

National Mass Graves & Forensic Impunity Matrix

Site-by-site comparative matrix of publicly known mass-grave sites in Sri Lanka, systemic forensic failures, the Office on Missing Persons mandate, and ICMP engagement — figures attributed to their sources only.

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§1 PART I — SITE-BY-SITE COMPARATIVE MATRIX

§ SITE 1 — CHEMMANI (Jaffna District, Northern Province)

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · First phase: Confession made in 1998 by a Sri Lanka Army corporal during trial for the rape and murder of a Tamil schoolgirl (1996). He alleged hundreds of detainees from 1995–96 Jaffna military operations were killed and buried at Chemmani. Excavation ordered by Jaffna Magistrate; carried out Sept–Oct 1999, finding 15 skeletal remains in initial pits — far fewer than alleged hundreds. Second phase: In February 2025, construction workers building a new crematorium inside Sinthupathy Cemetery (Chemmani area) discovered human remains; Nallur Pradeshiya Sabha then Jaffna Magistrate notified; formal excavation ordered. By October 2025, over 141–200+ skeletons had been uncovered, including children's items (baby bottle, toy, schoolbag). · **CONFIRMED** (excavations physically documented; 2025 finds reported AP/ABC/CNN/Al Jazeera)
2. Estimated remains count · 1999 excavation: 15 skeletal remains recovered from initial grave pits (Ceylon Medical Journal, 2006). Full extent of Chemmani area unexplored. 2025 excavation (Sinthupathy site): 141 skeletons confirmed by HRCSL Fact-Finding Report (Sept 2025); reports from AP/The Independent cite "more than 200" skeletons by Oct 2025. The corporal's 1998 confession alleged ~400 persons killed across Chemmani area. · **CONFIRMED** (HRCSL Sept 2025; The Independent Oct 2025; ABC News Oct 2025)
3. Alleged perpetrator category · Sri Lanka Army — alleged by the corporal's own confession (1998). Victims alleged to be Tamil civilians and detainees who disappeared from Jaffna peninsula after SLA recaptured it from LTTE (1995–96). ICJ (July 2025) and HRCSL (Sept 2025) note the 2025 remains context is consistent with the 1995–96 disappearances. No LTTE or paramilitary attribution alleged for this site. · **ALLEGED** (confession of one accused; perpetrator command chain not judicially determined)
4. Judicial status · Jaffna Magistrates' Court (MC/Jaffna). 1999: Magistrate-led inquiry; no referral to High Court. 2025: New inquiry opened by Jaffna Magistrate (Feb 2025); ongoing. HRCSL recommended a Special Magistrate be appointed and hearings expedited (Sept 2025). ICJ called for international forensic oversight (July 2025). HC Türk visited site June 25, 2025 (OHCHR UNifeed). As of mid-2026: inquiry still at magistrate stage; no indictment. · **OPEN** — Magistrate inquiry phase
5. Forensic status · 1999: Archaeological pedestalling technique used; paper by Ruwanpura et al. (Ceylon Medical Journal 2006) documents methodology. Samples not carbon-dated. DNA collection not systematically completed. 2025: HRCSL (Sept 2025) flagged gaps in carbon-dating technology and shortage of forensic experts; government stated readiness to work with "credible international partners." ICJ urged internationally supervised forensic protocol. DNA reference samples from families: not yet completed as of report date. No ICMP deployment confirmed. · **PARTIAL** — 2025 excavation ongoing; DNA matching not started
6. Prosecutorial outcome · No convictions for the Chemmani killings themselves. Rajapakse was convicted in a separate case (a Tamil schoolgirl murder/rape; Colombo HC) — that verdict did not address the Chemmani disappearances. No AG referral for the mass grave deaths. No indictment filed. · **ZERO PROSECUTORIAL**

