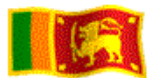


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Call for pause, giving equal status to the terrorist flag!

Dr. P. A. Samaraweera

During the two day humanitarian pause, the US and UK urged Sri Lanka to extend it. This is the second time the Government made a pause to allow free movement of civilians from the No Fire Zone (NFZ) .

The LTTE used the first two day pause to move their heavy weapons and artillery to the NFZ, fortified themselves and forcefully blocked the civilians leaving the conflict zone to the Government controlled areas. They used the second pause to further strengthen themselves by building earth bunds, cutting trenches, heavily mining the area and accelerated recruitment of child combatants.

During the lull in fighting, the LTTE continued attacks on the Security Forces who were on the defensive, killing two and injuring others. The soldiers encountered heavy machine gunfire and shelling as well. Ironically, while breaking the pause, the LTTE asked for a permanent cease fire. The LTTE allied human rights agencies too were bringing pressure for a continued pause.

The US State Department Spokesman Robert Wood urged for an immediate ceasefire and to go for political solution. Wood seem to be of the view that Sri Lanka had never tried these before and this shows how much homework he had done on the current Sri Lankan issue.

Unimpeded access

Then from the UK side, we had British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband putting pressure to allow 'unimpeded access' to humanitarian agencies and other members of international organizations. These Agencies and Organizations are in fact allied to the LTTE and trying to bail them out.

While the US and the UK are putting pressure on Sri Lanka to give a breather to the LTTE, these two countries are tightening the screws on Al-Qaida and Taliban.

In January this year, the US approved a further 17,000 troops to fight these groups. Then at the end of March saying the situation in Afghanistan is perilous and based on a new plan to combat terrorism approved another 4,000 troops with hundreds of additional civilians for auxiliary jobs. This new strategy is going to cost the US many more millions of dollars.

Last week, President Obama in his Policy Review speech, said, 'Al-Qaida defeat as top goal'. He said, "I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal, to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al-Qaida in Pakistan and Afghanistan..." But then with regard to the LTTE terrorism in Sri Lanka the US approach is not the same.

In the eyes of the US, UK, Canada and Australia it appears that the LTTE is not a terrorist outfit. For them it is banned only on paper. Otherwise why should they allow the 'LTTE terrorist flag' to be held by the side of their national flags in pro-LTTE rallies?

Neutral bystanders of these countries consider this as an insult and revolting as it attracts disgust to see a terrorist flag waved alongside a national flag giving equal status. Will these countries allow Al-Qaida, Taliban, Hezbollah and Hamas supporters to go on rallies waving their terrorist flags with national flags?

Double game

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Comments and suggestions to : Web Editor

So some are playing a double game with regard to terrorism. For the politicians who cannot separate the chaff from the wheat and who are vying for the Tamil Diaspora votes it makes no difference whether it is terrorism or nationalism as long as their Parliamentary or Congress seats are safe.

As Asia's brutal and longest terrorist war is coming to an end and the Government is attempting to free civilians from the clutches of the terrorists, the world's largest hostage rescue operation by the Sri Lankan Army is underway.

An example

The world renowned terrorist war analyst Prof. Rohan Guneratne says "...Sri Lanka is a laboratory for those who investigate on how to fight terrorism...

Government's worldwide should study how Sri Lanka successfully faced the war.... Armies in the Western countries and other defence organizations and intelligence divisions should take an example from Sri Lanka's military victory..."

Is the US, UK , UN and so on proposing devious methods such as pauses, ceasefires, meetings with LTTE leaders to give a lifeline to the terrorists and put them back on the saddle to unleash terror in Sri Lanka? However, President Rajapaksa's message is clear, "we will not bow down to local or international pressure with regard to terrorists".

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