



# In search of Saviors

## Channel 4

### and Never-ending Quest by Tamils

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Long before Dubya uttered those words, Jaffna was following it. You are either with us or with them. The battle cry is always 'we have to stick together'.

A society that still doesn't want to shed its caste system, facing the enemy, real or imaginary, will talk about unity, without any shame. Anyone straying will be black sheep. Traitor.

It will question your patriotism, even your bloodline. One who doesn't have tamil blood.

Your mother would be rolling in her grave, hearing those accusations about her chastity.

That is nothing new. Sheep accusing other sheep about their color. No big deal!

The problem is what it does with its shepherds. In tamil parlance, there is no such thing as opposition leader. Yes, there are traitors, quislings, boot lickers and tail wagers. But there can never be an opposition leader.

There is nothing wrong with that, you might say. You gotta give credit where its due. It is every ethnic group's dream to get people united, under one banner, like that. They should learn from tamils. We wish we had leaders and society like that. I hear ya!

**Everytime diaspora tamils go behind some shepherd to be herded to 'still waters and green pastures', the first thing comes to my mind is "Here we go again!"**

**Tamils have a long history of being sheep in desperate need of shepherds. The jaffna tamil society, which never hesitates to boast its pride on its 'educated jaffna' badge of honor, from time to time, decides to follow one leader or another. Once it chooses its leadership and on its way, there is no place for alternative opinions.**

Well, You should have seen what they did to their leaders, once they failed to lead them to the promised lands... pastures and still waters. Without blinking an eye, they were branded traitors. They are neither grateful of their leaders' convictions and sacrifices nor ashamed in following such a traitorous leader.

As if nothing happened, after crucifying the current leader at the lamp post, they will follow the next. More than 100 years of tamil political history is littered with the heads of these leaders. Ramanathan, GG Ponnambalam, Amirthalingam, Mahathaya, Karuna... You name it. We have plenty of long time leaders turned traitors overnight. Now it is Sampanthan and Sumanthiran Duo, for failing to go to Geneva.

One might wonder how El Supremo escaped wrath of tamils,

despite surrendering to the very military he was hellbent on fighting. More on that later.

#### Desperate measures for desperate times

In the post-Mullivaiakaal era, having lost their one and only leader, diaspora tamils are in dire straits, looking for anyone to lead them to... where else... the promised land.

It started with KP, once-pariah-turned-savior-turned-traitor-now. He was sidelined once, if not expelled. Once he was officially anointed as heir apparent by our Great Leader, all was forgiven and forgotten. His fifteen minutes of fame came to an abrupt end, when he was betrayed by his own... bundled, shipped and delivered from Malaysia to Sri Lanka. The seasoned negotiator made himself comfortable in the inner sanctum of the dynasty.

How dare he not take cyanide?

As usual, he became a traitor. They even floated a theory that he self-staged that drama. I couldn't stop scratching my head ever since.

Then they came up with that so-called government in exile. Elections held, leaders (s)electd. Naturally, tamils being tamils, there were factions and an acrimonious split. Now suddenly both camps became traitors. Who is traitor or savior is anybody's guess. Now everyone hasn't stopped scratching his head as to who the traitor-of-the-day is. Technically tamils are torn between the unholy trinity... Prime minister, Tall man and the Reverend. Honestly, I don't have a clue as to where that former intelligence impostor, Vinayagam, belongs. So for the time being, tamils, collectively, haven't made up their mind about their treason.

**A star is born.**

**Or was created.**

But you know tamils never give up their search for shepherds. Then came the campaign to send their representative to... where else... Canadian parliament. Despite previous failed attempts at various lower level governments, this time powers that be in the tamil community mobilised the now-defunct tiger machinery in action.

A star is born. Or was created.

Rathika Sitsabaiesan was at the front and centre of the tamil community. A female version of our national leader was projected.

It should be every tamil's historic noble duty to send our own daughter to canadian parliament,

tamils were told.

She is going to win Tamil Ealam in Rouge (red) Valley, whereas our national leader lost Ealam and made another river, Mulli vaikaal, rouge.