OUTCOME for mass grave deaths

7. Current status (2026) · Excavation of 2025 Sinthupathy site ongoing; estimated to continue through 2026 per HRCSL. Government of President Dissanayake (elected Nov 2024) has expressed willingness for international cooperation. Debate on international forensic oversight continues. OMP has not assumed exhumation authority. · ACTIVE EXCAVATION; NO PROSECUTION

8. Key civil society organisations · ITJP (International Truth and Justice Project); HRCSL (Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, state body); ICJ (International Commission of Jurists); Families of the Disappeared (FoD); Tamil civil society groups; Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD Sri Lanka) · —

9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · YES — directly cited. UN High Commissioner Volker Türk personally visited Chemmani site, June 25, 2025 (OHCHR UNifeed d3417493). WGEID Nov 2015 mission to Sri Lanka cited systemic disappearances (Chemmani not named individually but contextually covered). HRC resolution 46/1 reporting (A/HRC/49/9, 2022) references mass grave accountability failures. · CONFIRMED

10. Key primary source URLs · - HRCSL Fact-Finding Report (Sept 2025):

<https://www.hrsl.lk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Fact-Finding-Report-of-HRCSL-on-Chemmani-Mass-Grave-Site.pdf> — Ruwanpura et al., Ceylon Medical Journal (2006): <https://cmj.sljol.info/articles/1251/> — Al Jazeera (June 2025):

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/6/16/new-sri-lanka-mass-grave-discovery-reopens-old-wounds-for-tamils> — OHCHR UNifeed (June 2025): <https://media.un.org/unifeed/en/asset/d341/d3417493> — ICJ statement (July 2025):

<https://www.icj.org/sri-lanka-icj-urges-international-oversight-and-victim-centred-investigation-into-chemmani-mass-grave-in-compliance-with-international-law-and-standards/> — ABC News (Oct 2025):

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-10-04/chemmani-sri-lanka-mass-graves-skeletons-discovered/105808016> — CNN (Nov 2025): <https://www.cnn.com/2025/11/29/asia/sri-lanka-chemmani-mass-grave-intl-hnk> — Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemmani_mass_graves_investigation · —

§ SITE 2 — MANNAR ("SATHOSA SITE" / THIRUKETHISWARAM AREA, Northern Province)

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · Discovered 2018 during earthworks near the Thirukethiswaram temple area, Mannar District (often referred to as the "Sathosa" or cooperative store site). Construction/infrastructure workers exposed skeletal remains; Mannar Magistrates' Court assumed jurisdiction. Widely described as Sri Lanka's largest known mass grave site. · CONFIRMED

2. Estimated remains count · Reports cite ~350–360 skeletons (The Hindu, March 2019: "nearly 350 skeletons"; Business Standard/PTI: "over 300 men, women and children"). Additional remains discovered in subsequent excavations. · CONFIRMED (multiple press reports; court records cited in Tamil Guardian)

3. Alleged perpetrator category · Disputed. Tamil civil society and families of disappeared allege remains are victims of Sri Lanka security forces (army/paramilitary) killings during the civil war, particularly the brutal 1980s–1990s period. Counter-claim: Beta Analytic (Florida, US) carbon-dating of 6 bone samples (Feb 2019) indicated samples dated to the 15th century (500+ years old), predating the civil war — a finding that, if valid, would indicate this is a pre-colonial or colonial-era site. Expert dispute: some investigators challenged the sample selection methodology; JMO and OMP commissioner accompanied samples to US. · DISPUTED — civil war era (ALLEGED by Tamil families); pre-colonial era (ALLEGED by carbon-dating report)

4. Judicial status · Mannar Magistrates' Court (primary jurisdiction). Excavation temporarily halted by Mannar Magistrate T. Sarvanaraja, March 8, 2019, following the carbon-dating discrepancy. Vavuniya High Court also involved on question of families' right to legal representation in proceedings. As of 2024–2026: Tamil Guardian reports case "bogged down by Sri Lankan bureaucracy"; court continues hearing expert reports to resolve dating

controversy; adjournments frequent. · OPEN — Magistrate inquiry; dating dispute unresolved

