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urgent Press statement

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Sri Lanka's Readiness To Launch War On Tamil Nation

International Federation of Tamils wishes to share the grief of the families of the bereaved and express its sympathies to all those wounded and affected by the tragic bomb-blast that killed scores of innocent Sinhala civilians and wounded as many as Kebithagollewa on the morning of 15 June 2006.

The IFT also condemns unreservedly the perpetrators of this inhuman crime committed with a view to precipitate confusion, tension and disharmony among the Sinhala and Tamil nations and accelerate war.

The Sri Lanka Government of President, Mahinda Rajapakse and the extremist elements among the Sinhala chauvinists hurried to blame the Kebithigollewa incident on the LTTE, whereas the LTTE denied responsibility and condemned attacks of this nature on civilians whether they be Sinhala or Tamil, stating, "*Directly targeting civilians, as the Kebithigollewa claymore attack has, cannot be justified under any circumstances.*"

The LTTE further says, "*The attack in Kebithigollewa timed to occur immediately after the return of the LTTE delegation from Europe is a reprehensible act of murder with the sole aim of blaming the LTTE for the attack,*" pointing to "GoSL Operative Forces," as culprits.

It appears as if the "GoSL Operative Forces," were not waiting even for the impact of the bus attack to settle, before embarking on their pre-planned venture of attacking Tamil areas. In Trincomalee, the army with its multi-barrelled artillery, the Navy with its shelling and the Kfirs with its bombs were indiscriminately mopping up the Muthur Tamil area under LTTE control for hours starting at 10.30 in the morning. Aerial bombardments were repeated again in the evening. Members of the SLMM were in Muthur witnessing the attack. More than seventy artillery beats rocked the area into panic.

Indiscriminate bombing from high altitude by supersonic jets on refugee camps of the Tsunami victims numbering more than 300 in Mullaitivu, Vanni district, missed the refugees as they fled scattering in different directions for their safety around 11.30 am, a few hours after the bus tragedy on Thursday. The bombs creating a four-meter deep crater were dropped at least in six places, two of them failing to explode.

Aerial bombing was resumed the following morning at least in five places at Kilinochchi, the Reuters correspondent and the BBC correspondent witnessing.

Indiscriminate air-attack on civilian targets is a war-crime and a breach of ceasefire agreement and a violation of international norms.

Japan and Switzerland were two countries that rushed to condemn the Kebithigollewa bus massacre. IFT thanks them for their concern and interest. But we were also shocked at their failure to condemn the government for the aerial bombardment on civilian targets. Japan, more than any other country knowing the pain of indiscriminate bombardment of civilian targets and Switzerland, with its unique history of hating war of any kind, not speaking up for the civilian settlements subject to indiscriminate carpet bombing in Tamil areas, makes one wonder whether, the bureaucracies of these two countries were actually reflecting the true sentiments of their peoples.

In fact, this war crime should have drawn the wrath of the International Community in general and the EU and the Co-Chairs and Norway, in particular. Perhaps they wish to adopt one set of laws for de jure state and yet a different one for de facto state in the island of Sri Lanka!

The silence of the International Community on "Cluster-Killing" by the State Armed Forces has already led to its escalation:

- The face-to-face artillery-launcher attack on eight Tamil Port workers on their way to a nuptial reception in broad daylight at Nellyyadi;
- killing with impunity of five men arrested at checkpoint outside the army base at Kopay;
- the involuntary disappearance of eight Hindu devotees as pointed out by Amnesty International at Manthuvil;
- the involuntary disappearance of six youths forcibly marched into an army base at Kaladdy, Tirunelveli;
- the carnage involving thirteen lives, young and old at Allaipitty;
- the blood curdling desecration of the female organs of the mother and daughter at Vankalai in the most horrendous murder of the entire family;
- the attempted claymore attack on a passenger bus with more than 50 passengers at Periyakulam, Vavuniya;
- the abandoned case of decapitated bodies of naked Tamil youths arrested earlier in a round-up arrest in Colombo;
- killing of ten Tamil civilians and wounding ten others in a pressure mine attack at Vadamunai, Batticaloa

- are some instances of "cluster-Killing," by State armed Forces, going unabashed and unabated, thanks to the encouragement rendered by the silence of the International Community that perhaps has become immune.

The IFT urges the International Community to wake up and do its duty, fair and square, by humanity.

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