



# Tamil Information Centre

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Committed to Human Rights and Community  
Development  
**PRESS RELEASE**

The Tamil Information Centre(TIC) is deeply disturbed by reports that the oldest and holiest Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka, the Dalada Maligawa in Kandy, which enshrines lord Buddha's tooth has been attacked and damaged.

The sixteenth century temple was to be the centre for the proposed 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Sri Lanka's independence. The TIC condemns attacks on places of worship and cultural monuments and opposes all actions that flout international standards. In the past, the TIC has condemned destruction of hundreds of Hindu temples and cultural monuments by security forces in the Tamil homeland.

The attack on Dalada Maligawa comes in the wake of continuing political and military oppression in the Tamil homeland. There is a serious break down of trust between the Tamil and Sinhala communities, resulting from the government's inability to exercise effective control over the armed forces, and find an honourable solution to the Tamil National Question.

The Tamil information Centre is raising the alarm over the potential crisis in Sri Lanka, and is calling on the international community to urgently take effective action to end the war and bring about a political settlement to the conflict in Sri Lanka. Governments and international bodies must pay urgent attention to the growing tension between the two communities in Sri Lanka.

International community's disregard would only result in further polarisation and hardening attitude of the communities and lead to the very real risk of Sri Lanka soon witnessing another human rights crisis.

26 January 1998