



British Tamils Forum United Kingdom

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tamils reject any political solution based on the 13th amendment – it neither addresses the root cause of the conflict nor safeguards the Tamil national interest on the island.

The 13th Amendment to the constitution, entrenched in the unitary state-centric model, cannot address the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka.

This amendment to the constitution is not in any way a starting point, an interim or a final solution to the conflict and it prevents any lasting negotiated settlement, reached with the support of the International Community. The British Tamils Forum strongly denounces any efforts to impose this unsupported and failed political response, which was reached for the benefit and interest of two countries – India and Sri Lanka – without consulting the Tamil Nation.

The 13th Amendment has several flaws: executive power will be exercised by a Provincial Governor appointed by the President; public services in the province will be controlled by the Governor; the President has the power to dissolve the Provincial Council; the Governor is not duty bound to the advice or instructions of the Chief Minister; the executive power of the Governor is subject to the control of the President; the Provincial Council cannot access the Provincial Fund without the sanction of the Governor; power over the police and public order is retained by the President; and the Disposition of State Land is also in the hands of the President; among many others.

Due to these flaws and inadequate provisions, it has been consistently rejected by the Tamil people and political leadership at several democratic stages, in the past and at present, ever since this bilateral agreement was signed between India and Sri Lanka.

The genocidal actions – pogroms, massacres, colonisation, land dispossession – committed by the Sri Lankan state in the Tamil homelands even under the current provincial council system foreshadow the realities of life following the 13th amendment.

All those who seek a genuine solution to the Tamil question must remain vigilant against falling into the traps that have been set by the Sri Lankan state and certain external forces to impose the 13th Amendment or a watered-down version of 13th Amendment upon the Tamils.

The Sri Lankan state, through its hard-line allies and ultra nationalist forces, has initiated a political campaign encouraging hard-line views and xenophobic sentiments on the 13th Amendment, with a view to diluting the amendment even further to its interest, before thrusting it upon the Tamils. This is clearly visible to observers of contemporary southern politics.

In the contrast, certain external actors who aspire to play the role of ‘saviour’ in the Tamil-Sinhalese political arena are pushing for implementation of the 13th Amendment in its entirety, in the pretext of rescuing the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

On these grounds, the British Tamils Forum stands in solidarity with our people in our Tamil Homeland and state that any political initiatives grounded in the 13th Amendment cannot be feasible and will not create an enduring peace in Sri Lanka.

The British Tamils Forum insists that any political solution to the Tamil National Question has to be conducted through an internationally mediated referendum – only this can lay the foundation for a lasting peace and satisfy the socio-political and economic aspirations of the Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka.

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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 frame work under pinned by international law, its covenants and conventions. For more information admin@tamilsforum.com and/or visit: www.tamilsforum.com