

Kinniya Divisional Secretariat is about 146 sq. km in extent in the Trincomalee District and 16 km from Trincomalee Town. Nearly 59,469 Muslims 95% of the total population of 62,819 live here. Tamils are only 3,350 about 5% and no Sinhalese. According to the information available in the Divisional Secretariat Office there are 31 Grama Niladhari Divisions. Further, all the three Muslim parliamentarians elected for the Trincomalee District are from Kinniya.

The Kurangupanchan GS Division is about 20 sq. km in extent and 15 km East of Kinniya town. After the floods in 1957 the Muslims started to settle here. Kunchiappa, Mohamed Casim, Cader and Razikeen were the first people came and started chena cultivation. Later Muslims cerme in large

members and settled here. Since it was a jungle area, the new settlers had problems with monkeys - called Kurangu in Tamil, and therefore the area is called Kurangupanchan.

In 1970 the SLFP Muslim Parliament Mr. Abdul Majeed helped the renovation of the tank at Kurangupanchan and helped the local farmers to cultivate paddy in about 500 acres. Later the name of the place was also changed to Majeedpuram. However the place is continued to be known as Kurankupanchan.

The Muslim school started in 1979 in a cadjam hut got a permanent building and the school was named as Barakath Government Muslim Mixed School and Grade 1 to 6 classes were conducted. In 1980 a permanent building was constructed for the Mosque and Jumma prayers were conducted regularly.

More than 255 Muslim families lived in Kurangupanchan up to 1990. As a result of the ethnic violence in 1990 the Muslims in Kurangupanchan village were forcibly displaced by the LTTE and moved to Kinniya. Kiran (56) Majeedpuram (46) Kalladi Vedduvan (33) Vellankulam (53) Kallaruppu (13) Sungankuli (19) are some Muslim GS Divisions in the Kurangupanchan area. The displaced Muslims who lost their houses and fertile paddy lands became refugees and presently undergoing much hardships in temporary camps and in the houses of their relations. Soon after the ceasefire agreement between the GOSL and LTTE in February 2002, the Muslims went back and started paddy cultivation in their fields in Kurangupanchan and started resettling in their own lands. They renovated the Mosque as decided at a meeting held on 11.06.2003. Soon after this meeting LTTE chased 35 Muslim families resettled here and put up a camp in the Mosque building and objected any renovation. The media is maliciously suppressing the fact that the LTTE is forcibly occupying the areas of historical habitation of the Muslims in the Government controlled area.

2.

WAR CRIMES AGAINST MUSLIMS

Battle of Muthur 01-08 August 2006 -

Soon after midnight on Wednesday the 02nd August 2006, LTTE directed artillery and mortar fire at the Muthur Jetty. Army and Navy detachments at Kaddaiparichchan, Selvanagar and Mahindapura also came under attack.

The guerrillas infiltrated Muthur from the western side of the town before the dawn. Police and security forces personnel on guard at telecommunications centre and the Bus Depot were forced to back out due to intense fire. The Naval detachment too was under fire together with the Muthur Jetty. By Thursday morning Air Force Kfir jets began bombing Sampur area whilst Mi 24 helicopter gun ships attacked Sea Tiger boats in the surrounding seas. The guerrillas initially prevented re-inforcements rushing in by blocking the Jetty and the entry points on the Kanthalai side.

By late Thursday afternoon 03rd August 2006 intense fighting continued in the Muthur area. Infantry companies moved in, one from the Pachchanoor side to fight their way through. The guerrillas began to dominate parts of Muthur throughout till Friday morning. Another infantry company inducted the previous night fought their way to seize control of the Muthur town. The guerrillas backed out but continued to remain behind civilians who had gathered at several points. Later in the day they began to take full control. The LTTE operations in Muthur were led by Muttuselvi and Kunjan.

The LTTE attempt to gain a contiguous stretch of land from Sampur southwards, a move that would have crippled the working of the Trincomalee Port, was thus thwarted. Such a move would have had very disastrous consequences. This port is the lifeline for some 40,000 security forces personnel and policemen deployed in the Jaffna peninsula. It is from this port that they embark or disembark when they go on leave from the North. Military and food supplies to the north are also moved from this port.

LTTE attacks to seize control of Muthur and adjoining areas were a failure. But the guerrillas still won in one aspect. They succeeded in creating a mass exodus of Muslim civilians from Muthur. More than 40,000 were in temporary shelters in Kanthalai and other areas. At least 20 of them were killed in artillery and mortar fire. The Government and the LTTE traded allegations against each other over these attacks. The matter came up for discussion at a special meeting of the National Security Council on Friday 04th August 2006.



Without doubt, many a major attempt by the LTTE in the recent months has come a cropper. The latest was the attempt on the Navy's passenger ferry and the attack to take control of Muthur and surrounding areas.

With the exit of renegade Eastern leader Karuna (Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan), it is clear the LTTE has not been able to effectively strengthen its military strike capabilities in the East. This is a contributory cause for its failure although the LTTE in an unusual move, declared its action in Muthur was a defensive one to “protect civilians” and announced it had withdrawn from the area. Indeed it has, but against all its wishes to remain on the ground. Their grand design failed. However, this does not mean the LTTE would give up.

“Inadequate precautions to protect civilians” - Amnesty International

“Amnesty International is concerned by the extent and seriousness of the violations reported, the lack of adequate protection for civilians, and restrictions on access to the war affected areas,” it stressed.

On 6 August, the bodies of 15 aid workers with the French aid agency Action Contre la Faim were discovered lying face-down on the front lawn of ACF’s Muthur office, with bullet wounds indicating that they had been shot at close range. The bodies of two more staff members were found on 8 August in a car nearby, indicating that they may have been killed while trying to escape. The government has invited an Australian forensic expert to assist with the investigational truce monitors.

A roadside bomb reportedly hit an ambulance killing five people – a medical doctor, his wife, two nurses and the driver of the ambulance. This incident occurred in LTTE controlled territory.

SLMC Leader Rauff Hakeem debate Muthur Muslim issue in Parliament

On a motion moved by Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) leader Rauff Hakeem, parliament had a day long debate on Muthur Issue.

The problem of displaced persons was the focus of attention during the parliamentary debate.

It was the plight of the displaced Muslim refugees from Muthur that drew the most amount of concern.



It appeared that everyone wanted peace unfortunately the methods of achieving it were at variance.

The JVP and the JHU continued to stress the need for the government to adopt a hard-line stance when dealing with the LTTE while the UNP wanted the government to work harder towards resolving the conflict by negotiations.

While the majority of those affected by the violence in Muthur being Muslims, the SLMC leader called for a cessation of hostilities on both the sides saying it was the civilians who were suffering because of the war.

“All the peace loving people in Sri Lanka have come to realize that both the government and the LTTE continue to make sanctimonious pronouncements supposedly with the objective of respecting the humanitarian needs of the people. In real terms their objective is to pursue a relentless military option totally disregarding the sanctity of life and limb of innocent civilians,” an angry Mr. Hakeem said.

