



Tamil Information Centre

தமிழ் தகவல் நடுவம்

Committed to Human Rights and Community Development

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TIC Press Release

Dambulla mosque attack threat to peaceful co-existence of Sri Lanka's ethnic communities

The Tamil Information Centre (TIC) is deeply concerned and saddened by reports of the attack on the mosque in Dambulla and the threat of the Buddhist leaders to demolish the mosque. The TIC learns that the Buddhist leaders have listed 72 cultural and religious structures, including the mosque and a Hindu temple, marked for demolition in the region.

Attacks on religious communities and places of worship motivated by religious intolerance, particularly against vulnerable minorities, must be condemned without reservation.

In Sri Lanka, the adherents of four major religions of the world, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity have co-existed for a long period of time, and the people have taken pride in celebrating religious festivals in a spirit of friendship. Religious intolerance has taken a virulent form in the last few decades and has affected the religious practices of minority religions. The targeting of minorities on religious grounds is now increasingly becoming the order of the day, although freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Sri Lankan Constitution, and people find themselves at the mercy of ever growing state controls, religious discrimination, hatred and violence.

Sri Lanka's future depends on its ability to live and work harmoniously across racial, ethnic, religious and cultural boundaries. There can be no peace in Sri Lanka without peace among the religions. It is indeed depressing to observe that the current trend of religious intolerance and politicization of religion with state support, instead of the work towards healing wounds and rebuilding right relationships across religions and ethnic groups, is severely damaging communal harmony.

While expressing concern over the deteriorating situation that threatens peace and security in Sri Lanka, TIC wishes to extend its support and encouragement to the civil society and in particular to religious leaders as they work for peace, communal harmony, security, reconciliation, religious tolerance and justice for all.

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