

Vaiko urges British Parliament to restore Eezham Tamil sovereignty

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Vaiko, the general secretary of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetta Kazhagam (MDMK) from Tamil Nadu, while addressing British parliamentarians of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Tamils on Wednesday in the British Parliament, said that the British Parliament has a moral responsibility to rectify the historic injustice caused on to the Eezham Tamils during the colonial rule. It was the British who statutorily put the Tamil and the Sinhala territories together in 1833, made Ceylon a unitary entity and refused to consider federalism in their constitutional reforms. When they left in 1948, they passed on the power to the Sinhala majoritarian rulers, he said.



Sir Ivor Jennings, an International authority on constitutional Law and who was a party to the Soulbury constitution under which Ceylon became independent, regretted later for the injustice of the constitution when he saw the plight of the Tamils in the independent Ceylon, Mr. Vaiko, who goes by one name, told the cross party parliamentarians.

Extending gratitude for the opportunity to address the parliamentarians of the cross party forum, Mr. Vaiko, who has been invited to the United Kingdom by the APPG, gave a historical walk-through on the background of the Tamil struggle for freedom in the island of Sri Lanka.

Giving a detailed account of the major oppressive policies such as disenfranchisement, standardisation, colonisation, Sinhala only policy and the role of Buddhist extremism in determining the affairs in the island, Vaiko explained how Tamils fought for their rights through a non-violent struggle.

Vaiko described how Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam pact and all the other pacts, reached between the Tamil and Sinhala leaders, were abrogated by the same Sinhala leaders who were party to the agreements. He also narrated how the non-violent struggle was crushed and state-sponsored violence and genocidal pogroms against Tamils.

Referring to a speech made by the then Prime Minister of India, late Madam Indira Gandhi, in the Indian Parliament on 16 August 1983, after Black July anti-Tamil pogrom, he said that Ms. Gandhi clearly termed what was going on in Sri Lanka against Tamils as a genocide. She also declared that the conflict in Sri Lanka was no longer an Internal affair of that island, but a matter of universal concern.

100,000 Tamils, including 22,000 young men and women, have sacrificed their lives for Tamil sovereignty, he said adding that all those who were concerned on the resolution of the conflict should pay attention to the historical ground realities.

An independent Tamil Eelam is the only viable solution, he said.



As in the case with Montenegro, East Timor and Kosovo, the Eezham Tamil people have long back overwhelmingly mandated their sovereignty and self-determination in the Vaddukkoaddai Resolution of 1976 and its endorsement in the 1977 elections, he explained.

How could Tamils live together when the Sinhala leaders themselves reiterate their racial policy saying that Sri Lanka is a Sinhala state and there could be no question of Tamil homeland, he asked.

On the current developments, he observed that a tremendous upsurge was sweeping through Tamil Nadu state with 65 million Tamils, who are agitated against the genocidal war that has been thrust upon the Tamils by the Colombo government. The upsurge has transcended the borders of Tamil Nadu as evidenced by the recent protest by students in New Delhi, he said. Thousands of students from 17 different states of India made it a demand in their protest in front of the Indian Parliament in New Delhi that there should be no military support and that the war should end.

When the Jews were subjected to discrimination and genocide, the United Kingdom contributed to the creation of the Israel, Vaiko said. Having a peace loving and resourceful Tamil diaspora, which struggles for the freedom of its homeland, the UK has a moral obligation to see that Tamil Eelam is established, he said adding that it was also time for the International Community to force the Sri Lankan state, as the party which abrogated the Norwegian facilitated Ceasefire Agreement, to unilaterally declare a ceasefire. It was also time for the International Community to consider de-proscription of the Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam (LTTE), he said.

Reflecting on the address by Mr. Vaiko, Stephen Pound, the Labour member of Parliament for the Ealing North constituency, said it was one of the best speeches that deserved a record in the British parliament as a passionate, emotional and historical record. Keith Vaz, MP for Leicester East and Virendra Sharma, MP for Ealing, Southall, also appreciated the address by Vaiko as an informative account on the history of the conflict in Sri Lanka.