Mr. Hakeem said Thamilselvan should be held responsible for the incident which took place in Kirandimur, where the LTTE forcibly detained fleeing Muslims during the clashes in Muthur.

“The rights of the Muslims have been violated in Muthur, Compromising the rights of Muslims will create a fertile ground for radicalization of Muslims,” he said. Citing history, he said the UNP government in 1990 was also not able to protect the Muslims in the North. However, he believes President Mahinda Rajapaksa will fulfill his word and will make arrangements to resettle displaced Muslims. “We believe the President’s words which said that Muthur Muslims will not be allowed to remain as displaced persons,” he added.

“The thousands of Muslims who left Muthur on an assurance by the LTTE that no harm would be caused to them if they chose to leave were subjected to such harassment and cruelty resulting in the Muslims realizing that as in earlier instances, the LTTE’s assurances could not be trusted anymore,” Mr. Hakeem added.

Muslim Security Compromised.

In terms of the CFA it is the Government of Sri Lanka that is responsible for the protection of Human security particularly in government controlled areas. The events that unfolded in the past reiterates the SLMC’s repeated call that the CFA must be reviewed and strengthened to address the legitimate concerns of all stakeholders and ensure security of the civilian population at all times.

SLMC Said that it is also our considered view that these incidents cannot be seen in isolation and need to be viewed together with the events of the recent past including the notices that were distributed in Muthur area calling the Muslims to vacate the areas. It was also pertinent to analyze as to whether the Government of Sri Lanka has

unwittingly been turned into a trap, where it could easily be accused of triggering the exodus of the people of Muthur or have the radical elements clamoring for war as the solution to the ethnic problem skillfully achieved their objective of putting the Muslims against the Tamils.



When the LTTE closed the Mavillaru anicut the government and the Army never understood their true intention in order to capture Muthur. They strengthened the safety of the Mavillaru area neglecting the security of Muthur. The government had removed around 400 security forces personnel who were deployed in Muthur and posted them in

the Mavilaru area and this had made Muthur more vulnerable to LTTE attacks.

The LTTE carefully observed the situation and entered Muthur on 02nd of August 2006 without any resistance from the security force. They disconnected the electricity. The Muslims without any protection were caught unaware. They vacated their homes and went into the mosques and Arabic College hoping that they will not be attacked in those places. However what happened was something else. The LTTE used the Muslims as human shields when the army attacked the LTTE.

The Muslims got caught in the crossfire from both the army and the LTTE. Shells fell on Arabic College too. The number of deaths increased.



Since Muthur was totally surrounded by LTTE, the town could not function normally. Business came to stop. People did not have means to acquire their daily food, children suffered without milk, patience both from the hospital and the casualties suffered without treatment. The Muslims had to struggle for their mere existence.

If this situation continued all of them would have died either by hunger or by shells. Therefore decided to leave Muthur. Though they received

repeated assurances from the army that they will be protected and asking them not to vacate Muthur, there was no protection forthcoming. Therefore the Muslims lost hope both in the government and the army and left for Kanthalai and Kinniya.

The Muslims while running for their lives suffering with hunger and thirst were also attacked by the LTTE on the way. The women and elderly were tortured and the youngsters were separated and murdered. The people remained in the local camps in Muthur too were faced with untold hardships and are still suffering without proper amenities to eat, dress or sleep.

Trincomalee is almost the core of the power structure in the North and East and whoever is in control of the area will have the upper hand since it's the transit point between the North and East. Whoever wrests control in the area will have a say in the final solution – be it military or political.

The LTTE knew the importance of this place, infiltrated into the neighbourhood of Mavilaru since mid 1985 with the long term plan of taking control of the Trincomalee Harbour area.

Before the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in February 2002 it was the Sri Lankan security forces that were in control of the Mavilaru area.

After infiltrating into the area, the LTTE used the area to monitor the activities in the Trincomalee harbour, where troops and cargo have been transported through the ships to the North, since 1985.



Since the infiltration and consolidation of power in the Sampoor area by the LTTE during this period, the security of the Trincomalee Harbour has always been at a risk.

They also attacked the Trincomalee Naval base using 122mm and 130mm, artillery guns and mortars from Sampoor area. These heavy weapons which have the capacity of about 20 kilometers range were

captured from the military during the Mullaitivu and Elephant Pass debacles. Now for the first time in the East, the LTTE had used these weapons to attack the government military.

The attacks from these mass destructive heavy weapons remain the biggest challenge to the security forces carrying out operations in the Southern and Eastern parts of the Trincomalee district. Any mass movement of the security forces have been largely obstructed by these powerful big guns. Despite the aerial bombardment that had been going on at regular intervals for nearly two weeks, the Air Force is yet to destroy these guns.

The Tigers launched a fierce attack on three main army camps in Trincomalee – Kattaparichchan, Gandhinagar and Thoppor last week.

They also stormed into the predominantly Muslim areas in Muthur in a bid to take control of the township that had throughout been under government control. Though the security forces faced some setback initially with this unexpected attack, within 72 hours they managed to take full control of the area. The LTTE lost nearly 300 cadres including a large number of female cadres in the battle for Muthur.

More or less a similar number of Muslim civilians too got killed, caught in the crossfire, with majority of deaths reported due to LTTE firing.

If the previous governments had the common sense to realize the gravity of abandoning strategic locations, it would have saved this totally unwarranted loss of life and waste of money.

LTTE had it's eyes on Muthur for a long time for they considered Muthur harbour to be an important place but because of the presence of the Muslims have found it difficult to capture this area. Therefore LTTE was keen on chasing the Muslims from Muthur.



This is the reason why there were continuous attacks, strikes and murders causing much loss to the lives and properties of Muslims of Muthur. Many times leaflets were distributed by the LTTE threatening the Muthur Muslims to vacate their homes, but the Muslims of Muthur were not scared and they did not evacuate the area. They were determined to stay in the land which is rightfully their.

The Army was not serious about the security of the Muslims. There were many instances where the Muthur fishermen were badly treated by the Army.

When Muthur Muslims expressed their concerns about the threats of LTTE, Muslim political leaders, made a mockery of it. They believed Tamil leaders' assurance that there will never be a repetition of what happened to the Northern Muslims.

The CFA has become a dead letter with both parties violating it with impunity while regular ethnic cleansing of the Muslims takes place in the north east at the behest of the LTTE. The engagements between the government and the LTTE had only resulted in compromising

civilian security, particularly that of the Muslim population. Both sides have shown absolute disregard for human security with the LTTE openly committing war crimes while innocent civilians were fleeing Muthur. 'Both parties while making pronouncements about being committed to peace, the CFA and human security have brought the country towards the brink of all out war.



The government in the initial stage was not prepared to deal with such a mass exodus and had difficulty in dealing with the situation.

The government had no warning. Knowing that there was an impending crisis in Muthur developing, the disaster preparedness of the government agencies leaves a lot of suspicions. In fact, their lack of preparedness was a disaster.

If Muthur happened to be a predominantly Sinhala town, the approach to flush out the LTTE would have been different. Likewise, the LTTE also would have used different tactics if Muthur was a Tamil populated area. In this sense, both the government and the LTTE did not care

two hoots for the inhabitants who were largely Muslims. It was therefore easy for them to engage in absolute warfare and not think about Muslim civilians getting caught in between.

