

# Disunited

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# in diversity

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ABBEY NAIDOO

**R**ECENTLY, there was much fanfare over the Republic Day celebrations of India and reports and protests on the ongoing atrocities in Sri Lanka. Writers sang the praises of India, referred to Gandhi, and with pride to India becoming a superpower.

Modern India is really a hotch-potch of different kingdoms, principalities, princely states, often with very little in common. Like Sri Lanka, the British welded these disparate entities into one state under one flag. In keeping with this dream of being a superpower, India is now quickly learning how to throw its weight around and support a genocidal cause that flies in the face of its stated claim to human rights, its pioneering of non-violence; in short, its boast of unity in diversity is little more than just that.

In the Sri Lankan genocide currently underway, India has revealed a duplicitous and murderous collaboration with the genocidal regime in power in Colombo. Not only deaf to the pleas and cries of its own Tamil population to intervene in this murderous onslaught, it actively assists the regime in the supply of military hardware, the training of strike-aircraft pilots, the supply of military expertise, and the provision of military advisers on the ground. With an almost unprecedented blackout of news by Colombo, and a rather surprisingly tolerant acceptance of this restriction by the international media, it would come as no surprise if India's role is discovered to be more than what has been outlined.

The close cultural and ancestral heritage shared by the Sri Lankan Tamils with the Tamil population of India is of no consequence to India. In fact, it appears as if the Indian government is encouraging Colombo to wipe out the Tamils; media reports indicate that aid has been promised by this budding superpower to Sri Lanka to rebuild the North after the dust has settled (read after its devastation), and, by implication, the wiping out of the Tamils.

Recently, the Foreign Af-



ABBEY NAIDOO

fairs Minister, one Mr Pranab Muckerjee, on an unscheduled visit to Colombo, stated with much aplomb that a military victory should precede a political solution. His visit appeared designed to reassure Colombo that it could do as it pleased, and came immediately after widespread protests in Tamil Nadu, and pressure on New Delhi. Perhaps, he was reaffirming Delhi's ethnic alliance with the Sinhalese and Delhi's contempt for Tamils. Incidentally, the Sri Lankans, who follow a perverted form of Buddhism, are reported to regard the Tamils, the original inhabitants of India, as sub-humans.

Sadly, though, a country forever boasting it gave the world Gandhi, bears little resemblance in its deeds to the vision of the great humanist. This modern India is intent on playing a dangerous game in the South, and, by its alliance with the murderous regime in Colombo, might come to rue its role in the ethnic cleansing. Perhaps India, following a certain other superpower in whose camp (and clutches) it is now firmly in, has adopted that declining superpower's overriding motto: might is right.

The shelling of safe areas, the genocidal massacre of the elderly, innocent women, and children, the wanton murder of Tamil youths simply because they are Tamil, is akin to war crimes on a par with the worst of Nazism, and perhaps, when these atrocities are ended, a more just world will bring to book all responsible for this ethnic cleansing, as well as all others, including India, who have overtly and/or covertly supported this annihilation of the Tamil people.

Therefore, the celebrations are somewhat out of place – India is a house divided! (*Abbey Naidoo is a Durban-based attorney.*)