

# Remedial Justice for 1983 Tamil Pogrom in the form of Independent State would have averted 2009 Mullivaaikaal Genocide

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*TGTE calls for the Removal of Sovereign Immunity as Defence for Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes and Torture in Sri Lanka!*

NEW YORK , UNITED STATES OF AMERICA , July 23, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Black July 1983, and the Massacre of an estimated 3,000 Tamils, remain as one of the darkest chapters in the ethnic cleansing of Tamils by the chauvinist Government of Sri Lanka and its rulers. We now mark 36 years of bitter remembrance of that brutal period.

Black July 1983 was not a riot between two ethnicities, but a planned pogrom on one specific ethnicity by the state controlled by those of the other ethnicity.

As L. Payadasa, a Singhalese scholar and author, stated in the book about Black July Pogrom, motorists were dragged from their cars to be stoned and beaten with sticks, and mobs of Sinhala youth rampaged through the streets and ransacked homes, shops and offices, looting them and setting them ablaze, simply because those belonged to Tamils. Tamil homes and businesses were attacked and set on fire.

Every year, Black July brings back memories of the tragic events to those Tamils who underwent the brutal attacks and families of the thousands whose lives were taken in such a brutal and systematic manner.

1983 Black July is one part of the past and the present, the ongoing Genocide of the Tamils.

From the 1956 Gal Oya massacre of innocent Tamil families, including farmers, women, and children, at the hands of Sinhalese gangs, under the supervision of the police force, to the 2009 Mullivaaikaal massacre and the killing of 145,000 innocent Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan State forces, history is replete with those moments of violence in the Genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

J. R. Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka at the time of Black July, went on the national radio and declared "War means War, Peace means Peace", thus launching the pogrom against Eelam Tamils.

On 11 July 1983, President Jayewardene, in an interview to London's Daily Telegraph stated "I don't care about the opinions of Jaffna people.....and we can't think about them now, we can't think about their lives or what they think about us now". Those racist remarks pertaining to Tamils, by the President of the country, foretold the anti-Tamil pogrom to begin on 23 July 1983.

As it raged, the Prime Minister of India, Mrs Indira Gandhi, intervened and called on President Jayewardene to stop the riots and the pogrom on Tamils. Her Minister of External Affairs, P V Narasimha Rao, carried a message to Sri Lanka's President, which led Jayewardene to bring the situation under control and end the pogrom.

Later, PM Indira Gandhi was moved to call Black July as a 'planned genocide'.

As we mark 36 years since Black July today, we hasten to note that not one person had been charged or punished for the cruel massacre of such gigantic proportions in Sri Lanka.

We wish to remind ourselves also of the fake promises Sri Lanka's ruling elite made to the world then. After the Black July massacre, Sri Lanka's envoy to the UN was to make a promise to the UN General Assembly that whoever responsible for the pogrom against Tamils would not escape and that they would be punished. The UN, the Tamils, and the civilised world, are still waiting for Sri Lanka to deliver on the UNHRC Resolution 30/1 of 2015 for the mass atrocities committed on Tamils in Mullivaikaal in May 2009.

The 1983 Black July massacre was a singularly clear message to the Tamils that they should exert their Right to Self Determination, pull together all resources, and build their Nation towards an independent State of Tamil Eelam, to be free from the clutches of the Sinhala Buddhist state which is stained with Tamils' blood, thus assuring their own physical security, dignity and freedom.

Had remedial justice in the form of an independent state been granted to the Tamils in 1983, the disaster of 2009 Mullivaikaal massacre could have been averted.

We call upon all reasonable Governments around the world to remove 'sovereign immunity' as a defence for rogue states for crimes of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and Torture.

Today, as we witness the ongoing atrocities that Tamils and Muslims face at the hands of the racist Sinhala Buddhist state, we remember our martyrs who sacrificed their own lives for the freedom of Eelam Tamils.

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