



## **New Delhi & the Tamil Struggle - An Amoral Role**

### **Atharma Bhumi? - Sanmuga Suntharam**

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**Comment by tamilnation.org** We find ourselves in agreement with much of that which Mr.Sanmuga Suntharam says. He is right to point out the amorality of India's role in the struggle for Tamil Eelam. He is also right to point out the abominably pernicious "caste" system that pervades India's body politic, 'the suicidal infighting of those who are called Dravidians', and the 'abominable betrayals and treachery' of Tamils like Karuna, Douglas and Sangaree. But, having said that, Mr.Sanmuga Suntharam's conclusion may have to be examined further. He says –

"Let us therefore forget the 'motherland' complex and tell the Indians that we are the only people who can be relied upon as friends if they treat us with fairness. We are not asking for favors. First we are asking them to stop harming us. Secondly, we wish to let them know that any help they give us will be vastly in their interest, too. Will the Mandarins in their government emotionally accept this reality?"

If it is 'vastly in the interest of New Delhi' to help the struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam why has New Delhi not extended that help all these years? Is it that New Delhi is not astute enough to see that which we see? Or is it that New Delhi recognises that support for an independent Tamil Eelam will result in Sinhala Sri Lanka turning to the US and/or China? Does New Delhi fear that support for an independent Tamil Eelam will be counter productive - and will result in the very thing that New Delhi wants to prevent - the increased presence of extra regional powers in the Indian Ocean region? And that any help that an independent Tamil Eelam may proffer will not be sufficient to prevent that increase? Romesh Bhandari was forthright in 1987 –

"..No one individual formulates and decides (Indian) Government's policy. There are always in depth internal consultations and discussions. There are several inputs before decisions are taken. Any individual entrusted with a task does so on directions... it has been made clear at all times to Sri Lanka, that India's national compulsions cannot also be set aside. In any final reckoning these would prevail over anything else...Besides being a neighbour and non-aligned, Sri Lanka is a small island strategically located in the Indian Ocean having harbours on which some outsiders have their eyes. Continued strife and disorder only weakens Sri Lanka and makes itself vulnerable to foreign interference, presence and even involvement. None of these can suit India..."

We may need to recognise the uneasy power balance in the Indian ocean region reflected amongst other things by Operation Seabird. We may need to recognise that it is in the interstices of that power matrix that the struggle for Tamil Eelam is taking place. The words of an American diplomat to a Tamil Eelam activist in 1984 come to mind: "You know, India is not a super power, it should not try to behave like one." New Delhi may be behaving the way it has done for so many years, because it is not strong enough to do anything else. It is not strong enough to support the creation of an independent Tamil Eelam and at the same time exclude the presence of extra regional powers in Sinhala Sri Lanka - and in the Indian Ocean region. Having used the Tamil militant movement to destabilise Sinhala Sri Lanka, New Delhi then infiltrated the weakened Sinhala body politic through its many proxies and agents and now its foreign policy is directed to stabilise its hold on Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean region - and the Tamils continue to be called upon to pay the price. It is the weak who usually act amorally. They are not strong enough to be fair.

Given the key roles played in the Struggle for Tamil Eelam, by India , the United States and China (with supporting roles for the European Union, Japan and Pakistan) it is not without importance for the Tamil people to further their own understanding of the foreign policy objectives of these countries - this is more so because the record shows that states do not have permanent friends but have only permanent interests. We may want to remind ourselves yet again of something which Velupillai Pirabakaran said some 10 years before -

"...We are fully aware that the world is not rotating on the axis of human justice. Every country in this world advances its own interests. It is the economic and trade interests that determine the order of the present world, not the moral law of justice nor the rights of people. International relations and diplomacy between countries are determined by such interests. Therefore we cannot expect an immediate recognition of the moral legitimacy of our cause by the international community... The world is constantly changing and there will be unexpected changes. At a particular conjuncture the international situation might change favourably to us. At that time, the conscience of the world will be conducive to the call of our just cause... In reality, the success of our struggle depends on us, not on the world. Our success depends on our own efforts, on our own strength, on our own determination..." *Velupillai Pirabakaran, Maha Veera Naal Address - November 1993*

In the end, the success of the struggle for Tamil Eelam will be a function of the capacity of the leadership of the struggle to mobilise its own people and its own resources at the broadest and deepest level - and this means, amongst other things, broadening and deepening the understanding of the Tamil people of the motivations of the international actors in relation to the struggle for Tamil Eelam. Furthering our understanding of the strategic interests of the international community, will better equip us to engage in the real task of addressing those interests - and to show that the emergence of an independent Tamil Eelam will not pose a threat to many of the underlying interests of all the parties (not simply India) concerned with the conflict in the island. On the contrary, it is the attempt to suppress the struggle of the Tamil people to be free from alien Sinhala rule which will pose a threat to the stability of the Indian Ocean region.

