

Tamil-language publications ban — 1958

The 1958 prohibition of importation of certain Tamil-language publications under emergency regulations following the May 1958 pogrom.

Following the May–June 1958 anti-Tamil pogrom, emergency regulations were used to prohibit the importation of certain Tamil-language publications from India and to restrict the circulation of Tamil-language periodicals on the island. The measures are an early instance of the linguistic-restriction architecture that ran from the 1956 Official Language Act through the 1971 emergency-press regulations to the 2024 Online Safety Act.

§1 What was restricted

Emergency regulations gazetted in the second half of 1958 authorised the prohibition of the import, sale and circulation of named Tamil-language newspapers and periodicals deemed prejudicial to public order. The restrictions sat alongside the broader emergency administration imposed during and after the 1958 pogrom.

§2 Why it matters

The 1958 print restrictions are part of the continuous statutory and administrative architecture that has constrained Tamil-language public communication on the island. They precede the 1971 press regulations, the 1979 PTA's wide press powers, the 2010 emergency regulations and the 2024 Online Safety Act, and form a single ledger that the /case/ organ documents rather than aggregates.

Sources

- wilson-1988
- tambiah-1986

What this is not

- This page does not list individual publications by name.
- This page does not name editors or distributors.