Here we go again. First thing came to my mind is "For how long?".

It wouldn't take them long to call her "traitor".

She became a household name and guest, attending birthday bashes. At least, she is down to earth, not down-in-earth, hiding in a bunker.

As my friend deadpanning me often, there are more than thirty people who claim to have engineered her victory single-handedly.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, she won, not because of tamils' overwhelming support. Her victory was made possible only by Late Jack Layton's Orange wave and some dubious tactics employed by her backers who were able to fool the canadian electoral system. Their exploits got coverage in canadian mainstream media and those backers are nowhere to be seen nowadays.

Tamils made history by electing one of their own. But you never know tamils might make another history for their contribution in making stiff canadian electoral laws, if they hadn't already done with immigration and insurance laws. It wouldn't be long before canadian electoral officers dipping your fingers in ink a la homeland elections.

Look at the bright side. Wouldn't it be nice to flip your stained bird?

Inflated expectations of her hoisting the tiger flag in Parliament Hill deflated so fast that now she

became a persona non grata to tamil movers and shakers, if you call those in suits, grinning widely at the photo-ops with canadian politicians, as such.

Those who don't know the canadian political realities might entertain the idea that she is the representative of tamil diaspora and tamils in Ealam. But, as far as canadians are concerned, she is no more than a representative of Rouge Valley constituents. Of NDP, that is.

"I heard it through the grapewine" that now she is unofficially a traitor and there are moves underway to make her a 'one-term-wonder'.

You never know, next time she might be the one accusing electoral fraud against these same tamil elites. Well, you can call it 'sour grapes'.

You can still make grapewine out of sour grapes. Can't you?

Drinking that wine will be like tasting your own medicine.

Well, what do all these have to do with that Channel 4 doc?

After the first installment of Killing Fields, tamils started believing Channel 4 is in their side. Humiliated by the decimation of Tigers and their beloved leader's death, they were calling for the head of Rajapakse. They are ready to go behind anyone who spearheads that call. That's where Channel 4 fits in. You should have seen in the tamil media, how the Channel 4 was tigerized... er... lionized.

Overnight Channel 4 became a savior.

Then it hit me a again with a question... For how long? History

being my teacher as it is to our beloved National leader, it wouldn't be that long.

**Let them face judgement day!**

I have nothing against the intent or content of Killing Fields. Without question, what happened to those prisoners of war are war crimes. Not just human rights violations. Those who were raped, maimed and killed could have been our own sisters, mothers and daughters. Those who were blindfolded and shot could have been our brothers or sons. It doesn't matter even if it is a child of a monster, who dragged children for slaughter. Perpetrators who committed these crimes against humanity and caused this heart wrenching human tragedy should be brought to justice.

Channel 4 should be credited for bringing the suffering of the innocent to the forefront to get the attention it really deserves.

No one should be defending the SL government on any grounds to get it off the hook. It is the government's job to get out the mess of its own making and pay the price. Fighting terrorism doesn't give licence to kill innocents or unarmed prisoners of war. The war couldn't simply be portrayed as a humanitarian rescue operation from the clutches of tigers. The all out war to wipe out tigers can't be waged without giving any regard of civilian casualties, or by simply claiming that all those killed are only terrorists.

Yes, there are big boys who don't obey those rules which they are imposing on small fry. That is neither justification nor excuse.

It is the SL government's duty to come clean by bringing those

perpetrators to justice. Were it fails, it is the collective duty of international community to step in to get to the bottom of it. As it is done everywhere.

This is every tamil's wish. Wish if it were that simple.

**Hang him, not release him!**

Problem with diaspora tamils is that all these theatrics are more to do with 'Hang him!' than peaceful resolution of tamil ethnic question, nor even getting justice to those who suffered. It is all about getting even for being humiliated. Getting revenge. Eye for an eye. Blood for Blood. It is nothing else. Going back to my theory about our leaderships, tamils committed their cardinal sin of investing. Failure of diversification. Putting all eggs in one basket.