Would either party have chosen this mode of relentless artillery attack that drove people away if their own respective communities were inhabiting the area under attack? The armed forces showed no respect for human security when spraying artillery and similarly, LTTE committed atrocities of the worst order in Karandamunai when they were fleeing in mortal fear.

There was absolute war crime by the LTTE. It has been so since the mid 80's, when several Muslim villages had been abandoned.

On the question of launching operations, the military strategists are repeatedly committing the mistake of providing insufficient security to Muslim dominated pockets. The authorities have approved that they are not committed to safeguarding the rights of the Muslim community that has always been at the receiving end.

Internally Displaced Peoples - IDPs
Muslims from Muthur, Thoppur & Palaththoppur
During Ethnic cleansing by LTTE - 01 - 08 August 2006

S.No	Names of Refugee Camps	Displaced Population	Displaced Families	Male	Female	Children	Injured	Pregnant Mothers	Feed Mothers	Widows on Iddah	Death	Missing
Kanthalei												
1	Al Tiariq MMV	6,333	1,702	2,490	3,843	997	78	151	363	9		
2	Aysia Ladies College	5,853	1,575	3,111	2,742	795	10	30	150		26	
3	Ar Staffa	902	245	429	473	54	5	12	35			
4	Peasathwe II MMV	5,025	940				100	493	300			
5	Ar Raiff	1,500	250	645	855	62	15	15	25	1	7	
6	Al Mi teera Thakkya	1,490	335	752	738	194		13				
7	CSAI		110									
8	Akrabothl Paisala	1,073	376	419	654	132		9	4			
9	Gem III	86	21									
10	Thop I	1,061	378									
11	Zalila	1,400	324									
12	Marutham Mal Camp	1,010	262									
13	Kam Refugees' Camp	326	75	155	171	164		8	35	12		
	Sub total	26,059	6,593	8,001	9,476	2,398	208	731	913	22	33	
Thampalakamam - Mulipoththana												
14	Al Hija M.V.	3,305	665	1,514	1,591	239	47	28		1		
15	T.S.Ial M.V	1,883	406	946	937	633				1		
16	T/B Ilari M.V	1,227	313	624	603	184	17	10	43			
17	Bilari Mosque	879	227	393	486	234	1	15	51			
18	Hameeda MV	217	60	101	116	37	1	5	15			
19	Fathima MV	418	89	196	220	52	1	5	15			
20	Sams MV	372	83	191	181	124	5	7	25			7
21	Dianssalam MV	327	75	141	171	115	4	18	13	1		
22	95th Mile Post	571	162	287	284	73	4	15	21			
23	Al Hikma V	653	179	328	325	84	4	17	24			
	Sub total	9,852	2,259	4,823	5,014	1,775	84	120	207	3		7
Kinniya												
24	Al Mujalitha Vd	131	39	69	62	11		3	2			
25	Al Aksia MV	943	255	474	469	116	6	25	40			
26	Sathiya Arabic Col.	172	37	98	74	30	14	4	6			
27	T/V Bilasathia Vd	165	47	72	93	22	5	6	5			
28	T/Kiribake ny Girl Vd	117	28	59	58	15	4	3	4			
29	T/B Ilari Vd	225	75	113	112	31	8	6	9			
30	T/A lakikery MMV	219	79	110	109	28	9	6	8			
31	Vellimali Madeta V	243	106	121	122	31	7	9	9			
32	Friends & Relatives	467	122	237	230	115	54	12	17			
33	Friends & Relatives	630	167	270	258	55	6	16	23			
	Sub total	3,312	955	1,523	1,587	454	113	90	123			
Trincomalee												
34	Trinco Town	300	80	143	157	37	8	8	13			
Madatugama Dambulla												
35	Muslim School	125	33	76	49	21		6	21			
	TOTAL	39,548	9,920	14,666	16,283	4,685	413	955	1,277	25	33	7



Harthal and Peace Rally in Ampara

A Harthal staged in Muslim areas of Ampara on the 16th August 2006 in response to the hand bills distributed by the Federation of all Mosques in the Eastern Province calling for a Harthal. Around 15 000 people had participated in the peace rally held in Kalmunai.



3.

LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS OF NORTH EAST MUSLIMS

Muslim villages in the North East are interspersed with a Tamil village and vice versa. Substantial share of agricultural lands owned by the Muslims are adjacent to the Tamil villages.

There have been intermittent clashes over the years on comparatively trivial issues such as Muslim farmers being harassed by Tamils when they pass through Tamil areas, waylaying of vehicles, robbing of paddy and cattle belonging to the Muslims. After 1983 ethnic violence, it was found that the Tamils in the North have started to forcibly occupy the lands belonging to the Muslims in areas close to the Tamil villages. There are about 490 locations in the North East where the Tamils are forcibly occupying about 100,000 acres of agricultural lands belonging to more than 40,000 North East Muslim Families.

When questioned during the Media Conference which was described as the largest media event in Sri Lanka organised by the Tamil Tigers on 10th April 2002; about the forcible expulsion of tens of thousands of Muslim families by the LTTE in October 1990 from Tamil dominated areas in the North and the massacre of Muslims inside mosques in the East, LTTE Political Advisor Anton Balasingam said "It is I who made an apology to the Muslim people in public for what has happened in the past and that we are willing to talk to them and resolve these issues."

Responding to another question whether he has taken any concrete steps to allow the displaced Muslim people living in refugee camps for the last 16 years to come back to North, Mr Velupillai Pirabakaran said "proper objective conditions should be created for these people to come back. After these conditions are in place, I will make an appeal for the Muslims to come back."

Questioned about harassment of Muslims in the eastern province and the statement that the LTTE's eastern commander, Karikalan had reported to have made that the Muslims had no land rights in the Eastern province, Mr. Anton Balasingam replied, "we want to tell you that we have called the senior commanders of the eastern province to discuss the alleged harassment of Muslim people. We believe that there is no dispute as far as the LTTE leader is concerned on the issue of the Muslim people owning land in the North-East."

On an invitation from the LTTE Leader V. Pirapaharan, the Leader of the SLMC Minister Rauff Hackeem flew to the North with five of his party colleagues for a meeting on the 13th April, 2002.

Agreement was reached on important practical difficulties faced by the Muslims in the North-East. LTTE Leader Pirapaharan invited the displaced Muslims from Jaffna and Wanni to come and resettle in their own places. It was decided to establish joint committees of representative from the LTTE and SLMC to facilitate the resettlement. Similarly it was decided to create favorable conditions for the resettlement of the Muslims who were displaced from Muslims villages in the Eastern Province.

It was decided to help the Muslims to recultivate the uncultivated agricultural lands belonged to the Muslims in the North- East.

It was also agreed to appoint representatives from each district in the North East to discuss the problems faced by the Muslims with LTTE Senior Commanders and to strengthen Tamil Muslims relationship.