தமிழன் இல்லாத நாடில்லை -  
தமிழனுக் கென்று ஒரு நாடில்லை

reflects the deep felt feelings of more than 70 million Tamils living in many lands and across distant seas. And Velupillai Pirabakaran was right to say many years ago

" Though Tamils live in many lands in the world, it is in Tamil Eelam that historical circumstances have arisen for the emergence of an independent Tamil state."

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## **Atharma Bhumi? - Sanmuga Suntharam**

As if by rote the Tamils of Eelam say affectionate things about India; - India, our mother country; India, the Dharma Bhumi; India, the heartland of our culture; India, our protector; India, this; India, that.... This is as good a time as any to take stock of our ideas about India and to discard our misconceptions and to re evaluate our relationship to India. Not just because of India's recent contumelious and shabby treatment of our representatives, not only because of the seven thousand innocent Tamils killed and many women raped by the Indian army and not only because of the decision to hand over Tamil freedom fighters to the Sinhalese thereby leading to collective suicide of the heroes, not only because of the banditry in international waters and the cause of Kittu's death, not only because of giving hundreds of millions of (US) dollars to the Sri Lankan government at crucial times to prevent the Tamil freedom fighters recovering our sacred land, not only because of the continuing naval support and spying services provided to the GOSL, not only because India opposed

Finland's draft resolution on Human rights violations by the Sri Lankan government but also because we have to disabuse our minds about India, our 'mother' in the face of its hostility towards Eelam Tamils and their aspirations.

Firstly, "India" is not our mother country. The India of today is a creation of the British. It is far fetched to think that, for example, the Muslims of Indian Kashmir or the Sikhs of Punjab are in anyway our "siblings". They do not look like us; they do not speak our language nor profess our religion; majority of them may not even know of our existence. The central fallacy of the Eelam Tamils' affectionate attitude to the Indians of India is an expectation of reciprocity. This was a non-starter and the fondness had always been a one-way street.

Contrary to the self-serving accusations by the Indians and the Sinhalese that the British practised the strategy of "divide and rule" they indeed put together a disparate collection of separate states in India and dissolved the distinctive Tamil and Sinhalese kingdoms and conjoined them to facilitate imperial bureaucratic control. However, the most thorough going genetic and deep division of the Indians was devised and institutionalized by the Brahmins although the abominably pernicious "caste" system.. It is hierarchical, socially structural and skilfully integrated into the Hindu belief system. That is perhaps the most invidious division of humanity ever devised by man, thanks to the Brahmins.

Even in the new British-made India most Indians instinctively, in their minds, and informally divide their country into South India and North India. North Indians speak Indic languages and have adopted Urdu/Hindi - the Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit based Creole language -as their lingua franca and the official language of the Indian government and claim a mythical "Aryan" ancestry for themselves. The South Indians, though their languages are members of the family of Dravidian languages, except the non-Brahmin Tamils, barely recognize their Dravidian connection. Their common language of discourse is English and their languages have become "pidginized" with a mix of English and Hindi (Persian/Arabic/Sanskrit!) Hindu India - "Hinduism" with its fundamental credo of casteism, the only common thread running through this factitious nation - is ruled by an Italian Catholic through a Sikh Prime Minister. (Anyone who had read V.S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* will have an inkling of the rabid racism a Sikh can descend to). Though generally Hindu leaders are drawn from the high caste, the Indians seem to, instinctively, accord high caste status to persons of European origin such as Sonia.

With unmistakable symbolism, India is ruled from Delhi, the seat of the Mogul empire and imperial British Raj. Until last year only Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit were recognized as the classical languages of, believe it or not, - India (!) studiously excluding Tamil which is older than any of these languages and totally indigenous. To the minds of the North Indian rulers of India Arabic and Persian were more authentically Indian than anything Dravidian! These facts put into perspective the absurdity of the Eelam Tamils claiming any affinity with India.

