



A top consultative body on post-war reconciliation Tuesday handed its much-awaited 500-page report to the government at an event held at the Presidential Secretariat.

As both President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe were notable absentees at the event and former president Chandrika Kumaratunga received the report on their behalf.

However, the duo was seen happily inaugurating a multi-million-dollar investment project at Kuliypitiya in the north-western province earlier in the day. Minister of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Resettlement D.M Swaminathan, who attended the event told Ceylon News via phone that the President “did not attend the event, because he is not too well and former president Kumaratunga received the report on his behalf”. Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera and main opposition Tamil National Alliance (TNA) leader R Sampanthan were among the attendees.

The 11-member Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanism (CTFSL) headed by eminent Attorney-at-Law, Manouri Muttetuwegama, was scheduled to hand over its report based on its public consultation across the country, to the President on December 21, but it was postponed at the eleventh hour to January 03 (today) as he was busy with other works. The CTFSL was established by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in January this year to conduct public consultations on the mechanisms for accountability, truth, reparations and non-recurrence in Sri Lanka – the four pillars of transitional justice process. Civil Society members of the CTFSL earlier this year held public sessions across the country, including in the northern Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts where tens of thousands of people were killed during the final months of the war that ended in May 2009.

Ranil-Maithri

A large number of war survivors, including former LTTE cadres testified before this task force and insisted that truth and justice should be established via a fully-fledged international mechanism or a highly-internalised mechanism to probe war crimes and crimes, for genuine reconciliation to take place. The war victims had firmly said a domestic mechanism in this regard would not have their confidence. The CTFSL received submissions until 10th August.

On December 5, the CTFSL said that the final report has been printed and was “still waiting for @officialscrmsl to confirm a date for the handover to President & PM”.

Manouri Muttetuwegama in her speech after presenting the report warned that the country “is faced with the danger of falling into a broken structure”

“Our house – Sri Lanka is heavily damaged and we need to rebuild it. This family which is rich in its diversity and contains different nations is faced with the danger of falling into a broken structure. It is the division of THEM and US,” she said in a carefully worded speech.

“Just as this led to the long-drawn civil war, it is also an essential consequence of the war. It is not important here whether we decide to share from the same plate. But what is important is building a social and state structures that safeguard everybody’s rights based on justice and equality”.