

UNDERSTANDING MULLIVAICKAL

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY



THE MULLIVAICKAL GENOCIDE THE PEAK OF THE TAMIL GENOCIDE

Each year on May 18, Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day honours the Tamil civilians who lost their lives during the final stages of the war in May 2009.

For many Tamils around the world, the events that took place in Mullivaikkal are remembered as part of the Tamil genocide, reflecting the scale of civilian suffering, displacement, and loss of life.

Mullivaikkal, a coastal village in the Mullaitivu District in the northeast of the island, became the last remaining area where hundreds of thousands of civilians were trapped during the closing months of the conflict.



“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. – George Santayana”

TENS OF THOUSANDS
KILLED
COUNTLESS LIVES
SHATTERED



REMEMBER. REFLECT. ACT.



REMEMBRANCE

We remember every life lost. Their names live on in our hearts forever.



REFLECTION

We reflect on the lessons of the past to build a more just and compassionate world.



ACTION

We act for peace, justice, equality, and the dignity of every human being.

HUMANITY IS OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

“The dead cannot cry out for justice. It is a duty of the living to do so for them.

–Lois McMaster Bujold

“No one has the right to obey an order to commit a crime against humanity.

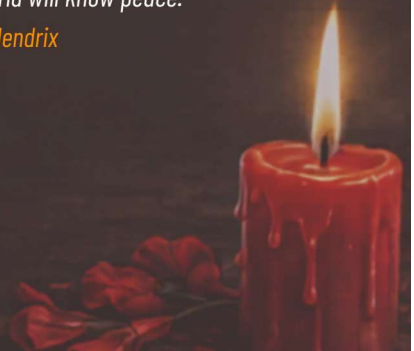
–Nuremberg Principles

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace.

–Jimi Hendrix



REMEMBERING LIVES LOST, UNDERSTANDING HISTORY, AND REFLECTING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, AND HUMAN DIGNITY



UNDERSTANDING MULLIVAICKAL

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY

THE ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT

“ To understand the pain of today, we must understand the events of yesterday. ”



THE ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT

Before European colonial rule, the island was governed by separate regional kingdoms, including the Tamil Jaffna Kingdom in the north.



1833 – BRITISH ADMINISTRATIVE UNIFICATION

British colonial reforms unified the island under a single central administration for the first time.



1948 – INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITAIN

Following independence, power was transferred to a centralised parliamentary system based on majority rule. Tamil political leaders raised concerns about the lack of constitutional protections for the Tamil community.



1948-49 – CITIZENSHIP ACTS

Large numbers of Indian-origin Tamils working on plantations were denied citizenship and voting rights.



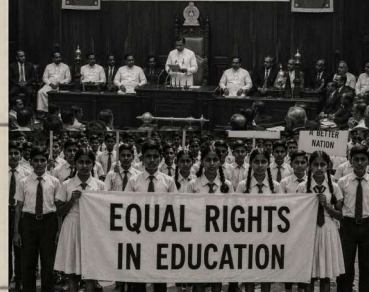
1956 – SINHALA ONLY ACT

Sinhala was made the sole official language, limiting Tamil access to public services, education, and government employment.



1972 – REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

Sri Lanka became a republic and Buddhism was given foremost place in the constitution, while protections for Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam were reduced.



1970S – EDUCATION STANDARDISATION POLICIES

Changes to university admissions reduced opportunities for Tamil students.



1983 – BLACK JULY

Anti-Tamil violence across the country resulted in thousands killed and displaced, marking a major turning point in the conflict and deepening divisions across the island.



These developments contributed to the escalation of tensions and the continuation of armed conflict for **nearly three decades**

THE FINAL MONTHS OF THE WAR MULLIVAICKAL - 2009

Understanding the humanitarian impact of the final stages of the conflict.



By early 2009, hundreds of thousands of Tamil civilians were trapped in shrinking areas of Mullivaikkal as military operations and shelling intensified around civilian zones.



● NO FIRE ZONES (NFZS)

Areas declared as safe zones later became sites of intense shelling, despite the presence of large civilian populations.

● HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS



Civilians faced severe shortages of food, water, shelter, and medical supplies while living in makeshift bunkers and temporary camps.

