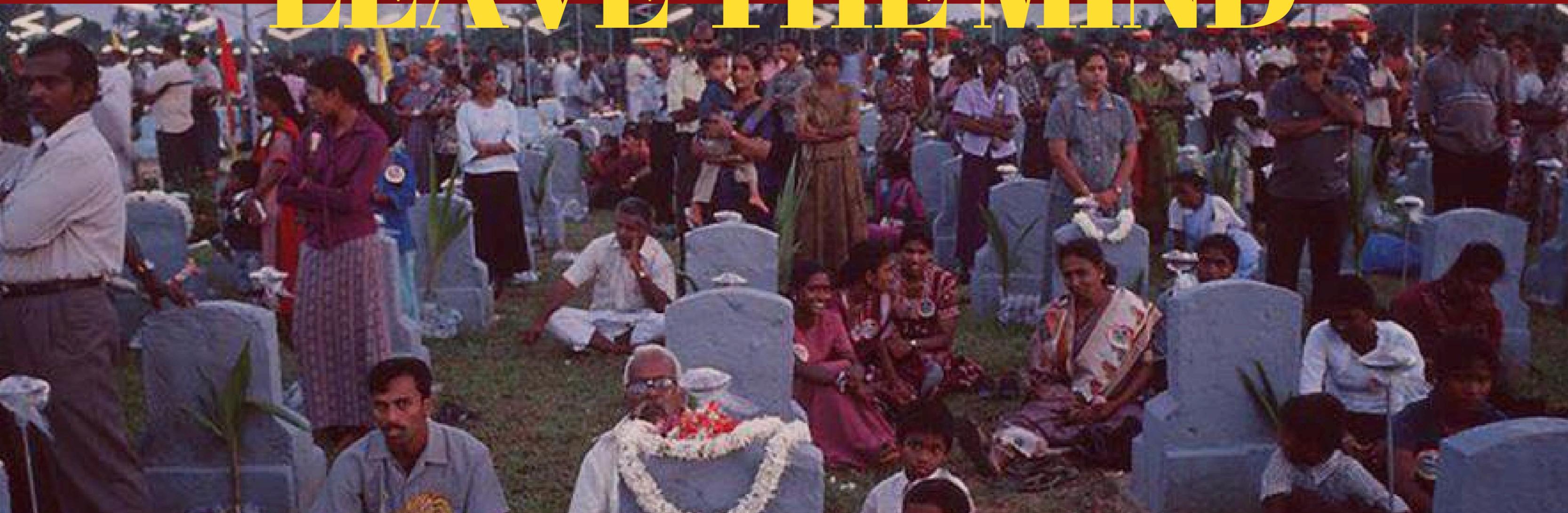


Solidarity
Screenings
Glasgow

A commemoration of the Tamil struggle for
liberation on Maaveerar Naal (Great Heroes' Day)