They put all their hopes in one single person, believing he is the only one capable of delivering the goods. How a society that was proud of its 'universtiy-educated' heritage was able to go behind one who hadn't even finished his grade 8 education is beyond me. In the tradition of worshipping the matinee idols of tamil cinema, they were cheering our "Thambo" who would singlehandedly "kill'em all and let god sort'em out", and get Tamil Ealam, not to mention rescuing thousands of 'tamsels' in distress. As the credits roll, he would sing, riding a white horse... "Prabaharan's army will win".

Living in their fantasy world for a long time and being cut off from reality by believing their own propaganda, tamils all over bought the hype sold by Tigers and their war profiteers.

The revelation came in Mulli Vaikaal that their leader is just another mere mortal, who is afraid of his own life, like every one else, not a fearless warrior, as he was projected to be, who would fight until his last drop of blood, crying 'freedom' like "Braveheart" William Wallace.

The 'Bravadoheart', was living in his own fantasy world, like his moronic followers, believing he would get 'Arafat'esque treatment, when surrendering. And he was waiting to be air-lifted like Marcos, in front of international media.

How else can you explain his dyed hair, combat fatigues, pistol and his dog tag?

**Put all eggs in one basket, have eggs on your face!**

Yes, the reality hit them very hard. After mercilessly killing anyone that was perceived as a traitor who betrayed the cause, their own leader betrayed them. After spreading the myth that tigers would rather take cyanide than being caught alive, he was afraid of his own life and kneeled down to his captors.

The man who sent hundreds of suicide bombers and tens of thousands of cadres for slaughter, without any shame, surrendered.

This is the man who used his own people as human shield, and killed those trying to escape with white flags and eventually he surrendered with a whitel flag.

The man who proudly gave posthumous awards for great heroes, was shamelessly afraid of his life and became the greatest coward.

For tamils, the myth exploded right on their face, leaving them naked with their stupidity. Only

way to save their face is living in denial. All these years, when they branded their leaders as traitors, there was somebody else waiting in the wings to take on the mantle. Not this time. Because they were cheering when he mowed down all those political leaders.

They put all eggs in one basket, now all had eggs on their faces.

Despite graphic evidence of their leader's demise, they wanted to pretend that their leader is alive.

In the jungle. Eritrea. White house. Somewhere.

They pretended so, not because he is alive, only because accepting the truth will make them look greatest fools.

They repeated, He will come back!

Of course, He will!

I am a christian and we christians are waiting for 2000 years for Him to come back.

He never came and we never gave up hope!

While telling everyone that their leader is alive, they were frantically looking for someone, just anyone, who could carry the torch... or the AK47.

Can you imagine that if he were alive, he would tolerate such a traitorous act?

Yes, there were leaders, but they were no match to our Great Leader. All of them surrendered their self-respect in the altars of Wannu by proclaiming to tigers that we are one and the same. As there is no credible tamil leadership forthcoming, head hunting went beyond ealam tamils. Without even blinking, they were ready to jump in bed with anyone. Yes, politics make strange

bedfellows. But unprincipled bed hopping like this has another street name. And I have more respect for sex workers.

It became so pathetic that even Mary Colvin became a celebrated tamil martyr.

It came to the lowest point when they even backed Sarath Fonseka in presidential elections, who boasted about killing Prabakaran and claimed, as immigrants, tamils have no rights, so they should shut up. This is the same Sarath Fonseka, whom tamils wanted to get arrested on war crimes while he was in US.

How low can you go?

### **Sleeping with enemies**

Human Rights Watch, which was not long ago disparaged by tamils for condemning tiger recruitment of child soldiers, suddenly became a darling. So did Amnesty International.

Overnight Jeyalalitha became the "mother of ealam", even though for time immemorial she was called names unprintable. Karunanithi became a hero, just for writing letters to the prime minister or press releases, even though tamils cursed him in his collusion with the central government during the final stages of the war.

US imperialists who were conspiring to destroy tamils' aspirations and its national leader and cursed for not air lifting their leader, became the one-and-only hope with its current stance at UNHRC.

It all comes down to this: Say something what they want to hear. You can be their savior. Say something about the human rights

violations of tigers. Next moment, they will be calling for your blood. Not to worry. Then say something bad about SL government. Everything will be forgiven and forgotten. You will be in their good books and you are allowed to retake the throne.