● HOSPITALS & CIVILIAN SHELTERS



Hospitals and civilian shelters were repeatedly affected during the fighting, worsening the humanitarian situation.

● CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

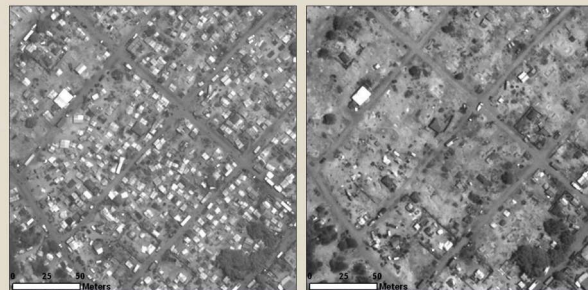


Estimates vary widely, with UN reports suggesting tens of thousands of civilian deaths during the final stages of the conflict.

● REMEMBRANCE & MEMORY



For many Tamils, the scale and nature of these events form part of what is remembered as the Tamil genocide.



IDP tents inside the No Fire Zone on May 6th (left) and May 10th (right). There is almost complete removal of all structures that were present.

REMEMBERING THE LIVES LOST AT MULLIVAICKAL

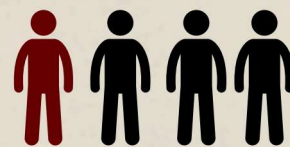


Civil society organisations and advocacy groups estimate that

146,679

TAMIL CIVILIANS REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR since the final stages of the war in 2009.

Estimates and interpretations vary across organisations and sources.



This is one of the highest numbers of unaccounted for people in the world.

**THE PAIN CONTINUES.
THE SEARCH CONTINUES.**

FACTS, QUOTES & FURTHER READING

UNDERSTANDING, ACKNOWLEDGING, REMEMBERING



TAMIL GENOCIDE
Remembrance Day

Truth brings healing, Justice brings peace. Remembrance builds a better future

KEY FACTS



Tens of thousands of civilians were affected during the final phase of the war.



Many families continue searching for missing loved ones.



Human rights organisations and UN reports have documented allegations of violations by multiple parties during the conflict.



Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day is observed annually by Tamils around the world.



The pursuit of truth, justice and accountability is essential for lasting peace and reconciliation.

QUOTES

“The Tamil community deserves truth, justice and accountability.”
– Jeremy Corbyn

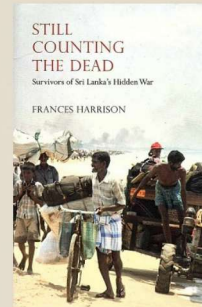
“I saw first-hand the heartbreaking situation faced by Tamil families in the north of Sri Lanka.”
– David Cameron

“The Tamil people have suffered enormously during the conflict.”
– Stephen Harper

“Victims and survivors deserve justice, truth and reparations.”
– Human Rights Watch

“There must be an independent international investigation into alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka.”
– Navi Pillay

RECOMMENDED READING



Still Counting the Dead

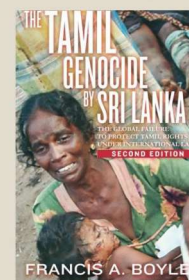
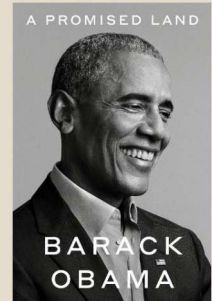
Survivors of Sri Lanka's Hidden War by the British journalist Frances Harrison, a former BBC correspondent in Sri Lanka and former Amnesty Head of news.

A documented account of survivor testimonies from the final phase of the war.

A Promised Land

by Barack Obama

Includes reflections on international conflict and leadership during global crises.



The Tamil Genocide by Sri Lanka

by Francis A. Boyle

Discusses legal and human rights perspectives regarding the conflict.

Let us honour the memory of the lives lost in Mullivaikkal
May their stories lead us to a world of truth, justice and lasting peace

PROMOTING REMEMBRANCE, EDUCATION, PEACE, AND HUMAN DIGNITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



The Crawley Forum for Peace and
Remembrance
அமைதி மற்றும் நினைவு
செயலகங்களை மன்றம் குழுவாள்

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NEVER FORGET
NEVER AGAIN

REMEMBRANCE

TRUTH

JUSTICE

PEACE

HUMANITY