27/11/2025

THOUGHTS THAT NEVER LEAVE THE MIND





Outline



A quick history of Tamil Eelam ○

LTTE primer ○

Significance of Maaveerar Naal ○

Political activity today ○

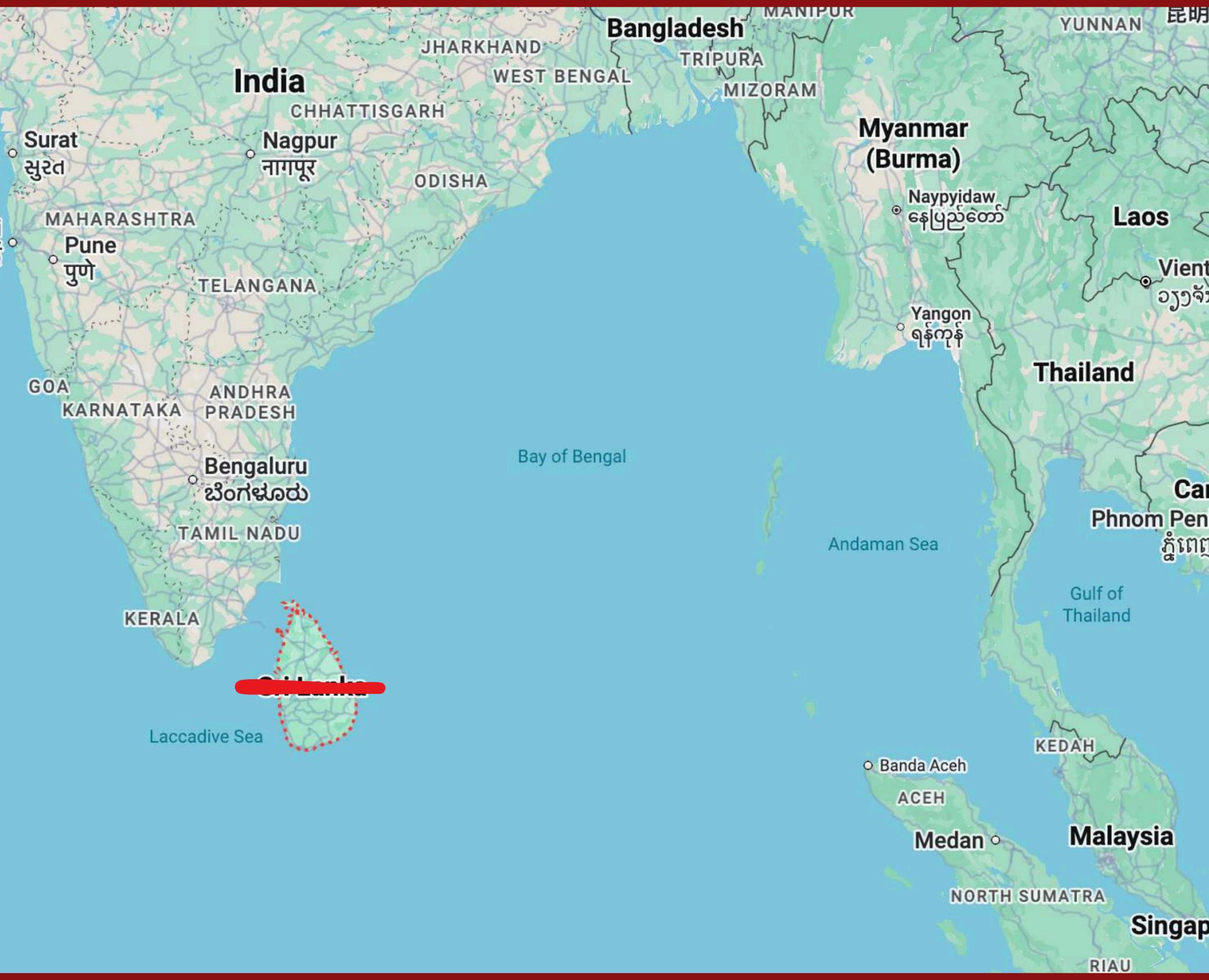
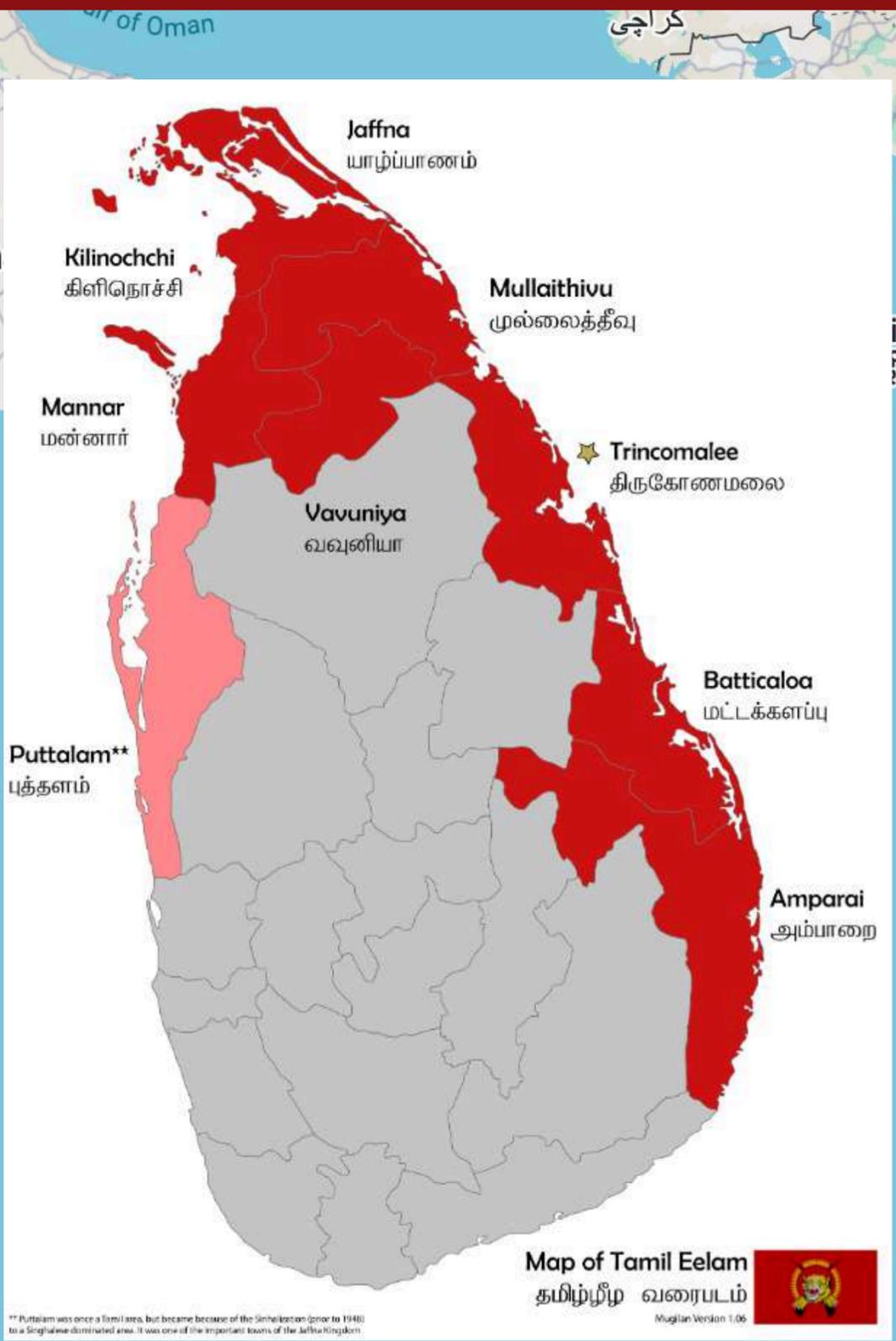
Film ○