Like any drowning man, tamils wanted to hold on to anything within reach. There came Channel 4.

Hold on they did!

### **Crusading journalists**

I have no qualms about crusading journalists. Fighting for justice while reporting the facts is an honorable thing. It breaks my heart reading about journalists being killed by dictators and drug cartels. I always wonder whether it is worth giving the precious life for something you believe in. Yes, it is better than being a coward, who wanted save his own life by surrendering after sacrificing hundreds of thousands of others.

But, there is a line any journalist should not cross. That is, taking one side and justifying its wrongs.

Nobody has any illusion about Murdoch's Mad Men at Fox. Those crusaders are hell bent on bringing down Obama, not because they believe in small government and trickle down economics. It is simply because they want to line the pockets of big fat cats who fund them. These crusaders of 'Tax cut to the rich' are just tools of right wing neocon propaganda.

No one will cry foul at the arrests of Murdoch's phone hacking fleet street journos at News of the World as an assault on press freedom either.

Patron saint of tamils, Mary Colvin, defended America's war on Iraq and repeatedly said "we've gotten rid of him", without saying Saddam by his name.

Is she a crusading journalist or a relentless war monger? In her own words... "Our mission is to report these horrors of war with accuracy and without prejudice. We always have to ask ourselves whether the level of risk is worth the story." She took great risks, and lost her life, 'to report the horrors of war with accuracy and without prejudice'. She was in Wannu without government's authorization, lost her eye and, at the end, was trying to save tiger leadership.

But for her, were the children dragged from the clutches of their mothers and got slaughtered not a story? Did she bother to write anything about the political assassinations, that robbed tamils of alternative leadership?

Or did she simply get cozy with tigers to look away the horrors of war, perpetrated by them?

And she even came close to saving them. If she had ever succeeded in it, would she have called for a war crimes tribunal for tiger leaders?

Like all these journalists, Channel 4 crossed that line. Instead of presenting the facts and letting others do the leg work, it became a crusader on behalf of tiger-backing tamils, exiled sinahalese journalists and, god only knows, who else?

Of those human rights violations and war crimes committed by Tigers, Channel 4 mentions in passing, just to defend its journalistic integrity.

### **You can only play the clips you're dealt!**

Yes, they can only show what they get from the sources.

That's the point. Who gave them? What are their intentions? What did they choose to show... and hide?

Did Channel 4 try to get the full picture?

Any journalist, who tries to cover a controversial subject, will try to get the other side of the story, even if they are outright lies. Yes, Sri Lankan government has its share of 'Comical Ali's, whose utterings are an insult, not only to intelligence, but to common sense.

Most of those generals, who fought the war, got diplomatic postings. As they are in foreign soil, it would'nt have been hard to track them down and chase them with cameras.

I haven't even seen anything like, 'Calls for comments were never returned'. It looked like Channel 4 started with an agenda. When someone is determined about the answer, the questions they ask never matter.

Like tamils, Channel 4 was sucked into the theatrics.

### **Old sambar in new banana leaf**

Actually, the second installment didn't offer anything new. The footage of Prabaharan was in Army's website for a while, right after the end of the war, before taken down. Photos of his killed son was making rounds in the internet for some time. There isn't anything earth shattering. There is no new evidence. May be for Channel 4, not for us anyway.

It was old recycled material! It is just old sambar in new banana leaf!

Eager to get attention and ratings, it was using the timing to coincide with UNHRC sittings. Perhaps, those who provided the footage insisted on it. Or simply Channel 4 had its own agenda.

### **Unanswered questions**

After seeing the first Killing Fields, there were few questions in my mind that I was waiting for anyone to ask. So far, no one did.

My first question was this: In the last presidential elections, if Sarath Fonseka had won, would these crusaders have pursued these accusations with such a passion?

I don't think so. First, Sarath Fonseka's candidacy got the blessings and backing of powers that be. You might say that Mahinda and his siblings would have been brought to justice in the Hague.