5. Forensic status · Beta Analytic Florida carbon-dating of 6 samples (results Feb 2019): 15th-century dates. Controversy remains over sample representativeness. Further expert reports ordered. DNA collection from families: reportedly initiated with OMP involvement but no confirmed matches published. No ICMP field deployment. JMO Chaminda Rajapaksa and OMP commissioner Mirak Raheem accompanied samples to US. · PARTIAL — contested; DNA matching not completed

6. Prosecutorial outcome · No prosecution initiated. Case remains at inquiry/investigative stage. The carbon-dating dispute has effectively de-prioritised criminal investigation. No AG referral. · ZERO

7. Current status (2026) · Stalled. JD SLanka (June 2026) reports authorities consulting "several expert reports" to resolve dating. Families' representative-participation rights still contested. Excavation incomplete. · STALLED — dating dispute; no prosecution pathway evident

8. Key civil society organisations · Families of the Disappeared (Mannar/Northern Province); Tamil Civil Society Forum; ITJP; JD SLanka (Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka); Law & Society Trust (LST) · —

9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · YES — contextually. WGEID 2015 country visit report references mass disappearances in Northern Province during civil war. OHCHR HRC reports (A/HRC/49/9) cite Mannar in context of accountability failures. No separate dedicated OHCHR resolution for Mannar site. · CONFIRMED (contextual)

10. Key primary source URLs · - The Hindu (Mar 2019):

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/mannar-mass-grave-predates-sri-lankas-civil-war-say-reports/article26460173.ece> — Asia Times (Mar 2019):

<https://asiatimes.com/2019/03/sri-lanka-halts-mass-grave-excavation-after-disparity-in-reports/> — Sunday Times (Mar 2019):

<https://sundaytimes.lk/online/news-online/mannar-magistrate-orders-temporary-halt-of-mannar-mass-grave-excavations/2-1075304> — Tamil Guardian (carbon dating samples):

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/mannar-mass-grave-samples-handed-us-company-carbon-dating> — JD SLanka (June 2026):

<http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/news-features/human-rights/863-more-expert-reports-to-finalise-dating-of-sri-lankas-largest-mass-grave> — AdaDerana (June 2024): <https://adaderana.lk/news.php?id=53663> · —

§ SITE 3 — MATALE DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL SITE (Central Province)

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · November 2012: Construction workers building a new facility at Matale District General Hospital uncovered skeletal remains. Matale Magistrates' Court initiated inquiry. Forensic specialists brought in. Forensic archaeologist Dr Ajith Jayasena (Matale hospital JMO) described it as "a crime site" based on evidence of "decapitation, dismemberment and concealment" (Al Jazeera, Feb 2013; BBC, Dec 2012). · CONFIRMED

2. Estimated remains count · 154 skeletons (confirmed by Matale Magistrate's Court, March 2013; AP/Guardian). Initial reports cited ~60 during early excavation; final count settled at 154. · CONFIRMED (Matale Magistrate's Court; Guardian Mar 2013; USA Today Mar 2013)

3. Alleged perpetrator category · Sri Lanka security forces (alleged) during suppression of the second JVP uprising (1987–1991). Forensic archaeologist confirmed remains date to approximately 25 years before 2013 (i.e., late 1980s). JVP-era victims are primarily Sinhalese youth. Matale Magistrate (March 2013) concluded remains dated to the Marxist rebellion era. Additional allegation (2023): ITJP, CHRD, JDS and SLCAT jointly accused former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa (then a military officer based in the Central Province region) of ordering police records relating to the site to be destroyed to hamper investigation (ITJP report, June 2023; Al Jazeera June 2023; The Independent June 2023). This allegation is ALLEGED, not judicially determined. · ALLEGED — state