Moreover, calling India (which India?) our mother country is contrary to the accepted view of the pervasive presence of the Dravidians in the then contiguous land encompassing the Indian land mass and the island of Ilankai, contemporaneously. The Nagas and Yakkas of the island were certainly Dravidians and it is a plausible

speculation that the First Sangam of then (South) Madurai might have been in North Eelam itself. Hence it is not an established fact that there was no presence of a Dravidian language (perhaps Tamil) on the island prior to its presumed importation from South India.

It is instructive to remember that Sinhala - the language - is the oldest of the Indic languages and the Sinhala (the people) claim descent from North India - the India that now rules that land. Hence their claim to 'India' as the mother country would be recognized more readily by the ruling class of India and will receive more support than that of the Tamils. In fact, the Sinhalese are more correct in calling India their motherland than the Eelam Tamils for whom Eelam is the motherland because Eelam Tamils are the Yakkas and Nagas, the authentic indigenous descendants of the original homo sapiens of the island.

Manifestly, Eelam Tamils' attachment to Tamil language and its glorious past is very real and profound. That is a major rationale for our fight for Eelam. Granted, our culture - whatever it means - in its present form was shaped considerably by the culture of the Tamils of Tamil Nadu. We look up to them and almost totally depend on them for the preservation and growth of Tamil and Tamil-based culture.

Moreover, we are deeply grateful to Tamil leaders like M.G. Ramachandran, Vaiko and Nedumaran for the help and sacrifices they made on behalf of Eelam and its people.

But the inescapable fact of "Dravidianism" is the suicidal infighting of those who are called Dravidians. (Sukrivan of Ramayana a putative Dravidian betrayed his own brother and got him murdered by Rama and by contrast Rama had the absolute loyalty and fraternal love of his brothers. Vibushanan another Dravidian of Ramayana fame betrayed his own brother Ravana). Close to home even more abominable betrayals and treachery are in progress minute by minute, all by Tamils like Karuna, "Douglas" and Sangaree (the "destroyer") who have formed an unholy alliance with the Special Task Force (STF) of the GOSL and are on a killing spree of Tamil civilians.

If as suspected in some quarters, Karunanithi, the archetypal Dravidian sabotaged, out of local political rivalry, TNA's appointment to meet with Prime Minister Singh, it is a despicable machination, but entirely in keeping with the worst of Dravidian behavior. Indians have their behavior pattern fashioned by years of casteism, foreign rule and colonialism.

They are obsequious, timid and reverential towards those who are perceived born to be superior and cruel and nasty to those presumably to be born to serve them unquestioningly. And, those born superior are Aryans. "Aryan" is defined in India as all the North Indians (other than the "untouchables") and the Brahmins of South India. The lighter the skin color the more Aryan one is. Ironically, because of this obsession, the actors of Bollywood the Indians swoon over, are mostly Muslims who look like the Mogul rulers. When Rajiv Ghandi visited Sri Lanka, subsequent to the "welcoming" assault by a member of the "disciplined" "honor" guard all ill feeling evaporated when J.R. Jayawardhene referred to Rajiv as the "Second greatest Aryan to set foot on Sri Lanka soil", the first presumably having been Vijaya! After listening

to that warm reminding of the glorious racial ties Rajiv went ahead and screwed the Eelam Tamils.

The present day mandarins of India who like their namesake "manthris" who ran down India all the way towards foreign conquest and ruination over more than 3000 years are, if they are from the South, Brahmins who are overtly and avowedly anti-Tamil. Remember the judge who sentenced seventeen Tamils to death which sentence was mostly thrown out by the supreme court of India consisting of non-Brahmin judges? Remember the reporters in Colombo for the The Hindu (Hidebound Indian Newspaper, Disseminating Untruths) who were acting as the propagandists of the GOSL? There is that oddball Subramaniam Swamy who cannot open his dysfunctional mouth without impugning the Tamil Tigers and Jayalalitha the b-witch who treats the Indian Tamils like cattle and hates the Eelam Tamils with a vengeance.