Mr. M.I.M. Mohideen, the Chairman of Muslim Rights Organization, who participated in the peace talks as an advisor to SLMC National Leader Minister Rauf Hakeem, had substantive discussions with the members of the LTTE team and came to a good understanding of the problems.



The LTTE was prepared to seriously address the issue and requested that a register of Muslim claims be prepared which would then be subject to verification. Subsequently Hon. Rauf Hakeem the leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress had requested Mr. M.I.M. Mohideen to prepare a register of Muslim Lands forcibly occupied by the Tamils. Dr. Kumar Rupesinghe the Chairman of the Foundation for Co-Existence provided support and guidance and facilitated the programme. The Muslim Rights Organisation had undertaken the survey with the following objectives.

- Systematically enumerate the land claims of the Muslims in the North-East by visiting each location in the 8 districts.
- Prepare a register based on field investigations on a professional basis.

The registration exercise involved the distribution of 40,000 forms and folders by nearly 60 Village Enumerators, 8 District Coordinators and 8 Assistant District Coordinators, who were the residents in the areas

concerned. They have filled the comprehensive questionnaire with regard to individual claims, the actual date of the acquisition, the manner in which the land was taken over, the extent of the land, their deeds, permit or any other documents to the land. Details of buildings, machineries and livestock kept in the properties are some of the other informations which have been recorded. The Muslim Rights Organization had obtained the assistance of the North East Muslim Peace Assembly, the Ullemas - Muslim Theologians and the Trustees of the Mosques in predominant Muslim areas in Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Kilinochi, Mannar, Vavunia and Mullaitheevu Districts of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Forms and folders were collected, checked case by case and attested by Justices of Peace. The information collected were fed in to the computer and documented.

The project was funded by USAID – OTI and Cordaid of Netherland and covered a period of 12 months.

There is no doubt that in many instances these land claims will be the subject of mediation. However, as a first step the register of land claims lays the basis for mediation.

The resolution of the land question in the North-East would benefit more than 40,000 families – 125,000 men, women and children and will establish the basis for conflict resolution and help peaceful co-existence between the Tamils and Muslims. It would certainly go a long way to heal one of the worst wounds at the heart of the relations between the two communities.

MUSLIM LANDS FORCIBLY OCCUPIED BY THE TAMILS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA

AMPARA DISTRICT

	Predominate Muslim Areas	No. Cases	A	Extent R	P
1	Pottuvil	730	2592	3	-
2	Akkaraipattu	660	1785	3	23
3	Addalachenai	329	1072	3	34
4	Oluvil/ Palamunai	176	559	1	30
5	Ninthavur	583	2349	-	10
6	Sammanthurai	529	2513	-	22
7	Irakkamam	428	2092	-	32
8	Kalmunai	280	1433	1	33
9	Maruthamunai	496	2365	1	30
		4211	16764	1	14

BATTICALOA DISTRICT

	Predominate Muslim Areas	No. Cases	A	Extent R	P
1	Kattankudy	449	4231	1	12
2	Eravur	2263	12784	3	34
3	Oddamavady	1856	8710	1	37
4	Valaichenai	907	3086	1	30
		5475	28813	-	33

TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT

	Predominate Muslim Areas	No. Cases	A	Extent R	P
1	Kinniya	2252	7209	2	6
2	Mutur	992	2577	-	36
3	Thopur	912	4617	2	17
4	Pulmoddai	566	1344	3	25
5	Morawewa	464	1343	1	22
		5186	17092	2	26

	Total No. of Cases	A	Extent R	P
	14872	62670	-	33

**MUSLIM LANDS FORCIBLY OCCUPIED BY THE LTTE AFTER
ETHNIC CLEANCING OF MUSLIMS IN OCTOBER 1990 FROM THE
NORTHERN PROVINCE**

District	DS Division	Cases	Extent		
			A	R	P
Mannar	1.Mannar	2,033	3,623	3	12
	2.Musali	2,966	11,700	3	6
	3.Manthai west	931	4,402	2	16
	4.Madu	417	2,825	1	15
	5.Nanattan	253	681	-	11
	Total	6,600	23,233	2	20
Jaffna	1.Jaffna	1,177	245	-	17
	2.Chavekachcheri	44	21	3	35
	3.Island south	28	65	1	-
	4.Vadamarachi north	2	1	-	10
	5.Valikamam south-west	3	-	3	6
	6.Valikamam north	2	14	-	20
	Total	1,256	348	1	8
Kilinochchi	1.Poonakari	114	283	3	25
	2.Karachchi	151	233	1	29
	3.Pachchilaipalli	7	8	-	10
	Total	272	525	1	24
Mullaitheevu	1.Maritimepattu	978	1,095	-	22
	2.Puthukudiyiruppu	16	53	1	12
	Total	994	1,148	1	34
Vavuniya	1.Vavuniya south	870	3,795	1	2
	2.Venkalachchettikulam	1,066	1,327	1	20
	Total	1,936	5,122	2	22
NORTHERN PROVINCE TOTAL		11,058	30,378	1	28

**MUSLIM RESIDENTIAL HOUSES DESTROYED BY THE LTTE AFTER
THE ETHNIC CLEANCING OF MUSLIMS IN OCTOBER 1990 FROM
THE NORTHERN PROVINCE**

District	DS Division	Cases	1990 Value	Rebuilding Cost 2004
Mannar	1.Mannar	2,328	415,530,090.00	746,700,875.00
	2.Musali	2,725	335,612,675.00	671,618,600.00
	3.Manthai west	863	179,271,860.00	310,948,300.00

	4. Madu	257	30,291,700.00	68,650,100.00
	5. Nanattan	252	34,637,100.00	63,155,000.00
	Total	6,425	995,343,425.00	1,861,072,875.00
Jaffna	1. Jaffna	1,313	483,374,750.00	902,285,368.00
	2. Chavekachcheri	44	10,677,000.00	18,683,000.00
	3. Island south	29	2,948,000.00	6,325,000.00
	4. Vadamarachi north	1	160,000.00	200,000.00
	5. Valikamam north	1	100,000.00	200,000.00
	6. Valikamam south-west	3	600,000.00	1,700,000.00
	Total	1,391	497,859,750.00	929,393,368.00
Kilinochchi	1. Poonakari	97	15,331,500.00	41,855,000.00
	2. Karachchi	132	36,364,000.00	84,163,000.00
	3. Pachchilaipalli	7	485,000.00	1,210,000.00
	Total	236	52,180,500.00	127,228,000.00
Mullaitheevu	1. Maritimpattu	936	148,795,850.00	282,257,850.00
	2. Puthukudiyiruppu	16	1,565,000.00	2,243,000.00
	Total	952	150,360,850.00	284,500,850.00
Vavuniya	1. Vavuniya south	881	110,984,337.00	201,725,000.00
	2. Venkalachchettikulam	1,225	112,548,955.00	107,410,050.00
	Total	2,106	223,533,292.00	309,135,050.00
NORTHERN PROVINCE TOTAL		11,110	1,919,277,817.00	3,511,330,143.00