Well. Wouldn't it have opened the can of worms and implicated the general himself? Of course, he would have thrown the brothers in jail without even blinking an eye, only on the grounds of corruption. But Nobody would have bothered about the war crimes.

Then comes the next question: Wasn't he the man who spearheaded this military campaign... successfully? Wasn't he the man who insisted on appearing on tv to announce the victory to the nation? Wasn't he trying to take all the credit for the war and victory? Then, where were the accusations about his complicity? Is it just the Rajapakse clan they are after? Why is it all about Rajapakses only?

Isn't it selective justice?

Third question is, would it have been the same with a UNP government? Of course, UNP and its perennially losing leader would have stopped the war, even before they reached tamil ealam's capital, bowing to outside pressure and prolonged the war.

And thank god, for sparing us from being forced to watch the theatrics of Wannu now.

Problem with the powers that be is that they want puppets and pawns. Their selective love of human rights, as it was theirs of the Kuwaiti people in the first gulf war, always make people wary of their intentions. If the war was waged by UNP, and won, all these hoopla would have just been brushed aside as a terrorist problem.

So is it the regime change they are after? Why? Would it solve the ethnic issue? History taught us that even though tamils are always happy to hop in bed with UNP, it is a chameleon which will never do justice to the tamil people. If tamils are in this predicament as we are now, it is because of the policies of none other than the great fox, JR Jeyawardena. He was the one who declared war on tamils even before the militancy was in its infancy. He was the one who charted the course, where tamils were put to collide with India, an irreparable damage that still haunts tamils today. When, Chandrika, with the help of Neelan Thiruchelvam, against all odds, decided to introduce a solution package, didn't UNP torpedo it with the help of Tigers and TNA?

So if we really need a regime change, and bring UNP to power, for whose interests?

Tamils' interests? Not that I know of!

If I were to believe that all these are done in love for tamils, then I have to believe that Dubya's love is only for Iraqi people, not for oil.

### Where is waldo?

In the final stages of the war, there were three hundred thousand civilians trapped in an incredibly shrinking territory. The government was telling the people to move to the no-fire zone. Innocents who moved there, believing they would be safe, were slaughtered by relentless shelling. Even hospitals, schools, temples and churches where people found refuge weren't exempted.

No one disputes these facts. All blur when figuring out whether these are causes or effects.

In a tiny strip of land, there were three hundred thousand people and they were bombarded, Channel 4 and others say.

My last question is:

Where were the tigers?

There were thousands of them. In Channel 4's film, they are nowhere to be seen. Was it that tigers were in a separate strip of land, separate from people, carrying on their fight? No, they were among the people and they haven't 'silenced their guns' yet. They kept on fighting while among the people. Then what do you expect? Precision-guided munitions that west boasts about in its usage in its wars on terrorism?

Channel 4 goes on to show that it is only civilians are in those makeshift hospitals. Where are the injured tigers? Channel 4 cleverly avoided showing tigers in any footage. Or those who gave those clips didn't bother to.

Isn't it a war crime to hold people against their will in a war, let alone using them as human shields? Isn't it a war crime to use no-fire zone as a launching pad for any attacks?

The fact of the matter is tigers were using people as cover, with no regards of their lives. Because they win both ways. If they could kill the enemy, that is good. If people are dead, that is good too, they can use it for propaganda purposes.

That was clearly shown in the first instalment, when a woman in the bunker, taking cover from aerial bombardment, was screaming while being filmed "Why are you filming? What are you going to do by filming?". She was telling the person who was filming to take cover, but that person kept on. Her screaming was going on... 'ioh, they are going to kill us all'.

This is what it is all about. For tigers, it is all about propaganda. They supposedly filmed the people's suffering.

Yes, there are many all over the world, risking their lives filming the misery, because they believe that it will bring attention and needed help. But for tigers, it is all about saving themselves, because they are the ones causing that misery.

So the clips about tamil civilians Channel 4 got in its hands are filmed by tigers and those who were affiliated to tigers. And their sole intention was propaganda. That's why tigers are nowhere to be seen. If it was done by independent people, we would have seen tigers mingling with people, including in hospitals. We still hear stories from the survivors that how tigers were using artilleries in the proximity of those

hospitals. They have thousands of stories about their suffering under the hands of tigers. There are stories of tiger cadres running away with people.

