

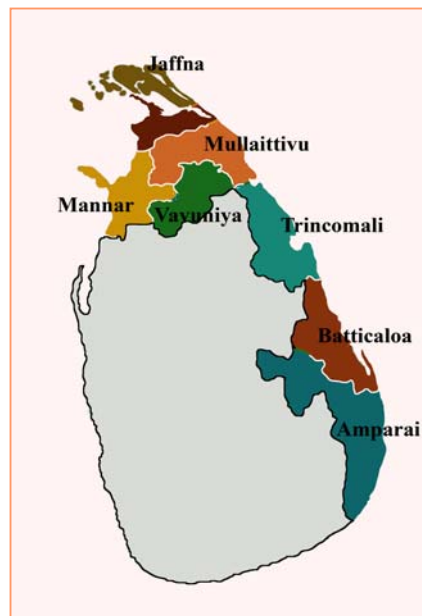


Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil Eelam for May 2007

Press release of LTTE Peace Secretariat

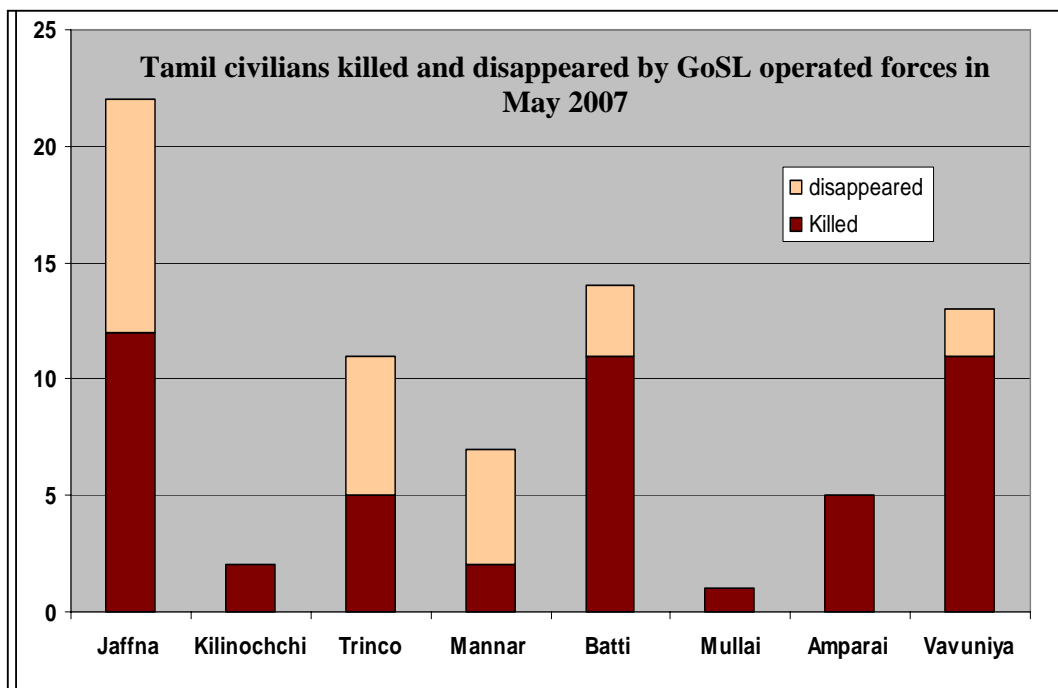
**Civilian casualty during Cease fire
– 2002 till present**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
Killed	1805
Disappeared	804
Displaced	340,000
Militarized	300,000



Summary:

Tamil civilian toll in May at the hands of GoSL operated forces



Forty nine Tamil civilians were killed and another twenty nine disappeared during the month of May in the hands of the Sri Lankan Government operated forces.

LTTE Peace Secretariat



Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil Eelam for May 2007

White-van gang abduction continued in Jaffna and contributed to the majority of deaths and disappearance there. University students in Jaffna face the brunt of these attacks with four students remaining missing after abduction by GoSL operated forces.

Attacks of fishermen at sea lead to the deaths of two fishermen from Jaffna. Three fishermen from Jaffna and another five fishermen from Mannar disappeared after going to the sea.

In Vanni too civilians were killed by aerial bombardment and artillery fire. A fifteen year old student, Kanagaratnam Mohanaraj, was killed in Poonagari in Kilinochchi due to indiscriminate artillery fire. A fifty six year old woman was killed in Venavil in Mullaithivu as a result of aerial bombardment. A seven old child was among those injured by aerial bombardment in Venavil.

It shouldn't have happened

Where is the arm of that youth on the street?

Where are the dogs that respond to our voice?

Where are the people to ask these questions?

Who closed the gates of all the homes?

I should not have left, I certainly should not have.

- a Tamileelam poem

Jaffna education community

On 4 May 2007 four senior school students were abducted by the military and they remain missing to date. Three students studying at Jaffna Hindu College, one student studying at Jaffna St John's College were abducted from their homes by armed gunmen working with the Sri Lankan military. Both these schools where the four students were studying are two of the leading schools in Jaffna. All of these students were studying towards the GCE Advance Level examination to be held in three months and were working hard towards these very competitive examinations.

The disappearance was followed by the distribution of pamphlets a few days later by the Sri Lankan military threatening school students with death for selling their school magazine. The disappearance and the pamphlets are seen by the students and their parents as a deliberate ploy to disrupt the students working towards their GCE AL examination.