Sources ○

Statue dedicated to Tamil resistance fighters who fell in the struggle for Tamil Eelam. Jaffna, 1994.

United Arab Emirates

Oman



A quick history of Tamil Eelam

The **island of Eelam** (known previously as Ceylon, known internationally now as Sri Lanka) was **under colonial control for over 400 years** and was granted “independence” in 1948.

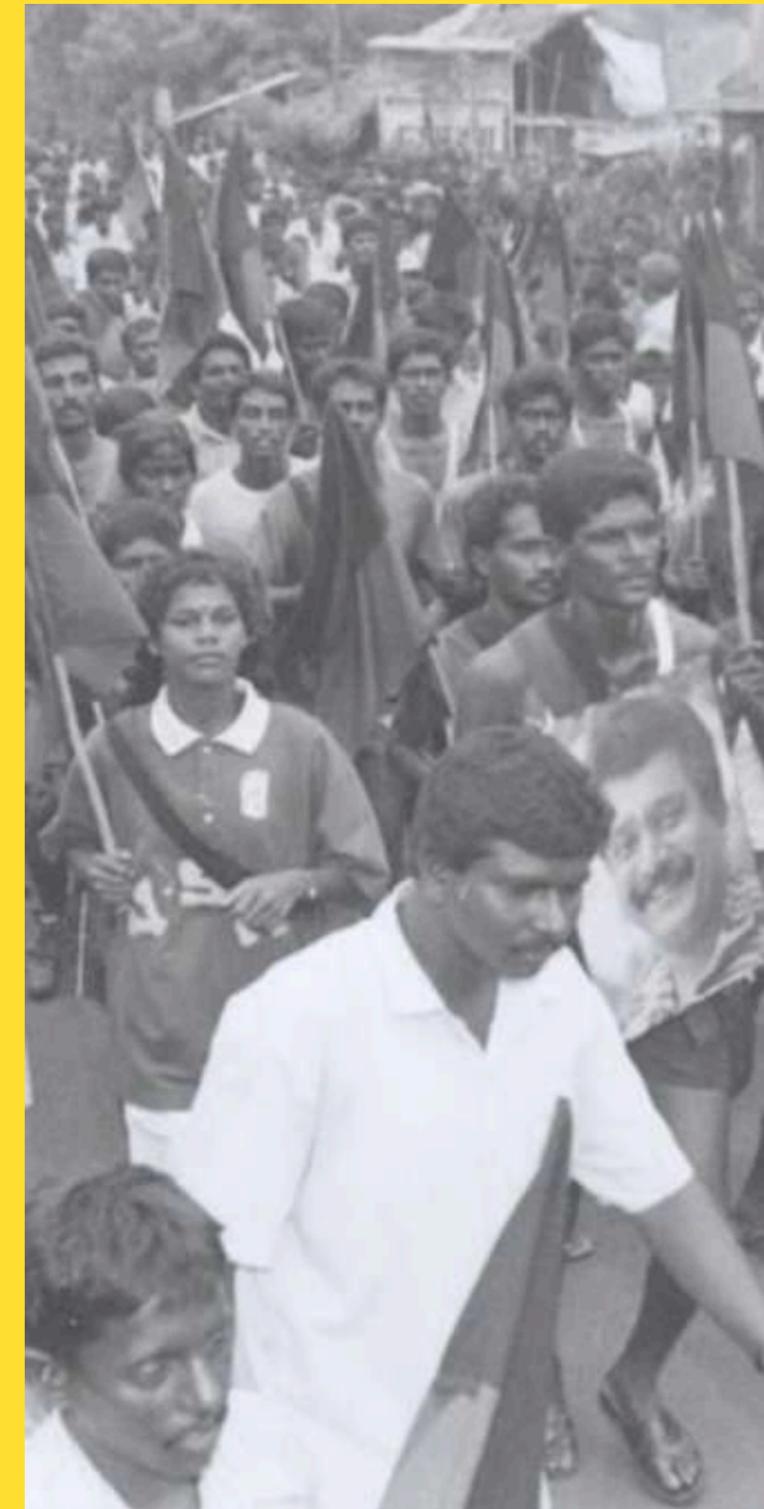
During the first year of “independence”, the **Citizenship Act** was implemented, which barred Tamils of indentured labourer descent (11% of the population) the right to citizenship! This was then followed by the deportations of hundreds of thousands.