MUSLIM PROPERTIES ROBBED BY THE LTTE DURING THE ETHNIC CLEANING OF MUSLIMS IN OCTOBER 1990 FROM THE NORTHERN PROVINCE

District	DS Division	Cases	1990 Value	2004 Value
Mannar	1. Mannar	2,874	504,558,310.00	1,053,787,449.00
	2. Musali	3,022	623,219,525.00	1,288,520,895.00
	3. Manthai west	1,060	267,902,930.00	515,468,547.00
	4. Madu	263	33,633,210.00	73,796,700.00
	5. Nanattan	288	52,408,470.00	93,437,595.00
	Total	7,507	1,481,722,445.00	3,025,011,186.00
Jaffna	1. Jaffna	2,262	660,977,395.00	1,203,641,691.00
	2. Chavekachcheri	104	19,713,738.00	37,358,004.00
	3. Island south	41	4,103,350.00	10,122,350.00
	4. Valikamam north	3	1,545,000.00	3,725,000.00
	5. Valikamam south-west	10	2,876,000.00	6,178,500.00
	6. Valikamam east	2	2,371,000.00	5,026,000.00
	7. Vadamarachi north	5	2,268,400.00	6,065,000.00

	8.Nalloor	3	752,750.00	1,759,000.00
	Total	2,430	694,607,633.00	1,273,875,545.00
Kilinochchi	1.Poonakari	122	28,700,000.00	61,246,025.00
	2.Karachchi	184	38,755,335.00	81,396,250.00
	3.Pachchilaipalli	10	716,000.00	1,534,700.00
	Total	316	68,171,335.00	144,176,975.00
Mullaitheevu	1.Maritimepattu	1,040	231,619,498.00	526,196,495.00
	2.Puthukudiyiruppu	20	2,268,650.00	4,506,950.00
	Total	1,060	233,888,148.00	530,703,445.00
Vavuniya	1.Vavuniya south	954	153,434,559.00	296,647,400.00
	2.Venkalachchettikulam	1,415	206,853,541.00	289,499,944.00
	Total	2,369	360,288,100.00	586,147,344.00
NORTHERN PROVINCE TOTAL		13,682	2,838,677,661.00	5,559,914,495.00

The Resolution of the Muslim Land Question in the North East Region

The resolution of the land question in the North East of Sri Lanka has become a dominant issue during the transition period between war to peace. The resolution of the land question will be a major contribution to the peace process in Sri Lanka, for it will create the basis for laying the foundation for co-existence between the Tamils and Muslims living in the North East.

The project intends to facilitate the transfer of agricultural lands and properties appropriated by the LTTE to Muslim owners in the Eastern region. It will help to create a framework, which can mediate and reconcile these claims through the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. The Foundation for co-existence will collaborate with the Muslim Rights Organization with regards the Land Register and also collaborate with the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, the Mosque Federations, the LTTE, North East Muslim Peace Assembly and other relevant organizations.

Mediation and the Promotion of Co-existence

The transfer of the land will not be easy since Tamils have cultivated the land and some of it have been handed over to the families of Martyrs who had lost their lives or being injured in the war. Committee of the legal intricacies involved in such a transfer, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and problem solving approaches will have to take place. It is therefore suggested that a proper framework be created which can help facilitate an orderly and structured process, which can ensure sustainable mediation and reconciliation.

Communications

Clear communications between all the stakeholders is essential for the success of the exercise. The communications strategy should keep all stakeholders fully informed and ally any fears and rumors, which could incite conflicts. The best way to do this would be to get the support of the Trustees of the Mosques the LTTE, NEMPA, SLMM and Members of Parliament in the region.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Alternative dispute resolutions need to be setup in place for mediation and arbitration. Whilst the LTTE has promised to hand over the land to the Muslim owners, this is not easy since Tamils are already occupying or working on the land. Therefore alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, mediation and arbitrations may need to be put in place. Alternative dispute resolution means that measures should be found which would avoid a long and protracted cases in Court. In Sri Lanka it has been suggested that a **Mediation Commission** be appointed to deal with land disputes. Zonal special mediation boards could be appointed in each district composed of individuals from each community who can mediate on the issues. Currently the Ministry of Justice is framing legislative provisions to create such a Mediation Commission for the North Eastern region.

Mediation Centers

Eventually mediation centers will have to be established in each village. The Muslim Peace Secretariat should explore the best possible way in which such mediation centers could be established in each district. The establishment of mediation centers of a permanent nature is essential since the region is composed of a multi-ethnic population.

Confidence Building

Confidence building between the Tamils and the Muslims in the North East was taken up as a priority item at the Peace Talks commenced on Thursday the 31st October 2002, at the Rose Garden Holiday Resort, Samoran, Nakhorn Pathong, Thailand.

It was agreed to take the following steps immediately to implement the joint agreements reached between the L TTE Leader Pirabhakaran and the SLMC Leader Rauff Hakeem at the discussion held on 13th April 2002 at Vanni.

1. Establishment of Village level Tamil-Muslim Joint Committees to identify and resolve the problems faced by the Tamils and Muslims in the North East.
2. The Joint Committee to identify the lands belonging to the Muslims in the North-East unlawfully occupied by the Tamils to enable the take over by the Muslims.
3. The Joint Committee to identify the security problems faced by the Muslims in the North East in order to strengthen Muslim Security.
4. The Joint Committee to identify the administrative difficulties faced by the Muslims in the North Eastern Provincial Council, District Secretariats and the Divisional Secretariats in the North East to eliminate discrimination against the Muslims.
5. The Joint Committee to identify any other issues that would ensure the improvement of confidence building between the two communities.



Committees to Address Land Issues and Other Areas of Mutual Concern in the Eastern Province

At the Fifth Session of Peace Talks held in Berlin on 7-8 February 2003 the parties agreed to establish three committees, one in each district of the Eastern Province, to address land issues and other areas of mutual concern. The committees will consist of six representatives of the Muslim population and six representatives of the LTTE. The work of the committees will start immediately. Similar committees will be appointed to address such issues relating to other communities as and when required.

4. RESETTLEMENT OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED MUSLIMS IN THE NORTH EAST

The main focus of the Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) at the peace talk held in Thailand during 6-9 January 2003, was on the urgent humanitarian needs to improve the day to day lives of the North East people. To this effect the parties have agreed on an accelerated Resettlement program of the Internally Displaced people.

Details of the internally (forcibly) Displaced Muslims from the North East who are now languishing in the following districts – Year 2002

<u>Districts</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Peoples</u>
Puttalam	15,500	74,140
Anuradhapura	865	4,070
Kurunagala	487	2,311
Gampaha	1,050	4,725
Colombo	425	1,912
Kalutara	395	1,856
Matale	85	517
Kandy	110	517
Galle	5	23
Kegalle	32	150
Ampara	110	523
Trincomalee	2,207	10,492
Batticaloa	343	1,631
<u>Total:</u>	<u>21,614</u>	<u>102,867</u>

The value of assets robbed by the LTTE during 1990 ethnic cleansing is more than Rs. 10,256 Million or US\$ 110 Million. The donor countries should put a condition for the LTTE to pay this amount to the forcibly displaced Muslims.



