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Press release

Battle for water or something else

The Political Head of the LTTE, S P Tamilselvan, told Norwegian Special Peace Envoy, Jon Hanssen Bauer, and Norwegian Ambassador, Hans Brattskar, at the meeting on 6 August 2006 in Kilinochchi, that the LTTE leadership has decided to open the Mavilaru sluice gate, without any conditions, which was shut by the protesters and requested the delegation to address the concerns of the Tamil people of Mavilaru that were put forward by the protesters.

This information was immediately conveyed by the Norwegian Special Peace Envoy to, the GoSL Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mangala Samaraweera, Secretary General of the GoSL Peace Secretariat, Palitha Kohana, and Norway's Development Minister Eric Solheim. Agreement was reached to act on the decision made by the LTTE to open the Mavilaru sluice gate.

On the same day, accompanied by the Head of SLMM, Ulf Henricsson, and SLMM Trincomalee district Head, Ove Jansen, the LTTE Trincomalee Political Head S Elilan and protest leaders went to the damn location to open the sluice gate. The GoSL forces began shelling the location. Some fell very near the SLMM Head and exploded. SLMM monitors and others who went to open the sluice gate were forced to take cover in bunkers.

With the full knowledge of the presence of the SLMM monitors at the location and the decision by the LTTE to open the sluice gate, the GoSL had decided to shell the exact location. The LTTE considers this act by the GoSL as deliberate and strongly condemns the attack. The GoSL action by implication not only rejected LTTE's good will gesture it also shows that the GoSL is paying scant regard to Norway's peace efforts.

The very next day, at 7.30 am on the morning of 7 August, 15 civilians were killed when the GoSL forces shelled the civilian areas in the LTTE administered section of Mutur. Many more were injured and large number of people were displaced. Buildings and property sustained severe damages. 40,000 civilians living in LTTE areas were displaced.

Do these actions reveal anything about the GoSL's intentions? It is the plea of the Tamil people to the international community that it understands the stark truth behind these actions of the GoSL.