1956

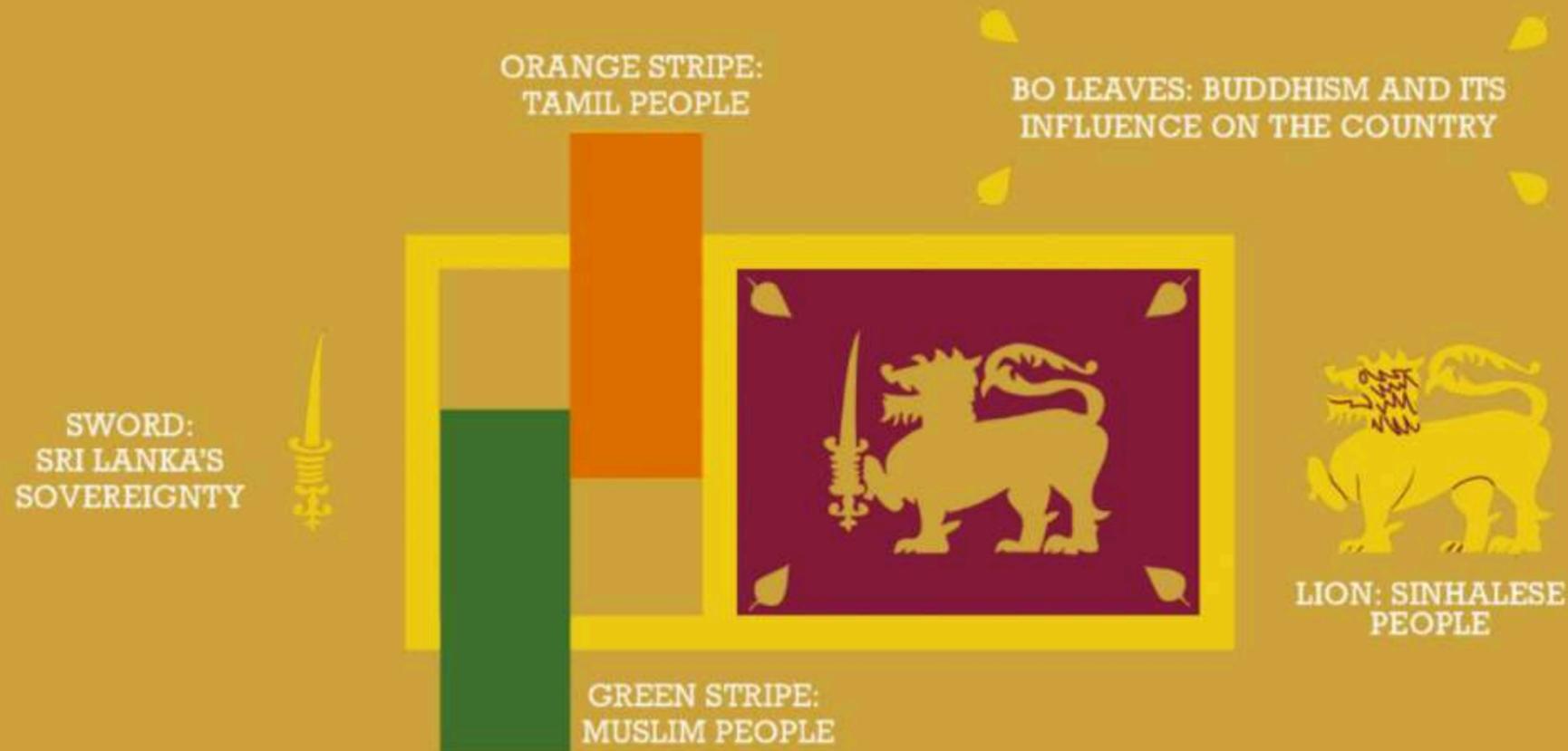
- **Sinhala Only Act** was passed, making Sinhala the sole official language, excluding Tamil. Even the official name of the country Sri Lanka is in Sinhalese

