TNA REJECTS CASUALTY CENSUS

Circumstances of disappearances and deaths not accommodated

By NAVARATNAM KAPILNATH

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has decided to reject the census taken by the Department of Census and Statistics regarding human and material losses incurred by the civil war. TNA Parliamentarian Mavai Senathirajah said the five-party amalgam had decided not to cooperate with the census on the grounds that the procedures adopted by the officials in gathering information were not agreeable to them.

The PSC was not a genuine process to find a solution to the ethnic problem, Sumanthiran said. The TNA would take a decision in due course on the PSC, he added.

However, Vanni District Parliamentarian Selvam Adaikalanathan and Vinonogarathalingam were conspicuously absent at the meeting. "Land grabs by the state, excessive army presence and women’s affairs were also discussed extensively among other things at the meeting" Sumanthiran said.

People expelled from Valikamam and Sampur should be able to return to their original places, army presence in the north should be reduced, safety of women should be assured, and the various impediments to carrying on enterprises should be eliminated, he said at the media briefing. It was also decided that serious disciplinary action would be taken against the local government members of the TNA who voted against budget proposals presented in TNA-controlled institutions.

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He stated that the circumstances of incidences of disappearances and deaths were not being accommodated in the census process and this was not acceptable to the Alliance.

TNA Parliamentarian M.A. Sumanthiran said in Vavuniya on Tuesday that the decision to reject the census was taken at the special meeting of TNA leaders held in Vavuniya on Tuesday. TNA Parliamentarians, the Chief Minister of the Northern Province, the NPC Ministers and members participated at this meeting chaired by TNA leader R. Sampanthan.

The Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) was not a genuine process to find a solution to the ethnic problem and a reasonable political solution could not be found through the PSC, Sumanthiran said. The TNA would take a decision in due course on the PSC, he added.

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