security forces; Gotabaya obstruction allegation

4. Judicial status · Matale Magistrates' Court (primary jurisdiction). Inquiry opened 2012; ongoing but effectively stalled. No High Court indictment. Gotabaya obstruction allegation referred to relevant authorities (no prosecution as of 2026). ITJP 2023 report called for fresh inquiry. · OPEN — stalled at magistrate level
5. Forensic status · Initial forensic analysis by JMO Dr Ajith Jayasena; forensic archaeologist involved. Dating: morphological/contextual (consistent with late 1980s); no published carbon-dating results. DNA collection from families: not completed. No ICMP involvement. · PARTIAL
6. Prosecutorial outcome · No prosecution. Despite strong forensic indicators of a crime, no suspects identified, no AG referral, no indictment. Obstruction allegation against Gotabaya Rajapaksa: no prosecution as of 2026. · ZERO
7. Current status (2026) · Effectively dormant. Case referenced in ITJP 2023 report as a paradigmatic example of systematic failure. · STALLED
8. Key civil society organisations · ITJP; CHRD Sri Lanka; JDS (Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka); SLCAT; relatives of 1987–1990 JVP-era disappeared · —
9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · YES — contextually. WGEID 2015 country visit report noted the JVP-era disappearances as unresolved. OHCHR HRC reports reference Matale in accountability context. · CONFIRMED (contextual)

10. Key primary source URLs · - BBC (Dec 2012): <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20726027> — BBC (Mar 2013): <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-21964586> — The Guardian (Mar 2013): <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/28/sri-lanka-mass-grave-marxist> — Al Jazeera (Feb 2013): <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2013/2/18/sri-lanka-mass-grave-called-a-crime-site> — Al Jazeera (June 2023 obstruction report): <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/22/ex-sri-lanka-leader-stalled-police-probe-into-mass-graves-report> — ITJP Report (June 2023): https://itjpsl.com/assets/ITJP_MassGraves_report_v5.1.pdf — The Independent (June 2023): <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/gotabaya-rajapaksa-ap-colombo-families-british-b2362325.html> · —

§ SITE 4 — DURAIAPPAH (DURAIYAPPAH / THURAIAPPA) STADIUM, JAFFNA

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · April 4–10, 1999: During renovation of the Duraiappah Sports Stadium in Jaffna (named after Alfred Duraiappah, mayor assassinated by LTTE in 1975), workers discovered skeletal remains in several locations beneath the playing surface. [NOTE: The user's brief cited "2017" — this appears to conflate the 1999 discovery with the 2017 renovation announcement by Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa, and the subsequent Indian-funded renovation inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi.] · CONFIRMED (Wikipedia; Roar Media; Tamil Guardian)
2. Estimated remains count · Approximately 27–34 skeletal remains reported from the 1999 excavations (Roar Media archive). Site not fully excavated. · CONFIRMED (press reports; limited forensic documentation public)
3. Alleged perpetrator category · Context is ambiguous. The stadium was used by both LTTE (before 1995) and SLA (after recapture). Remains could relate to either LTTE-era killings or SLA-era killings/burials. Formally: no perpetrator has been named. Tamil civic groups allege SLA involvement consistent with post-1995 period. · ALLEGED — perpetrator undetermined
4. Judicial status · Jaffna Magistrates' Court. Inquiry opened 1999; effectively closed without resolution. 2017 renovation plans and subsequent Modi inauguration proceeded without completing forensic clearance of site — criticised by civil society. · DORMANT — no active proceedings confirmed
5. Forensic status · Minimal documentation publicly available. No DNA collection reported. No carbon dating. Site subsequently renovated (Indian-funded; inaugurated by PM Modi), raising concern about evidence

preservation. · POOR — site partly physically altered by renovation

6. Prosecutorial outcome · None. No suspects, no indictment, no AG referral. · ZERO

7. Current status (2026) · Stadium operational after renovation. Forensic inquiry effectively closed. Site integrity compromised. · CLOSED — no accountability

