



## **NORTH EAST SECRETARIAT ON HUMAN RIGHTS NESOHR**

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### **Press Release**

### **Remembering the Victims of the Kumuthini Massacre**

Twenty years ago the boat "Kumuthini" was ferrying passengers between two islets, Nedunthivu and Punguduthivu, off the coast of Jaffna peninsula. On May 15th 1985, 60 people were travelling from Nedunthivu to Punguduthivu in the "Kumuthini" boat. A Dvora boat full of armed men approached "Kumuthini" in the sea, boarded it and started hacking the passengers with axes and swords. Thirty-three passengers, including a one-year-old child, were murdered. Twenty-five passengers were seriously injured, some losing their limbs.

According to survivors, the Dvora boat that carried the armed men was fitted with cannon and belonged to the Sri Lankan Navy attached to Nainathivu naval base.

Today as we remember this unprovoked attack on civilian travellers twenty years on, we must seriously reflect on the state of the delivery of justice to survivors and relatives of victims. Sadly, absolutely no progress has been made on the delivery of justice.

NESOHR urges the local, island-wide and international human rights community to focus on the delivery of justice to the relatives of the victims and the survivors of this and scores of other massacres of the people of the NorthEast of the island.

*More on the 'Kumuthini' at <http://sangam.org/CULTURE/kumuthini.htm>*