Yes, you can't convert the non-believers who will never believe what they don't want to believe. Tell them about the stories of ordinary people. They will say it is all government propaganda or people are still under government control. Or all of them are traitors.

The trophy videos about military atrocities were mostly provided by sinhalese journalists and military personnel. But some in tamil circles claim that they had to pay handsome amount to get them. What an innovative idea to extract money from the intelligent diaspora!

It was the sinhalese who brought these videos, that depict the atrocities committed by sinhalese army, out to get the attention. But tamils are still trying to cover up the atrocities, done by tigers.

### **Reap what you sow!**

Make no mistake. All these questions don't absolve sri lankan government of its atrocities, war crimes and crimes against humanity. But one can not expect mercy from his enemy, once he wages a war against him. Unless he shows mercy for his enemy, he has no right to expect either. Remember the time tigers were parading the dead soldiers. Then how could you get angry when army was parading the dead bodies in A'pura air base attack? We shouldn't be shocked to see the way prisoners of war were killed, if we care to remember the surrendered policemen, and sinhalese settlers, killed in the east. Seeing the

indiginties to dead female soldiers rightfully causes outrage, but remember it was the tigers who dug out a corpse and burnt it with tires.

When the dead LTTEers were paraded in A'pura, a sinhalese catholic bishop condemned that brabarcic act. I am yet to see another prominent tamil condemning such an act by tigers.

We reap what we sow! And we did well!

And we can not pretend like clueless innocents.

### **How Channel 4 fell from grace?**

Well, Channel 4 did what it intended to do. Unfortunately for tamils, and beyond too. That's where their honeymoon with Channel 4 came to an end.

Tamils were thinking that Channel 4 will only be exposing government atrocities. When the word got out that their leader's demise also would be shown, came the uproar. They are ok with a sinhalese government showing their leader's dead body. They can always deny it and believe the hollywood-computer -grahpic spinning by Nakkeeran, a supermarket tabloid from Tamil Nadu. But they don't want a white man to show it. It was going to give credibility.

Now the tiger, a cat that is, is out of the bag, they were dumbfounded as to what to do. Tiger media was desperately in damage control mode, blaming traitors for providing the footage. Those who made a living by telling that their leader is in Eritrea, had to come up with stories. One spinmeister went as far as to minimise the damage by saying that the leader was taken alive only after being gassed.

You know a real leader will never surrender at his own free will. He saved tamil pride by surrendering only after being gassed.

Another brilliant one quoted an astrologer, who was supposed to be the one foretold Chandrika's victory, saying the Dear Leader is alive.

Channel 4 betrayed tamils by showing the dead, and naked, body of their leader to the whole world to see. Now tamils are not that keen to show the doc to anybody.

This is how Channel 4 fell from grace, in good books of tamils. Channel 4's betrayal didn't hurt the tamils that much, as US has filled in, right away, to become the savior-of-the-day. As the sole superpower took on their cause, and mission accomplished, tamils no longer need the services of Channel 4 anymore.

For the time being, they are following Uncle Sam. Once they realise that all the hoopla about the UNHRC resolution mean nothing and won't get Mahinda to the Hague like Milosevic and Charles Taylor, they will go back to their rhetoric about US imperialists. India will have no choice but to back SL government to keep China out of Sri Lanka. Then they will restart their cursing of indian politicians.

### **If you are in a hole, don't dig deeper**

If tamils ever want to get out of the hell hole they dug themselves into, they have to stop looking up the sky for saviors. There is no almighty who can crack open the skies and thunder 'let there be ealam'.

They have to come out of the herd mentality of blindly following shepherds. Instead of looking for

saviors and shepherds, first of all, tamils have to search for the answers by looking inwards and start questioning, why it all went wrong. They should stop blaming others, from India to EU, from UN to US, and from Akashi to Solheim for their own failures and start taking responsibility for their own actions. At one point, they may realise that known devils are better than unknown gods and they are better off dealing with the devil himself than praying for the gods in heaven.