8. Key civil society organisations · Tamil civil society groups; ITJP (referenced in 2023 report) · —

9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · Not individually cited in publicly available OHCHR documents reviewed. Covered contextually within broader Jaffna/Northern Province disappearances reporting. · NOT INDIVIDUALLY CITED (confirmed from available sources)

10. Key primary source URLs · - Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duraiappa_stadium_mass_grave — Roar Media archive:

<https://archive.roar.media/english/life/history/bodies-beneath-accidentally-discovered-mass-graves-in-sri-lanka> — Tamil Guardian (renovation):

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/sri-lanka-renovate-jaffna-football-stadium-built-tamil-mass-graves> — Tamil Guardian (Modi inauguration):

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/modi-inaugurates-stadium-jaffna-renovated-india> · —

§ SITE 5 — SOORIYAKANDA / SURIYAKANDA (Kolonne, Ratnapura District, Sabaragamuwa Province)

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · January 3, 1994: Excavation began at the summit of Suriyakanda mountain, Kolonne, Ratnapura District — a site near state-owned TV and telecom towers. Led by opposition MPs (including then-Western Provincial Council Chief Minister Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga), journalists, and parents of missing schoolboys. Three pits identified as mass graves (Pravada Vol. 3.1, Polity.lk). Identification linked to enforced disappearances of schoolboys from Embilipitiya Maha Vidyalaya during second JVP uprising counterinsurgency (1987–1990). · CONFIRMED

2. Estimated remains count · Over 300 bodies alleged at site. Actual excavated count: a smaller number formally documented; government reported forensic analysis in 1996 but did not publish full findings. Number formally confirmed in court records not publicly available. Wikipedia states "over 300 bodies were alleged to have been buried." · ALLEGED (300+); PARTIAL confirmation from 1994–1996 excavation

3. Alleged perpetrator category · Sri Lanka security forces (SLA/police/paramilitary) — specifically elements conducting counterinsurgency against the second JVP uprising. The Embilipitiya schoolboys (predominantly Sinhalese youth, aged ~14–18) were allegedly taken by security forces as suspected JVP sympathisers and executed. Also referenced: Army camp at Embilipitiya (Sevana Army Camp, per Amnesty International, 1991) where 46 documented disappearances occurred. · ALLEGED (Amnesty International, AHRC, Parliamentary inquiry)

4. Judicial status · Original inquiry under Sri Lankan courts in 1994–1996. Presidential Commission of Inquiry (Embilipitiya Commission) established. Commission findings reportedly submitted. No High Court indictment followed. · DORMANT — Commission findings not acted upon

5. Forensic status · Government reported forensic analysis 1996; full results not published. DNA collection and family matching: not completed. International forensic involvement: none documented. · MINIMAL

6. Prosecutorial outcome · No convictions. Presidential commission findings not translated into prosecutions. Several officers implicated by commission; no trials proceeded to conviction. · ZERO

7. Current status (2026) · Dormant. Families aging; no renewed prosecutorial interest documented. Cited in ITJP 2023 report as another paradigm of failure. CHDM (Centre for Historical Documentation and Memory) documents the site. · DORMANT

8. Key civil society organisations · AHRC (Asian Human Rights Commission); CHDM (Centre for Historical Documentation and Memory); Amnesty International; families of Embilipitiya disappeared · —

9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · YES — contextually. Embilipitiya disappearances heavily documented by WGEID in 1990s; Amnesty International 1991 report (ASA 37/018/1991) documents Sevana Army Camp context. WGEID 2015 country report references JVP-era disappearances as unresolved. · CONFIRMED (contextual WGEID documentation)

10. Key primary source URLs · - Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sooriyakanda_mass_grave — Polity.lk/Pravada PDF: <https://polity.lk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/pravada-vol-3.1-mass-graves-at-suriyakanda.pdf> — CHDM: <https://chdmlka.org/location/mass-grave-sooriyakanda/> — Amnesty International 1991 (ASA 37/018/1991): <https://www.amnesty.org/ar/documents/asa37/018/1991/en/> — AHRC: <http://www.humanrights.asia/resources/journals-magazines/article2/vol-04-no-03-june-2005/tales-of-two-sri-lanka-n-massacres-the-relevance-of-embilipitiya-to-bindunuwewa/> · —