<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Value in Millions</u>
Residential properties	22,000	5,500
Commercial and Industrial establishments		
	2,402	2,100
Religious and Cultural Institutions	340	1700
Agricultural Lands	39,400 Acres	200
Gold Jewelleries	475,000 Grams	300
Cattle	211,000	150
Motor Vehicles	320	160
Motor Cycles	800	20
Carts	750	4
Bicycles	4000	25
Fishing Boats	850	40
Engines (Boats)	400	16
Fishing Nets	1200	8
Refrigerators	200	2
Television sets	2000	40
Radio Sets	600	1
<u>Total:</u>		<u>Rs.10,256</u>

The parties to the ceasefire agreement dated 22nd February.2002 the Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) have accepted that the groups that are not directly party to the conflict have also suffered the consequences. This is particularly the case as regards the Muslim population in the North East.

But the LTTE Leader of the combat unit of the Eastern province Karuna speaking in a recent meeting in Switzerland had said that the MoU that was signed by the Government and the LTTE was prepared by the LTTE having only the interest of the Tamils in mind. Speaking further Karuna said the Economy of the Eastern province is in the hands of the Muslims and this should be changed. At present Muslims are taxed only 5% of their income, it is only to keep them happy for a while but soon we must levy a Tax of at least 20% from them. Karunas speech was broadcasted by IBC, a broadcasting station maintained with LTTE sponsorship

Internally Displaced Muslims in the North East

Northern Province	Jaffna	Vanni	Total
Internally Displaced Muslim Families	4,000	14,954	18,954
Internally Displaced Muslim People	20,000	69,367	89,367

Eastern Province	Amp.	Batti.	Trinco	Total
Internally Displaced Muslim Families	110	343	2,207	2,660
Internally Displaced Muslim People	500	2,000	11,000	13,500

**FUNDS REQUIRED IN MILLION RUPEES 33, 250 (MILLION US \$ 350)
FOR THE RESETTLEMENT**

The proposal submitted by the Sri Lanka Government to the Oslo Donors Conference on 25th November 2002, for immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation support did not mention the losses suffered by the Muslims and the funds required for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction works in Muslim areas. The proposal gave the impression that it was only the Tamils have suffered in the North East conflict.

The Muslim Unit authorised by the Prime Minister in the Government peace secretariat to prepare the detail Plans and Estimates for the urgent works that have to be carried out and the register of Muslim lands that are unlawfully occupied by the Tamils in the North-East have not yet been accomplished.

The main concern of the few Muslims who have return to Jaffna is about their security, and lack of attention to Muslim IDPs. In 1990 nearly 18,000 Muslims lived in Jaffna in 3537 houses and 194 Government quarters, sent their children to four primary schools and two secondary schools and conducted prayers in 16 Mosques. All that are changed now by the Tamils and the present ground situation in Jaffna is quit different. The few Muslims who have returned mostly do pavement hawking, tailoring, run meat stalls or engage in scrap iron business. But the Tamil middlemen have now taken control of the trade and it is extremely difficult for the Muslims to survive in Jaffna. Also the Muslim returnees have found that their houses are being occupied by the Tamils authorize by the Government agent.

Under the present situation there is serious security threat for Muslims in the North-East. However, the SLMC leader Rauff Hackeem has said that the forcibly displaced Muslims should have confidence in the Government and go back. But the Government continues to remain silent with regard to the security and the rights of the Muslims in the North-East.

BERLIN RESOLUTION TO APPOINT COMMITTEES TO ADDRESS MUSLIM LAND ISSUES IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE.



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பிரதம அமைச்சரின் அலுவலகம்

Prime Minister's Office

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- Secretariat for Co-ordinating the Peace Process

SCOPP/45

3rd March, 2003

Hon. A. Rauf Hakeem,
Minister of Port Development & Shipping,
Eastern Development & Muslim Religious Affairs,
45, Layden Bastian Road,
Colombo 01

Dear Sir,

Committees to Address Land Issues in the Eastern Province

At the fifth Session of Peace Talks held in Berlin (7 – 8 February, 2003) the following decision was reached.

6. *The parties agreed to establish three committees, one in each district of the Eastern Province, to address land issues and other areas of mutual concern. The committees will consist of six representatives of the Muslim population and six representatives of the LTTE. The work of the Committee will start immediately. Similar committees will be appointed to address such issues relating to other communities as and when required.*

I shall be grateful if you could let us know the steps that have been taken towards appointing these committees for the three districts of the Eastern Province, and any other steps towards implementing this decision.

An early reply is appreciated since progress on the implementation of this decision would need to be placed at the next session of talks in Japan.

Yours sincerely,


for Director General

PK/-

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10th மாடி, பேரல் கோபுரம், உலக வர்த்தக அலுவலம், கொழும்பு 01.

Level 10, West Tower, World Trade Centre, Colombo 01.

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தொலைபேசி:

Tel. Nos.:

388709/388710

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பக்ஸ்:

Fax:

075 556309



Rauff Hakeem MP
Leader, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress

Minister of Port Development & Shipping
Minister of Eastern Development & Muslim Religious Affairs

20th November 2002

Mr. M.I.M. Mohideen,
Chairman,
57, Norris Canal Road,
Colombo 10.

Dear Mr. Mohideen,

MUSLIM LAND QUESTION IN THE NORTH EAST

A delegation from the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress led by me met the LTTE delegation led by Mr. V. Pirabakaran in Vanni on the 13th of April 2002 and discussed various matters pertaining to the problems faced by the Tamil and Muslim Communities due to the war in the North Eastern province.

Mr. Pirabakaran gave us an assurance that all lands belonging to the Muslims that are now being forcibly occupied by the Tamils will be returned to the Muslim Land owners as soon as possible. This matter was again taken up with Mr. Thamilselvan and Mr. Karuna during the 2nd round of Peace Talks in Thailand during 31st October to 3rd November 2002. They agreed that this matter could be effectively implemented only if we could provide them with details of such lands that are now being occupied by the Tamils.

Since you are a Licensed Surveyor from the area and a person who has a thorough knowledge of the Muslim Land question in the North East, I wish to entrust this task of identifying and preparing an up to date list of lands in question to you.

I shall therefore be grateful if you could please take up this challenging task immediately and submit a comprehensive report at the very earliest.

Thank you,
Sincerely yours,

RAUFF HAKEEM MP
LEADER, SRI LANKA MUSLIM CONGRESS and
Minister of Port Development, Shipping,
Eastern Development and Muslim Religious Affairs

5.

PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON LESSONS LEARNT AND RECONCILIATION

Evidence by Mr. M.I.M. Mohideen, (Former Secretary General - Peace Secretariat for Muslims, Secretary General - North East Muslim Peace Assembly and Executive Director - Al-Ceylan Muslim Documentation Centre) on 03 September 2010

01. War Crimes aganits the Muslims in Muthur - Trincomalee

At least 200 Muslim youths have been abducted by the LTTE in Muthur on Friday the 04th August 2006. On the same day, thousands of fleeing civilians including children, pregnant mothers and the elderly have been subjected to virtual starvation for over forty eight hours as a result of attacks on Muthur both by the government forces and the LTTE

In terms of the CFA the Government of Sri Lanka is responsible for the security in the Government control area.