The students went on a boycott of classes until the disappeared students are released. They called off the boycott temporarily. After the boycott was called off the SLA entered several schools in Jaffna and collected by threat the names of all the senior students attending each school.



Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil Eelam for May 2007

Soon after these events three hundred staff and students of Jaffna University were threatened with death for supporting the LTTE in notices that were posted all over Jaffna University premises. The names of the 300 students and staff were listed from each department in the notices.

While these bullying tactics and threats by the SLA of the education community were going on, letters were received by senior Jaffna university dons from paramilitary group supported by the SLA demanding protection money worth of millions of rupees.

Jaffna that was once blessed with the most advanced educational institutions in the island has been gradually stripped of this status by deliberate policies of successive Sri Lankan governments through deliberate discriminatory practices in teacher appointments and university entrance. This mentality evolved eventually into the most abominable act of destroying the Jaffna library with hundreds of thousands of irreplaceable texts in 1981. Presently this mentality is exhibited as bullying and threatening of the education community by a military whose control over Jaffna has been described by many as that of maintaining an open prison.

Judge orders SLA officers to attend murder inquiries

The bodies of three young fathers abducted in white-van from their homes in Vavuniya were found thrown in the street eight Kilimetres away. Judge Ilanchelivan conducting the murder inquiries noted that all four exit routes from the location of the homes of the three victims were guarded by SLA checkpoints. Questioning how the victims could have been abducted past these checkpoints, he ordered the four senior SLA officers of these four checkpoints to attend the murder inquiries.

Fuel restriction and motorbike users in Vanni

The amount of fuel allowed into Vanni is strictly limited by the Sri Lankan military. This has serious detrimental effect on many aspects of life in Vanni. Electricity to the hospital, farming and transport are all affected. One particularly harmful effect of this fuel restriction is the damage it is doing to the lungs of the motorbike riders.

Motorbikes are the main mode of transport for small scale farmers to transport their produce to the market. These people cannot afford to run their motorbikes on petrol anymore due to the high cost of petrol. They get some modifications done to their motorbikes so that these motorbikes can run on kerosene. Two essential parts of these modifications are a small petrol droplet dispenser and a tube leading to the carburetor.

To start a cold motorbike engine the rider feeds the carburetor with a few drops of petrol through the tube. The rider will then blow into the tube to give extra air to the carburetor to encourage the engine to start. As if this gymnastics is not enough, for some motorbikes, it is necessary to blow into the tube and also push the motorbike forward with the feet to encourage a start. Even kerosene, although cheaper than petrol, is still expensive. In order to save on kerosene the rider frequently blows into the tube to improve the efficiency of combustion and thus be more fuel economic.



Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil Eelam for May 2007

All of this continuous blowing into the carburetor comes at a cost. Invariably the rider while blowing is also inhaling the petroleum fumes, be it petrol or kerosene, deep into his lungs. Health effects of inhaling petrol and kerosene fumes have been the subject of extensive medical research. These studies have concluded that such inhalations affect the liver and can also cause heart failure. The studies were targeting people who inhale these fumes from the environments where they work. Direct inhalation that has been forced on the motorbike riders in Vanni will certainly have far more serious effects on the health of these riders.

Below are some extracts from the IPS news service's May report, "War refugees stressed by mass resettlement" at the following URL , <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=37920>

"An army-supervised mass resettlement plan underway for more than 100,000 people, displaced by fierce battles with Tamil rebels in eastern Batticaloa district, may be causing new problems for the refugees rather than solving existing ones, say volunteers.

"The town and outlying areas were inundated by civilians fleeing their homes when fighting broke out between government forces and Tamil rebels first in areas north of the town and then the western side. By early March, the refugee count in the district had swelled to above 150,000 and they were everywhere -- under trees, on the side of the roads.

Later they were housed in schools, community centres and with host families, but this affected civilian life in the district. At the height of the fighting 325 schools were closed with studies of 135,000 students disrupted, according Batticaloa's civilian administrator S. Amalanathan. Eighty schools still remain shut.

Some of the displaced have been on the move since August 2006 when they fled villages south of the Trincomalee bay. They had to travel more than 100 km, often with just the clothes on their backs, before they could reach safer areas in Batticaloa.

There has been criticism that the return was not totally within internationally accepted norms. United Nations agencies like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have urged the government to adopt a step-by-step approach and be mindful of existing risks.

Humanitarian workers described the current round of resettlements as ad hoc. "We could not go into the areas where the returnees were going, the security forces said that it was unsafe which was a bit surprising given that all these civilians were going there," Rukshan Fernando from the Law and Society Trust said after visiting Batticaloa.

I am very concerned by the deterioration of the humanitarian situation as a result of the resurgence in the conflict. And I am especially concerned about the impact of the conflict on civilians, many of whom have now been displaced multiple times by the fighting," Tony Banbury, Asia director for the WFP, said last week in Colombo.

Humanitarian and medical workers were threatened, harassed and abducted and their work further hampered by new registration requirements, Amnesty noted in its latest report".



Human rights and humanitarian situation report in Tamil Eelam for **May 2007**

Note: For extensive information on the above and other human rights topic in the Tamil homeland
please visit : <http://www.ltteps.org>