§ SITE 6 — MIRUSUVIL (Jaffna District) — KILLING/BURIAL SITE

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · December 20, 2000: Eight Tamil civilians (including 4 children) were killed by SLA soldiers in Mirusuvil village, Jaffna. Bodies were hidden/buried at or near the site. Site is a killing and clandestine burial site rather than a classical pre-existing mass grave, but included here as it involved clandestine disposal of bodies by security forces. · CONFIRMED (Colombo High Court proceedings)
2. Estimated remains count · 8 victims — all identified. · CONFIRMED (court judgment)
3. Alleged perpetrator category · Sri Lanka Army — CONFIRMED by Colombo High Court conviction. Specifically: Army Sergeant Sunil Ratnayaka and unit. Victims were Tamil civilians, killed by stabbing (knife). · CONFIRMED — SLA (court judgment HC/1092/2002)
4. Judicial status · Colombo High Court (HC/1092/2002). Conviction June 25, 2015 after 15-year investigation. Ratnayaka convicted and sentenced to death. Sentence subsequently commuted. March 2020: President Gotabaya Rajapaksa issued presidential pardon, releasing Ratnayaka. Amnesty International condemned pardon (March 2020). · CONVICTION obtained; PARDON nullified it
5. Forensic status · Victims identified. Standard forensic examination. No mass-grave-specific forensic challenges (small number of identified victims). · COMPLETE for identification purposes
6. Prosecutorial outcome · ONE CONVICTION (2015); PARDONED (2020). This is the only site in this matrix where a criminal conviction was obtained — and it was subsequently undone by executive action. · CONVICTION ANNULLED BY PARDON
7. Current status (2026) · Ratnayaka free following pardon. No further proceedings. Pardon widely condemned internationally. · CLOSED — impunity restored
8. Key civil society organisations · CHRD Sri Lanka (provided legal assistance); Amnesty International; Human Rights Watch · —
9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · YES. Amnesty International formally responded to pardon (March 2020). OHCHR/HRC reporting has referenced Mirusuvil as emblematic of Sri Lanka's impunity pattern. · CONFIRMED
10. Key primary source URLs · - Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirusuvil_massacre — CHRD Sri Lanka: <https://srilankachrd.org/la-mirusuvil.php> — Amnesty International (Mar 2020): <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/justice-reversed-for-victims-of-the-mirusuvil-massacre-from-sri-lanka/> — Al Jazeera (Mar 2020):

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/3/27/sri-lanka-pardons-soldier-who-killed-tamil-civilians> · —

§ SITE 7 — KOKKUTHODAVAI (Mullaitivu District, Northern Province) — POST-2009 WAR SITE