When the LTTE closed the Mavillaru anicut the government and the Army never understood the true intention of LTTE to capture Muthur. The Army strengthened the safety of the Mavillaru area neglecting the security of Muthur and removed around 400 security personals who were deployed in Muthur and posted them to the Mavilaru area. This had made Muthur more vulnerable to LTTE attacks.

The LTTE carefully observed the situation and entered Muthur on 02nd of August 2006 without any resistance from the security forces. They disconnected the electricity, and used the Muslims as human shields when the army attacked them. The Muslims got caught in the crossfire from both the army and the LTTE. Shells fell on the mosques, schools, hospitals and residential houses.

Since Muthur was totally surrounded by LTTE, the town could not function normally. Business came to stop and the people could not acquire their

daily food, children suffered without milk, patience both from the hospital and the casualties suffered without treatment.

Since the infiltration and consolidation of power in the Sampoor area by the LTTE during the CFA period, the security of the Trincomalee Harbour has always been at great risk.

LTTE attacked the Trincomalee Naval base using 122mm and 130mm, artillery guns and mortars from Sampoor area. These heavy weapons were captured from the military during the Mullaitivu and Elephant Pass debacles. The attacks from these mass destructive heavy weapons remained the biggest challenge to the security forces carrying out operations in the Southern and Eastern parts of Trincomalee. Any mass movement of the security forces have been largely obstructed by these powerful guns.

LTTE also launched fierce attack on three main army camps in Muthur - Kattaparichchan, Gandhinagar and Thoppur.

The CFA become a dead letter with both parties violating it with impunity while regular ethnic cleansing of the Muslims took place in the North East at the behest of the LTTE. The engagements between the government and the LTTE had only resulted in compromising civilian security, particularly that of the Muslim population. Both sides have shown absolute disregard for human security with the LTTE and Government Security forces openly committing war crimes while innocent Muslims were fleeing Muthur. 39,648 Muslim People in 9,920 families were displaced, 32 died and 7 missing during 1st and 8th August 2006 in Muthur.

02. Muslims Hacked to Death in Pottuvil - Ampara

Ten Muslims hacked to death on Saturday – 16th September 2006 near the Radella tank in Pottuvil created tension and fear among the Muslim population. The government blamed the LTTE for this brutal killing but the civilians suspected the Government Special Task Force (STF).

According to reports from the area the victims were found blindfolded, hands tied and hacked to death in a vicious and brutal manner in close proximity to the Panama STF camp, which is an open area with no jungle. This area is fully under the control of the security forces, so there was no likelihood of the LTTE entering this area.

The journalists who visited Pottuvil on Monday the 18th September 2006 have said that the area was gripped by tension with civilians assigning the brutal attack on Muslims was clearly the work of the security forces and not the LTTE.

03. Human Rights Violations Against Muslims

On Thursday the 20th June, 2002; a Muslim three wheeler driver called Faizal was badly beaten by LTTE Ranjan and few others in Muthur.

When Faizal came home bleeding, his family members were provoked. They collected few others and went and caused some damage to the LTTE Office in retaliation for what LTTE Ranjan and others have done to Faizal.

On Wednesday the 26th June 2002, a hartal was organized by the LTTE to protest over the attack on the LTTE office by the Muslims in Muthur. About 500 LTTE cadres participated and forced the Muslims to close their shops and business places and they threatened to set fire to a petrol pumping station in the Muslim area. Muslims closed the shops but resisted any attack on the petrol pumping station and the clash between the Tamils and Muslims started. Five shops and seven houses belonging to the Muslims were destroyed by the LTTE who came in the so called peaceful hartal procession. They also removed the barbed wire fence to the paddy fields and drove the cattle in to destroy nearly 700 acres of paddy belonged to the Muslims.

On Friday the 28th June, 2002; Valaichenai Pradeshiya Sabha Office was set on fire and destroyed. In the grenade attack on Muslims returning from Friday "Jummah" prayers, 7 were injured – 2 critically. Additional troops and Special Task Forces were Airlifted after the mortar shells were fired and grenades were hurled at the Muslims by the Tamils. The Batticaloa and Ampara District were placed under curfew.

On Sunday the 30th June 2002, the LTTE abducted two Muslims killed and threw them in Kalmudu paddy field. The LTTE cadres with arms objected the removal of the bodies for burial according to Muslims rites and insisted the burning them at the site. The Army Major Hettiarachi contacted the Head Quarters and he was given the orders from Colombo to leave the bodies and avoid any confrontation with the LTTE. Then the LTTE cadres put the bodies on a heap of tyres and burned them in front of the Parents, Army and Police and destroyed all evidence of the horrendous human rights violation against the Muslims by the LTTE during cease fire.

04. LTTE Military Camp in Kinniya, Kurangupanchan Mosque

The Kurangupanchan area is in Kinniya - Trincomalee.

The Government Agent and the representatives of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission jointly had a meeting on Kurangupanchan Development Project on 06th June 2003. More than 200 displaced Muslims participated in the meeting. In order to stop any development and the resettlement of the displaced Muslims, the LTTE has set up their unlawful Military Camp in the mosque and abducted a Muslim, Mohamed Haniffa Abdul Latiff.

The unlawful erection of the military camp by the LTTE in Kurangupanchan mosque was the most controversial issue discussed in the media. The parties to the ceasefire agreement – GOSL, LTTE, and the Norway facilitator should have realized that the violation of the ceasefire agreement in Kurangupanchan is denying the Muslims the benefit of the cease fire

agreement in the peace process. The LTTE Camp in the mosque is now occupide by Sri Lankan Scurity Forces.

05. Land and Property Rights of North East Muslims

When questioned during the Media Conference which was described as the largest media event in Sri Lanka organised by the Tamil Tigers on 10th April 2002; about the forcible expulsion of tens of thousands of Muslim families by the LTTE in October 1990 from the North and the massacre of Muslims inside mosques in the East, LTTE Political Advisor Anton Balasingam said that It was he who made an apology to the Muslim people in public for what had happened in the past and that they were willing to talk the Muslims and resolve these issues.

Responding to another question about the harassment of Muslims in the Eastern province and the statement that the LTTE's Eastern commander, Karikalan had reported to have made that the Muslims had no land rights in the Eastern province, Mr. Anton Balasingam replied, "we want to tell you that we have called the senior Commanders of the Eastern province to discuss the alleged harassment of Muslim people. We believe that there is no dispute as far as the LTTE is concerned on the issue of the Muslim people owning land in the North-East."

06. De-Merger of Eastern Provinces

The Supreme Court on Monday the 16th October 2006, in a landmark judgment ruled that the merger of the Northern and the Eastern Provinces null and void.

The merger of the North and the East flared up opposition as it was paving the way to the creation of a single Tamil dominated administrative entity that encompassed one third of the land area and two-third of the country's coast. Also the ethnic balance of the Eastern Province was another matter of contention.