(I have no hope that they will ever do that. I don't give up on believing in tamils that they will never give up their search for saviors.

If they ever run out saviors, there is always MIA.

This pure tamil-blooded warrior is always there, waiting, for your taking. She was the only one, in her words, talking about the suffering of tamils at international level. And she has the required attitude, looks and connections, matrimonially that is.

If tamils ever get her as a savior, tamils will get a leader they deserve and she will get the attention she craves. If tamils ever succeed in getting her to lead them, can anybody ask the two questions I have?

I would like to know how much this bleeding heart gave to the refugees in Wannu, even if it is tax-induced philanthropy.

And, after marrying into the opposing camp, whether she is still 'like PLO I don't surrender'.

But, be forewarned that you being tamils, when you become disillusioned with her and make her a traitor, don't complain, when she shows you the finger, and curses you and your mother.)

## Post Script

It is a tragedy that in modern civilization, one can not express her opinion freely without being issued a fatwa.

Say something about Mid-East or Balkan politics. Mutter anything about fundamentalists, be it Bible-thumping-Quran-burning Southern variety or Quran-thumping-Bible-burning Mid-Eastern variety.

Express your opinion on any conflict, be it cultural, ethnic, political or religious. Without fail, you will be branded as a traitor, infidel or turncoat by one group or another.

When it comes to Tiger politics, oh brother, trust me, you ain't seen nothin' yet!

Suddenly, your right to exist in this world is questioned and there is someone who is ready to be a martyr by removing you from the face of the earth... along with him.

Someone somewhere wants you dead. Dons, warlords and turbaned clerics will send their enforcers with pistols and holy warriors with suicide vests. You could be blown by a suicide bomber or burnt at the stake by Fox news and Rush Limbaugh. If you aren't that famous, then there are millions of comment-thumping cyberwarriors whose sole raison d'etre is to leave anonymous comments and... threats.

Imagine yourself, at the Pearly Gates waiting anxiously to be condemned to burn in hell for eternity by this particular God, remember hell hath no fury like a god blasphemed, while someone is jumping the queue, being greeted by 72 scantily clad virgins, adorning garlands, singing "Aloha, Welcome to paradise".

So the conventional wisdom suggests that I should rather keep my mouth shut, run with the sheep and settle for... at least one virgin. Even if she is in Niqab.

So much for the First Amendment and freedom of speech.

So when the second installment of Channel 4's Killing Fields was aired, as you might have understood by now, my choice was clearly, and severely, limited between hell for eternity and paradise with a niqab-clad beauty.

But now every Tom, Dick and Harry, not to mention every Raja, Kumar and Nathan along with every Singhe, Nayake and Pakse, expressed his stance on that, for sure, paradise should have run out of its supply of virgins by now, scantily clad or niqab clad.

In the world of "you are either with us or with them" world of Dubya, sitting on the fence is no longer an option. You are not allowed to keep your opinions to yourself, like keeping your virgins inside your harem, invisible to outside world. No matter what, you have to let your opinion known to others. Saying nothing implies you have something to hide, which means "you are with them".

As having no choice and future lead to revolutions and springs, I, left with no option but eternal hell, hereby unveiled my beauty... er... opinion.

Opinions expressed here are mine alone and not subsidised by any government or its intelligence agency. Nor am I a member of any terrorist outfit, present or past.

Yes, there were accusations in the past about me being funded by those institutions. As it is almost a quarter of a century, the purported amount should have made me the first tamil billionaire, robbing the title from that convicted felon friend of felines, Raj Rajaratnam.

Still, accusations will fly from all directions. So anyone who is able to provide any proof of payment of any kind, upon submission of incontrovertible evidence, will be awarded "40 acres and a mule" in Wannu, the one-time paradise of Tigers and their goons in diaspora, and forever-hell for the rest of the tamils.

To any pure-tamil-blood-boiling great hero, who still wants to accompany me in my journey to paradise: please be forewarned that don't blame me, when you see, at the Pearly Gates, any note saying, "Virgins out of stock. Please, Come back another time".

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