



British Tamils Forum

United Kingdom

03/06/2015

BTF meets Indian High Commission officials in London

The British Tamils Forum (BTF) has long recognised the important role India plays in the region and in the outcome of Tamil peoples' struggle for justice and freedom. BTF together with our long term community partner organisation, Hindu Council UK (HC UK) met with Indian High Commission officials in London recently to highlight the immediate needs of the people in the North East of the island and measures which ought to be implemented immediately by the new Sri Lankan government.

BTF requested the Indian government to take up these matters urgently with the new Sri Lankan regime. The proposals included urgent measures to address humanitarian issues faced by the Tamil people in their homeland, taking into account the long term strategic interests of the Tamil nation.

Our long term strategy to engage with India through political and diplomatic means recognises the geopolitical significance of India in the region. BTF shares the same strategic vision with India, for a peaceful neighbourhood that ensures stability in the region and protects India's long term security interests in its southern borders. Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka have a very long historic tie with India through cultural, religious and linguistic affinity are natural allies of India.

We have been continuously engaging with New Delhi based political parties since 2010. This included meeting with the then BJP leader Nitin Gatkari in 2011, senior BJP officials and a Minister in November 2014. Our long standing Indian community partner, the influential HC UK facilitated the recent meeting with the Indian High Commission officials in London. Although Tamils have historic grievances about India's handling of our struggle in the past, we are moving forward, engaging with India, to address the immediate needs of our people in the North East of Sri Lanka and to find a lasting political solution to enable Tamils in Sri Lanka live in peace and dignity.

The diplomatic engagements will continue in London and New Delhi to further develop the understanding between Tamil Diaspora and India in addition to strengthen the strategic ties between India and Tamils in the North East of the island of Sri Lanka.