1958

- First anti-Tamil pogrom as an attempt at **collective punishment for Tamils demands for equality**
- The **Sri Lankan state has been complicit in genocide**: state-sponsored settler colonialism in the North and East, state-backed pogroms, and mass killings, enforced disappearances and sexual violence by the security forces are examples of genocidal acts



THE SRI LANKAN FLAG DECONSTRUCTED



THE SYMBOLISM OF A LION HOLDING A SWORD TRACES BACK TO 152 B.C.E., WHEN THE SINHALESE KING DUTUGEMUNU DEFEATED THE TAMIL KING ELLALAN. THIS HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, OF A “NATIVE” SINHALA KING DEFEATING A “INVADING” TAMIL KING IS ONE THAT’S TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS, AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE BELIEF THAT THE SINHALESE ARE SUPERIOR TO THE TAMIL PEOPLE.

LTTE primer

The LTTE initially formed as the Tamil New Tigers in 1975, however, they renamed to the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam** in 1976.

On political perspective: A Marxist-oriented and Tamil nationalist organisation. They were working to establish an independent socialist state in Tamil Eelam

On war: The LTTE was often described as indestructible as they were masters and pioneers of asymmetrical warfare. They were the first guerrilla organisation to establish a cavalry, a navy and an airforce.

On a revolutionary culture: From the 1980s onwards, a third of their members were Tamil women. The founders of the LTTE came from the oppressed Karaiyer caste and for the whole of its existence was constituted largely of people from oppressed caste backgrounds.





**CN: Images of artillery fire, child martyrs' bodies covered in ceremonial flowers, themes of grief and collective loss.
AN: Flickering montage, flashing lights [0:10-0:13].**



The LTTE was more than just an armed group, they were a political formation. During the ceasefire from 2002-09, they essentially ran a state in Tamil Eelam!

LTTE primer

How they were destroyed:

The **LTTE** was one of the final organisations from the previous century that were upholding the banner of **revolution and liberation**, they proved themselves to be a threat to the whole imperialist world system.

During the barbaric imperialist onslaught of the so-called “**War on Terror**”, the **LTTE** was **targeted, declared a “terrorist organisation”**.

- With British involvement e.g., British mercenary company Keenie Meenie was involved with war crimes in Sri Lanka for which its shadowy directors have never been held accountable.
- **Counterinsurgency** methods used → The whole world was unified in supporting the Sinhalese ethno-state of Sri Lanka, from China, to “israel”, to the US, Pakistan and India.

The destruction of the LTTE was an attempt of the imperialist world order to threaten liberation movements worldwide into capitulating, however, **the banner of liberation is still held firmly across the world**, and as the Sinhalese state continues its repression in Eelam, the struggle will be reignited.



Maaveerar Naal





The significance of Maaveerar Naal

A day to honour the fighters of Tamil Eelam.

This year has seen “a level of public remembrance not witnessed in more than a decade. For some villages, it is their first time marking Maaveerar Naal under Sri Lankan military occupation.”

