

Jaffna Bishop Appeals to Leaders, Foreign Diplomats to Bring in Peace

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“The Holy See Benedict XVI had urged President Mahinda Rajapaksa to stop the war and strive for peace when the president met the Holy Pope at Vatican but the war atrocities have only escalated since then,” Rt. Rev. Thomas Saundaranayagam, Bishop of Jaffna said in his New Year message for the year 2009. “The appeal made by the Bishops in Sri Lanka to stop the war too remains rejected,” the message said.

Even appeals made by several countries including India to stop the war had gone unheeded, the new year message continued to say.

The leaders of Sri Lanka and the foreign ambassadors stationed here should take into consideration the injustice committed against the peoples and work hard to find a permanent solution, the Bishop said in his message.

The government’s war to capture the Vanni has resulted in the loss of lives and thousands of people being displaced in the year 2008. Jaffna peninsula and Vanni kept reverberating in the artillery fire and aerial attacks, the message said.

Moreover, people had to face severe economic crisis and natural disasters in Vanni and Jaffna peninsula including a major flood, it further pointed out.

One cannot remain unconcerned about human lives when the people have to face a new year amidst great suffering and while the government looks forward to a new year in a state of 'victorious exhilaration,' the Bishop observed in his message.

“I pray to God that all people should lead a life without the fear of war, happily and in prosperity, in an atmosphere where human rights are respected, in the year 2009,” the Bishop sought the blessings of God.