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · Discovered during NWSDB (National Water Supply and Drainage Board) pipe-laying excavation work in Kokkuthodavai village, Mullaitivu District. Multiple skeletal discoveries; wartime context confirmed by JMO and archaeologists. First discovery ~2022–2023; a second grave found Sept 2023 (WSWS). Remains presented to Mullaitivu Magistrate's Court, February 2024. · CONFIRMED (SriLanka Brief Feb 2024; Tamil Guardian; WWSW Sept 2023)
2. Estimated remains count · Number not formally confirmed in public domain; multiple individual skeletal sets discovered in two separate finds. Wikipedia notes "hundreds of skeletons" referenced by Tamil groups. The formal court count is not publicly confirmed. · ALLEGED (hundreds per Tamil groups); PARTIAL formal confirmation
3. Alleged perpetrator category · Associated with the final stages of the Sri Lankan Civil War (2009), specifically the last phase of fighting in the Vanni/Mullaitivu "No Fire Zone." Tamil groups allege extrajudicial killing by Sri Lanka security forces. Mullaitivu JMO presented findings consistent with wartime period (Feb 2024). · ALLEGED — SLA (Tamil civil society); wartime period CONFIRMED forensically
4. Judicial status · Mullaitivu Magistrate's Court. Case repeatedly adjourned; as of late 2024: adjourned to February 2025 (Tamil Guardian). As of mid-2026: no indictment stage reached. · OPEN — stalled in magistrate inquiry
5. Forensic status · JMO and archaeologist reports presented to court Feb 2024. DNA collection: not confirmed as completed. No ICMP involvement confirmed. · PARTIAL
6. Prosecutorial outcome · None. · ZERO
7. Current status (2026) · Stalled in magistrate proceedings. · STALLED
8. Key civil society organisations · Tamil civil society Forum; Tamil Guardian (reporting); Tamil National Alliance parliamentarians; families of 2009 disappeared · —
9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · Not individually cited by OHCHR in reviewed documents; Mullaitivu District disappearances covered broadly in OHCHR HRC reports on civil war accountability. · NOT INDIVIDUALLY CONFIRMED (contextual coverage only)
10. Key primary source URLs · - Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kokkuthodavai_mass_grave — SriLanka Brief (Feb 2024): <https://srilankabrief.org/sri-lanka-kokkuthoduvai-mass-grave-belongs-to-war-time/> — Tamil Guardian (delays 2024): <https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/more-delays-kokkuthoduvai-mass-grave-case-adjourned-february-2025> — WWSW (Sept 2023): <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2023/09/28/fjxm-s28.html> · —

§ SITE 8 — KAIVEALI VILLAGE AREA / PUTHUKKUDIYIRUPPU (PTK), Mullaitivu District

Dimension · Detail · Status

1. Discovery date & circumstances · August 2011: Resettling civilians returning to Kaiveali village, PTK division, Mullaitivu District, discovered hundreds of skeletal remains of what are believed to be civilians killed in the 2009 war final offensive. Reported by TamilNet (Aug 6, 2011). Remains found in open terrain as civilians returned from internment camps. · CONFIRMED (TamilNet Aug 2011; widely reported)
2. Estimated remains count · "Hundreds" of skeletons (TamilNet); no formal magisterial count confirmed in public domain at time of discovery. · ALLEGED (hundreds) — no formal court count confirmed
3. Alleged perpetrator category · Sri Lanka security forces (alleged by Tamil community) — context of the May 2009 final offensive ("Mullivaikkal" stage). Alternatively, some remains may be LTTE fighters killed in battle.

Victim categorisation not forensically completed. · ALLEGED — SLA/civil war casualties; victim status undetermined

4. Judicial status · No formal court inquiry confirmed in publicly available sources. Area was under military control post-2009; access constrained. · UNKNOWN — no confirmed judicial proceedings

5. Forensic status · No systematic forensic examination documented publicly. · NONE CONFIRMED

6. Prosecutorial outcome · None. · ZERO

7. Current status (2026) · No active proceedings documented. · UNKNOWN

8. Key civil society organisations · TamilNet; Tamil civil society; Global Tamil Forum · —

9. OHCHR / UN WGEID formal citation · Mullaitivu District/Mullivaikkal extensively cited in OHCHR Panel of Experts report (2011) and HRC resolutions. Individual Kaiveali site not separately named. · CONTEXTUAL ONLY

10. Key primary source URLs · - TamilNet (Aug 2011): <https://tamilnet.com/art.html?artid=34280&catid=13> · —

§2 QUICK-REFERENCE SUMMARY MATRIX

Site · Location · Discovery · Remains (est.) · Alleged Perpetrator · Court · Conviction · DNA Done? · UN/OHCHR Cited · 2026 Status

Chemmani · Jaffna, N. Province · 1999 (phase 1); Feb 2025 (phase 2) · 15 (1999); 200+ (2025) · SLA (alleged — confession) · Jaffna MC · NONE · Partial/pending · YES (HC Türk visited Jun 2025) · Active excavation

