



# தமிழ் இளையோர் அமைப்பு Tamil Youth Organisation

அடிப்படைநிலை

Australia

01 February 2008,

Tamil Australians asked to wear black armbands to mourn Sri Lankan Independence Day

Tamil Youth Organisation of Australia in conjunction with 'enough. Sri Lanka', is requesting all Tamil Australians to wear a black armband on Monday 4 February 2008 to mourn the Sri Lankan Independence Day.

"Whilst many countries celebrate the day they gained their independence, the Tamils of NorthEast Sri Lanka mourn this day as it was the day they lost their independence," says a founding member of Tamil Youth Organisation of Australia.

On 4 February 1948 the island of Sri Lanka gained independence from the British after almost two centuries of colonisation. However, the Tamils inhabiting the island have only witnessed discrimination, suffering, torture and genocide at the hands of the Sri Lankan government since. With several government backed pogroms, including the ethnic cleansing of the 1983 Riots which left an estimated 3000 Tamils dead ([www.blackjuly.info](http://www.blackjuly.info)), the Tamils of the island have hardly experienced 'independence' in the last 60 years.

Over the last year Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and several United Nations delegates have voiced concern over the human rights abuses faced by Tamil civilians. Recently, a Human Rights Watch representative stated in an interview that "Over the last one and a half years over 1000 people have 'disappeared'...4 people every day are killed or disappeared in Sri Lanka...[and] the government had done shamefully little [to investigate]...the most targeted population is Tamil men." (28/12/2007, Chicago Public Radio).

So, to highlight the Tamils' lack of freedom, and to bring attention to the recent withdrawal from the ceasefire by the Sri Lankan government, the Tamil Youth Organisation of Australia encourages all Tamil Australians to wear a black armband to work, school or university on Monday February 4 2008 in solidarity with the native Tamils of NorthEast Sri Lanka.

Further information regarding the human rights abuses and humanitarian catastrophe faced by the Tamils can be obtained from [www.blackjuly.info](http://www.blackjuly.info) and [www.tyoaustralia.org](http://www.tyoaustralia.org).

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