



British Tamils Forum United Kingdom

Tuesday 17 June 2014

BTF condemns recent attacks on Muslims in Sri Lanka

British Tamils Forum joins the international community in condemning the violence that is currently being targeted at the Muslim community in Sri Lanka. A Sri Lankan state supported organisation, the Bodu Bala Sena, which has very close links with the Defence Secretary Mr Gotabaya Rajapakse, is directly involved in the violence. On 15 June, the General Secretary of this organisation delivered an openly racist speech citing Muslims as a threat to the Sri Lanka's Sinhala identity. Consequently, Sinhala thugs have attacked Muslim owned shops and houses in southern towns and cities.

The Police and the Sri Lankan military and Special Forces have remained as mere spectators giving protection to the attackers rather than the victims. The events of recent days bear close resemblance to other pre-meditated attacks by the Sri Lankan state that have been meted out against Tamil-speaking people since independence. The root cause of this violence is the "Sinhala only" mind-set of the Sri Lankan state, which sees every other nationality and religious group as outsiders that must either be eliminated or chased away from the island.

We call on those Islamic countries that support the Buddhist-extremist state of Sri Lanka to reconsider their support. The world must unite to condemn and exert targeted, effective pressure on this state to cease its violence. Even after the dust settles, there must be effective accountability and punishment for the perpetrators and instigators of this violence.

British Tamils Forum shares the pain of the affected families and stands in solidarity with the Muslim community. It is regrettable that several Muslim leaders have historically stood by the Sri Lankan government, despite its overtly racist nature. We hope they will now see the folly of their past decisions and take a stand to protect the people they seek to represent.

Contact: Shan Sutha Tel: +44 (0) 7927 023 912
Email: media@tamilsforum.com

Notes to Editors:

British Tamils Forum exists to harness the skills and the knowledge of the members of the forum, well-wishers and significant others, including mainstream decision makers in the UK, with the aim of alleviating the sufferings of the Tamils community in the island of Sri Lanka, and to further their right to self-determination within a democratic framework underpinned by international law, its covenants and conventions. For more information admin@tamilsforum.com and/or visit: www.tamilsforum.com