India's policies and actions are not even remotely governed by any perceived special relationship with Eelam Tamils because there is none. Any love that we harbor towards India is totally spurned and unrequited. Its policies are determined by the mandarins who, like the Neocons of the Bush Administration, act on the basis of an agenda which is not always identical to one that is in the interest of India. They know that if they aided in the victimization of the Eelam Tamils there is none to effectively challenge them. The possible protest of the Tamil Nadu Tamils, they know, will be weak and inconsequential. If Eelam Tamils were all Muslims, Indian mandarins will, literally, be up in arms at the slightest infringement of their rights. India understands Muslim solidarity and fears it. This is congenital. But Tamils - they can be dispensed with! There are economic interests to consider, however.

GOSL has, cynically, granted to India a lease of oil tanker farms in Tamil territory of Trinco. The possible privilege of access to the Trinco naval harbor is another tempting carrot that is dangled. India, therefore, has quite deliberately put its interests in conflict with ours on a long term basis. The latest of these Indo/Sri Lankan ugly manoeuvres is the agreement to build a power plant in Sampur, recently grabbed from the Eelam Tamils. Thus India, either acts out of fear of repercussions or out of unscrupulous economic interest, neither of which we Eelam Tamils present. Pakistanis, though inimical to Eelam Tamils, are not encumbered by Aryanism, Brahminism and fear of Muslims. They audaciously support Islamic cross-border attacks against India and justify this as Kashmiri freedom struggle but at the same time supply arms, bomber pilots, strategic advice and financial help to GOSL to kill the Eelam Tamil freedom fighters, with impunity and no qualms. India quietly and supinely acquiesces in this flagrancy.

Quite obviously the Northern/Brahmin rulers of India think that it is less desirable for the Eelam Tamils to survive than Pakistan to get stronger and influential. GOSL, in almost every situation of conflict between India and Pakistan, either took the side of Pakistan or "malingered" and feigned neutrality. Yet India treats the Sinhala government as the favored child. Even the most virulent anti-Indian JVP leader Wimalawansa was given refuge, protected and sent back to Sri Lanka to continue his hateful shenanigans, this time against the Eelam Tamils, possibly on India's instructions? India's steadfast and continuous support concomitantly with simultaneous bad mouthing of Eelam Tamils both within India and internationally is

not only reprehensible, it is criminal. The harm India has done to us ranks very close to what the Sinhalese are perpetrating.

Its gratuitous insistence on Sri Lankan "Territorial integrity", a fetishism promoted by ex-colonial nations, is uncalled for, deeply hurtful to the Eelam Tamils by promoting Sinhala racist hegemony and paradoxically destabilizing by ensuring endless conflict. India treats Tamil Eelam the way US treats Cuba - and Pirabhakaran, veritably like US's treatment of Castro. When Prime Minister Singh at the Non-Aligned Nation's Conference parroted those noble sentiments in Cuba did he not feel queasy? When in Cuba he so warmly greeted Douglas who is accused of so much of inhumanity to the Tamils of Eelam, was he thinking of the violent Cuban factions in Miami who are bent on destroying Castro and all that Cuba stands for, and are therefore treated like privileged princes.

We cannot and should not look up to the Indian government for any succour. Let us therefore stop ingratiating ourselves with India. They are not the type that helps the downtrodden. In India the under caste are and have been treated abysmally badly for millennia. If India wants to be a regional "power" it will not be able to attain that by armed strength alone. It cannot even handle Pakistan - it fears Pakistan. It needs friends - genuine friends - not fair weather friends like Sri Lanka. If India forms an alliance with Eelam Tamils we will take care of India's interests in our neighbourhood very well. Give us the arms and we will keep Pakistan at bay. We can certainly contain the Sri Lankan/Pakistan nexus.

India, for long, has taken the Eelam Tamils' loyalty for granted. It is as if they think we owe them fealty. The central fallacy in Eelam Tamils' loving attitude towards the Indians is the expectation of reciprocity. This was a non starter and the fondness has always been a one way street. Let us therefore forget the 'motherland' complex and tell the Indians that we are the only people who can be relied upon as friends if they treat us with fairness. We are not asking for favours. First we are asking them to stop harming us. Secondly, we wish to let them know that any help they give us will be vastly in their interest, too. Will the Mandarins in their government emotionally accept this reality?