Even with strong opposition by the Sinhala and Muslim communities, successive Presidents Ranasinghe Premadasa, D.B. Wijetunga and Chandrika Kumaratunga continued the extension of the merger with the hope of arriving at a negotiated settlement to the national question and then deciding on the fate of the two provinces at a final solution.

With the split of Karuna from the LTTE, Tamil regionalism based on the Eastern province came to the fore adding a new dimension to the issue of the North-East merger.

The Muslims who have faced the brunt of ethnic cleansing from North and more recently in the East have absolutely no desire to subject themselves to further tyranny by the Tamil nationalists who have consistently tried to trap the Muslims in politics of “Tamil speaking peoples”.

07. Sinhalisation of Administration of the De-merged Eastern Province

After de-merging the East in October 2006, the Eastern Province administration is being ethnically transformed. Former Trincomalee GAs Rodrigo and Nelundeniya are the chief secretary and public administration secretary respectively. Former Matale GA, Udage is the secretary of the provincial Public Services Commission.

There are also many ex-servicemen in key positions. The Governor is Rear Admiral Mohan Wijewickrema. The GA is Major General Ranjith de Silva. The Rehabilitation Coordinator is Major General Amaradeva. The Governor's Secretary is Capt. Patrick Jayasinghe and Sunil Kannankagara is the GA Apmara.

Appointing ex-servicemen to key administrative posts has been criticized by members of the administrative service. However, the fact remains that this combination of retired administrative and security officials is well-equipped to implement the ‘Sinhalisation’ process in the East.

08. Eastern Provincial Council Election on 10th May 2008 and the appointment of the Chief Minister

Before the election, President Mahinda Rajapakse Promised that the group that returns the highest number of members to the council would be appointed the chief minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

The election results reflected the mood of the people in the province with the UPFA's 18 elected members comprising, eight Muslims, six Tamils and four Sinhalese whilst the UNP – SLMC list returned nine Muslims four Tamils and two Sinhalese. The JVP and the TDNA returned one Sinhalese and one Tamil respectively. In the total of 35 elected members from both side, there were 17 Muslims as opposed to 11 Tamils and 7 Sinhalese.

When analyzing the overall ethnic composition of the elected members to the Eastern Provincial Council, Muslims have topped the list. On ethnic basis there are 17 Muslim members, 11 Tamils and 7 Sinhalese members elected to the 35 member council.

Although the Muslims command the majority in the council, the government presented various arguments to change the promise and appointed a Tamil ex-LTTE terrorist as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Province.

09. Muslims Discriminated in Rebuilding and Rehabilitation of the East

Soon after the demerger of the East by the Supreme Court and following the take over of the province by the armed forces, President Mahinda Rajapaksa led UPFA government having elaborate plans to rebuild and rehabilitate the East. However the Muslim community feels the government has not so far included them into the development process.

While the government rebuilding the infrastructure, the people must be given back their lost lands and freedom to engage in whatever livelihood they were engaged before.

Controversy over the New Flag

Sri Lanka government has designed a new flag for the Eastern Province. This new flag has caused much misunderstanding and confusion as the flag has failed to represent all the communities living in the East in a just and faire manner.

The new flag has three symbols – the lion, eagle and fish. The Muslims claimed that while the lion and fish represent the Sinhalese and Tamils respectively, there is no symbol to represent the Muslims.

The Muslim community which is the largest ethnic group in the East today has raised serious concern over the failure of the government to recognize this community by not printing any symbols in the flag to represent the Muslims.

Para Military Forces harassing civilians

Law enforcement authorities in many parts of the Eastern province are allegedly turning a 'blind eye' to the continuous complaints made by the Muslims against Tamil terrorists.

Apart from encroaching lands belonging to Muslims, the Tamil terrorists have commenced taking ransom. Most Muslims victims have now stopped complaining to the police because when complaints were made to the police the details of those who made the complaints were leaked. As a result these families are intimidated and harassed.

10. Reconciliation

Reconciliation between the Tamils, Muslims and the Sinhalese in the North East was taken up as a priority item at the Peace Talks commenced on Thursday the 31st October 2002, at the Rose Garden Holiday Resort Thailand.

On a decision at the 5th session of the peace talks in Berlin on 7th & 8th of February 2003, LTTE – Muslim District Committees were established in all the three districts in the Eastern Province by the Government Peace Secretariat under the Prime Minister, to mediate lands and properties issues between the Tamils and Muslims.

The resolution of resettlement, land, security, and power-sharing questions would be of enormous significance and will establish the basis for reconciliation between the Tamil, Muslims and Sinhalese communities in the area of conflict - North East. If these issues are not resolved reconciliation and permanent peace will never return to the North East of Sri Lanka.

11. Lessons Learnt Period

Indo- Sri Lanka Agreements of 29th July 1987 and the arrival of Indian Peace keeping force - IPKF, the 13th Amendments of the constitution certified on 14th November 1987, provincial Council Act No 42 of 1987, Unilateral proclamation of Independence of the separate state “ Tamil Elam” and the EPRLF Chief Minister of North East Provincial Council surreptiously leaving Sri Lanka with his 250 supporters to India in March 1990, North East Province Governor’s Communication that more than one-half of the membership of the council refusing obedience to Sri Lanka Constitution, the dissolution of the merged North East Provincial Council, Ethnic Cleansing of Muslims from North in October 1990 were some of the important Lessons we have Learnt. Therefore, the Lessons Learnt Period should have commenced from 29th July 1987 instead of 19th May 2009.

The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has had a terrible effect on the Muslims in the North-East. The forcible eviction of more than one hundred thousand Muslims, the destruction of more than 150 mosques and other places of worship, the confiscation of land and attacks on innocent civilians have caused fear and insecurity in the hearts of the Muslims. Therefore, the North East Muslims have to be vigilant in the future. Our primary concern is the safety and security of our people, rights for our areas of historical habitation, resettlement of the forcibly displaced North East Muslims and power sharing on the basis of internal self-determination.

The violence perpetrated against the North East Muslims during the last two decades has shown us that we have not succeeded in drawing attention to our problems internationally. When more than hundred thousand Muslims were forcibly evicted from the North-East by the Tamil militants there was very little protest from International bodies. We have learnt over the years that the natural mechanisms including the Government, have failed to afford adequate protection to the North East Muslims. To ensure adequate protection we have no option but to make use of the protocols and instruments available to us internationally under the Charter of the United Nations. We need therefore to ensure that we represent our case in all United Nations bodies and other International fora. A lobby also must function to inform other international institutions regularly.

We are also quite aware that internationalization alone will not bring practical solution to the problems faced by the North East Muslims in Sri Lanka. It is imperative to work out special programmes and proposals aimed at providing durable settlement of our problems and for initiating and sustaining a dialogue process with other communities and the government based on the principals of equality, mutual accommodation and pluralism.



Mr. M.I.M. Mohideen
ASI (Sri Lanka), AMCSI (England)
Land and Building Surveyor

Executive Director of Al-Ceylan Muslim Documentation Centre, Coordinator for the North East Tamil Muslim Peace Committee for the resolution of ethnic conflict and the former Secretary General of Peace Secretariat for Muslims

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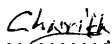
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