Maaveerar Naal commemorates the first death of a member of the LTTE, Shankar, killed in 1982.

Before the re-occupation of Eelam by Sri Lanka in 2009, these **commemorations were held in thuyilum illams (resting places)** where thousands of LTTE fighters were buried. **Every one of these cemeteries was destroyed by the Sri Lankan state** - showcasing the political threat that remembrance and honouring martyrs of the armed struggle represents.

“Maaveerar Naal is more than just a memorial day. It is a political declaration and illustrates the strength of the Tamil nation.”



Political activity today

The yearly commemoration of Maaveerar Naal is active resistance. Despite the attempts of the occupation to stop them, **young and old people are rebuilding memorials and cleaning cemeteries of fighters.**

Organisations of relatives and families of the disappeared, largely led by **mothers, continue to organise and demand to know what the Sri Lankan state has done to their family.** Journalists continue to document.

Kannathil Muthamittal

A Peck on the Cheek (2002, 2h17m)

- Tamil Nadu film written, produced and directed by **Mani Ratnam**, who's known as one of the greatest directors of cinema in India.
- Based on a short story, "Amuthavum Avanum" by Sujatha.
- A story of an Eelam Tamil child adopted by Indian (Tamil Nadu) parents, whose desire is to meet her biological mother in the midst of the revolution in Eelam.



A MANI RATNAM FILM

Kannathil Muthamittal

DIGITAL
its
SOUND

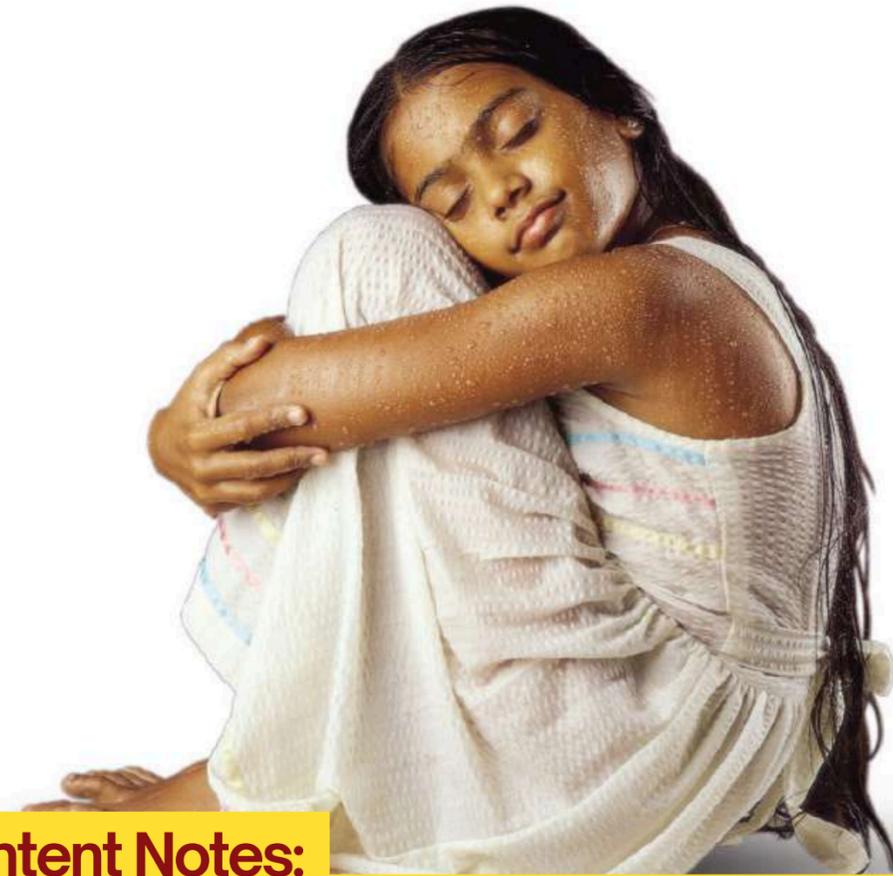
(A peck on the cheek)

Mani Ratnam A.R. Rahman

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Content Notes:

The film has English subtitles. It includes themes of adoption. There are various depictions of colourism throughout, as well as violence, guns, blood, death, suicide, bombings, forced displacement & the destruction of villages. The film also depicts pregnancy at the time of forced displacement, child nudity, distress, spousal loss, and child abuse. There are mentions of pregnancy loss and the loss of children. Finally, there are a few scenes that contain flashing images.

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