

Taking just stand on national question is only way to sustainable democracy: TCSF

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Highlighting the fact that the denial of democracy currently being experienced by the majority Sinhalese community "is a cumulative impact of the anti-Tamil politics of successive Sinhala Governments" an independent civil society outfit has said that taking "a just stand on the Tamil national question" is the only way out for a sustainable democracy in the country as a whole.

"The fact is the denial of democracy currently being experienced by the Sinhalese is a cumulative impact of the anti-Tamil politics of successive Sinhala Governments. The denial of democracy that they suffer now is result of them being by standers-endorsing the anti-Tamil agenda of successive Governments. In our opinion the only sustainable path to democratization lies in the creation of a popular discourse that is created by taking a just stand on the National Question. There are no other alternative or by- roads to democratization. The Sinhalese people and their leaders must realize this," the Tamil Civil Society Forum (TCSF) said on Tuesday.

Issuing a statement in a bid to address the dilemma of the Tamil people with regard to the January - presidential poll, the TCSF said both President Mahinda Rajapaksa, who is seeking unprecedented third term in office and the common opposition candidate Maithripala Sirisena have placed "the Sinhalese at the centre of these elections and have made these elections as being material only to their future well-being" while ignoring issues that affect the Tamil people.

"In fact they are in denial of those problems and have taken positions contrary to Tamil interests. Hence the Tamil

people do not have to take a collective stance at the forthcoming elections. To explicitly call for a vote for either of the main candidates will be tantamount to accepting a unitary constitution and to rejecting international investigations," the TCSF statement issued by its spokesman Elil Rajan said.



Following is the full statement of the TCSF:

This statement is being released to clarify our stance with regard to the upcoming Presidential Elections to be held on the -th of January ----.

There are two main candidates in this election: The incumbent President, Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa and the opposition candidate Mr. Maithripala Sirisena who was until recently for almost -- years, a key Minister in Mr. Rajapaksa's cabinet.

It is beyond debate that the Tamils have suffered immensely under the incumbent President's regime. It was under his rule that the worst and most destructive chapter of the genocidal process against the Tamil people was carried out. Even after the end of war his Government continues to ferociously implement a multi- faceted genocidal

programme that aims at destroying the collective existence of the Tamil people. The suffering of the Tamil people continues unabated in the form of land grab, Sinhala Buddhisation, Militarisation, violence against ex-combatants, illegal arrests etc. Hence the question of Tamil people voting for the incumbent President just does not arise.

However, we are also aware historically that regime change does not necessarily result in change in the lives of the Tamil people. Both main parties in the South, ideologically and functionally are deeply embedded in Sinhala Buddhist, chauvinist, anti-Tamil politics. They do not even have a minimalist just position on Tamil issues. For example both parties are not even prepared to discuss a solution that goes beyond the confines of a unitary constitution.

Both parties are also against international investigations. The inseparable nature of the policies of these Sinhala Buddhist parties towards Tamils is something that we have through experi-

Mara particularly shines, because her character is a person we all recognize in ourselves: She is falling in love for the first time in her life.

ence understood as a common Sinhala Buddhist politics in ge opposition candidate also has confirmed that his position is no from that of the incumbent Presi regard to both a political solutio countability for crimes committ the Tamils.

At the forthcoming elec opposition candidate argues tha agenda of his candidacy centr abolishing the Executive Presid agenda-slogan has attracted the of many.

It is true that a form of Go centred around the Executive P tends to concentrate too much in one individual and hence is ocratic in character. Particularly of Executive Presidential form o ment envisaged by the Second R Constitution of Sri Lanka, when with other models of Executive cies has many anti- democratic o istics to it. This system of Govern further worsened by the enactm --th amendment to the Constitut to which the opposition cand a contributor. Hence on the su stand- alone issue abolishing the Presidency is an important com an agenda of democratic reform However from a long- term persp lightened by Tamil interests and relating to sustainable democ we wish to place the following o

The Tamil people have equally under Westminster sty mentary form of Governments the enactment of the Second R Constitution. When the Sinhala was enacted in ---- Sri Lanka ha mentary form of Government. T is adequate to substantiate the the change of form of Governme

hala political from time to not and will no impact on the l Tamil people. Sri Lanka's d practice and driven by chauv hala Buddhist p change of form ernment is goi efit the Tamil p

Tamils have not been a dated as equal partners in any ka's constitutional experiments piece- meal reforms to a section Tamil constitution will not solv

When the Fire Dies Down: The aftermath of Aluthgama violence

The watcher at the Al Humeisara Central College in China Fort is compulsive about keeping the tall gates padlocked at all times. He ushers authorised vehicles in and hurriedly shuts the gates behind them, casting furtive looks on the road outside.

Inside the closely-guarded gates, schoolroom desks and chairs are stacked in corners. All the signs of mass displacement abound - large water tanks, truckloads of relief items and make-shift first aid centres. Infants and toddlers snooze in the stifling noon day heat on the floors of fly-infested

