

*Irish revolutionary Bobby Sands
(1954 - 1981)
Died on hunger strike*

*Tamil revolutionary Thileepan
(1963 - 1987)
Died on hunger strike*



Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day 2017

(Remembering the Massacre of Tamils and Resistance)

Belfast and Derry

'Why do the army drive those jeeps Appa?'

A young Tamil asked his father in the 1980s.

'They got them from Northern Ireland', his dad said.

The family soon fled Sri Lanka as refugees.

The jeeps still patrol their Tamil homeland, or Tamil Eelam.

Just one British export from the Troubles.

(Quoted from Phil Miller's 'Britain's Dirty War Against the Tamil People, 1979-2009')

The Irish people are well placed to understand Britain's role in Sri Lanka and its terrible consequences for the Eelam Tamils. Just as loyalism served to internalise British interests within Ireland, Sinhala supremacism was groomed by the British to assist their colonial control of the Indian subcontinent. Britain's terrible legacy is not limited to their actions several centuries ago. Its interference in Sri Lanka continues to this day - as it does in Ireland. At every consecutive stage in history, Britain's involvement exacerbated the conflict and the suffering of the Tamil people in the island.

It is particularly significant that those who struggle for freedom and social progress in Ireland are commemorating - in both Belfast and Derry - the day that marked the most terrible crescendo of the slaughter of the Tamil people - May 18th 2009. A UN team appointed by Ban Ki Moon estimate that, during several months leading up to this day, over 70,000 Tamils were killed by the Sri Lankan Armed forces. The Rome based 'Permanent Peoples Tribunal' ruled that the actions of the Sinhala armed forces had been carried out with the complicity of the UK and the US.

On the 18th of May this year, Eelam Tamils from the homeland and from the Diaspora will join their Irish hosts to remember and examine the common source of their problems and discuss how practical solidarity can be built. We invite you to participate in the discussions on how the methods of repression that were perfected against the Irish, were used in Sri Lanka against the Tamils. Soon after the 'shoot-to-kill' scandal in Armagh in 1982, Sri Lanka set up its own police commando unit with British help. Britain taught RUC tactics to the Sri Lankan Special Task Force (STF) to use against the Eelam Tamils. Trained by former SAS soldiers, the STF became the cutting edge in implementing the policy to eliminate what the British counter insurgency expert Frank Kitson called the 'genuine subversive element'.

The Eelam Tamils could only survive several decades of intense pressure from the US/UK backed Sinhala forces by comprehensively involving the whole population into the resistance struggle. The liberation movement did this mobilising the oppressed strata of Tamil society, the women, the poor and the lower castes to leading the struggle. The resulting social achievements, which could be clearly observed during the time of the Sri Lankan peace process, constitute the very character of the risen Eelam Tamil people. This will not be allowed to be extinguished by physical force and psychological pressure. The Eelam Tamils are inspired that the Irish have sustained the idea of independence for so long. This invitation to commemorate May 18th, in Belfast and Derry will be a historic step in a long-lasting relationship.

ORGANISED BY : Coiste Na Nlarchimi | Relatives for Justice | National Graves Association | Pat Finucane Centre | Bloody Sunday Trust | Irish Forum for Peace in Sri Lanka | International Human Rights Association - Bremen

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