

The Murder of Vavunathivu MO and the blatant hypocrisy of HR activists in Sri Lanka

The LTTE terrorists killed Dr. Palitha Pathmakumara, the one and only medical officer of the Rural Hospital Vavunathivu in a cold-blooded murder on Sunday (Nov 16) night.

The poor villagers of Vavunathivu, Eechanthivu, Kanankuda and Navakkadu lost their friend who saved their lives, treated their illnesses and guided them on health issues. Doctor Kumara, as they called them was not just a medical consultant to the people in the area; he was a teacher to the uneducated, counsellor to the depressed, and a kind father to their tiny tots. Simply, he was a saint to the people who had suffered from decades of terrorism and have just gained hope for a life without its horrors.

The return given to him for the service rendered to the poor people in the area, including the poor Tamil villagers too, was a violent death by a group of maniacs who call them to be the sole representatives of Tamils. The young man who was healing the minds poisoned with racism, transcended his kindness beyond barriers of communalism, and chose service to poor instead of making private profit out of his profession had his life so brutally ended. Sadly, the terrorists murdered this great man for no reason other than his race. A true humanitarian worker in deeds than by mere words was too much for the terrorists to keep alive and serving the people.

While the country is shocked and grieved about this atrocity, the so-called Human Rights activists in Sri Lanka lie stunningly silent about it. None of those organizations that usually take great pleasure in tarnishing the human rights record of Sri Lanka has swung into action to either condemn the killing or pressure the LTTE to desist from killing civilians. Indeed, it is time for those who are affected by usual "concerns" raised by such Human Rights organizations to question their silence over the murder of Dr. Palitha Pathmakumara.

In that fateful night, a group of armed men had come to the Dr. Pathmakumara's quarters and killed him while his wife watching. The terrorists had shot at the doctor's head and chest. Before leaving, they did not forget to introduce themselves to the stunned and grieving Mrs. Pathmakumara, as the members of a mainstream Tamil political party that refuses LTTE tribalism. However, it has been now revealed during the investigations that they were the same group of LTTE terrorists behind the assassination of several political activists in the area during last few weeks.

While fleeing from the scene the terrorists had killed another Tamil civilian, Thambirasa Yokendiran, a 38 year old father living in a near by house. It is believed that the terrorists had carried out this killing as the civilians had identified them. However, another individual who witnessed the second murder had positively identified the killers to be LTTE cadres.

The above facts clearly indicate the real perpetrators behind the killing of Dr. Pathmakumara. Also, the reason why they had to kill a Tamil civilian who had identified them shows that the ordinary Tamil civilians did not support their deed.

Above all, Dr. Pathmakumara was a true humanitarian worker who chose to work for the poor in rural areas while many others in his profession prefer to make money in the towns. Raised from Kotmale in the central province, the victim had spent his whole medical career serving people in the rural areas. Therefore, it is clear that none of those so called Human Rights activist, enjoying rich perks from foreign countries, can come anywhere near the service rendered by Dr. Pathmakumara to the people. More than fighting for rights of the HR activists, he fought to secure the right to life of the people that eventually cost him his life.

It should be noted that there is no way of justifying killing of doctors or other medical workers during an armed conflict. Dr. Pathamakura's killing reconfirms nothing but the barbaric nature of the LTTE terrorists. Hence, the stubborn refusal to see, hear or speak against terrorists attacks at civilians would not help improvement in human rights in any country. The hypocrisy of some HR organizations in this part of the world has put countries such as ours to the same predicament as rape victims. Instead of lending a helping hand to overcome our agony, these organizations seem to get obtain a sadistic delight in stigmatizing us incessantly. Therefore, any organization really desirous of helping citizens of Sri Lanka must understand that they too have to play an important role in saving the lives of true humanitarian workers like Dr. Pathmakumara.

We pay tribute to Dr. Palitha Pathmakumara, who was assassinated by the LTTE terrorist while performing his duties at Vavunathivu Rural Hospital on 16 Nov 2008.