Mannar (Sathosa) · Mannar, N. Province · 2018 · ~350–360 · SLA (alleged); pre-colonial (carbon-dating claim) · Mannar MC; Vavuniya HC · NONE · Initiated, no matches · YES (contextual) · Stalled — dating dispute

Matale Hospital · Matale, Central · Nov 2012 · 154 · SLA/security forces (JVP era) · Matale MC · NONE · No · YES (contextual) · Dormant

Duraiappah Stadium · Jaffna, N. Province · Apr 1999 · ~27–34 · Undetermined (SLA/LTTE era) · Jaffna MC · NONE · No · NOT individually · Closed — site renovated

Sooriyakanda · Ratnapura, Sabaragamuwa · Jan 1994 · 300+ alleged · SLA/police (JVP era) · Presidential Commission · NONE · Minimal · YES (contextual — WGEID 1990s) · Dormant

Mirusuvil · Jaffna, N. Province · Dec 2000 · 8 (identified) · SLA (CONFIRMED — court) · Colombo HC · YES — pardoned 2020 · Complete · YES · Closed — impunity

Kokkuthodavai · Mullaitivu, N. Province · ~2022–2023 · Unconfirmed (hundreds alleged) · SLA (alleged — 2009 war) · Mullaitivu MC · NONE · Partial · Contextual · Stalled

Kaiveali/PTK · Mullaitivu, N. Province · Aug 2011 · Hundreds (alleged) · SLA/civil war (alleged) · None confirmed · NONE · None · Contextual · Unknown

§3 PART II — PATTERN FINDINGS: SYSTEMIC FAILURES ACROSS SITES

§ 2.1 Carbon-Dating as a Tool of Contestation

The Mannar site demonstrates how carbon-dating can become a mechanism of contestation rather than clarification. The Beta Analytic lab (Florida) reported 6 bone samples dating to the 15th century (Feb 2019). Critics immediately questioned:

- Sample selection bias: Were the oldest-looking bones selectively submitted?

- Contextual incompatibility: Items found alongside remains (clothing fragments, artefacts) were inconsistent with 500-year-old burials.

- Chain-of-custody gaps: The process of sample selection was not fully transparent to families or civil society.

The result was the Mannar Magistrate halting excavations (March 8, 2019) — effectively freezing the investigation. As of mid-2026, the dating dispute remains unresolved (JDSSLanka, June 2026). This pattern — using scientific uncertainty to defer accountability — has no parallel resolution mechanism in Sri Lankan law.

Cross-site relevance: At Chemmani (2025), civil society organisations (ICJ, HRCSL) pre-emptively flagged the absence of carbon-dating capacity and forensic expertise before such disputes could arise, calling for international oversight from the outset. This represents a lesson partially learned.

§ 2.2 Magistrate Rotation and Jurisdictional Fragmentation

Sri Lanka's Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) vests mass grave inquiries in Magistrates' Courts at the local level. Magistrates are routinely transferred. Each transfer:

- Resets institutional memory of the case.
- Requires familiarisation time with complex forensic evidence.
- Creates opportunities for procedural delays.

The ITJP 2023 report identifies this as a structural problem across all sites reviewed. No site has a dedicated or protected magistrate for the inquiry. The Vavuniya High Court's separate jurisdiction over representation rights in the Mannar case adds jurisdictional fragmentation — families must litigate in two courts simultaneously.

§ 2.3 Evidence Custody Failures and Alleged Destruction

The Matale case exemplifies evidence destruction risk. ITJP (June 2023) alleged that former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, as a military officer with authority in the Matale area during 1989, ordered police records relating to the site destroyed. This allegation — if proved — would constitute obstruction of justice at the highest political level. No prosecution of this allegation has occurred.

More broadly:

- Bone samples and artefacts are held in magisterial custody with limited climate-controlled storage.
- JMO offices holding samples are understaffed and subject to officer rotation.
- No central evidence custodian (such as a dedicated forensic institute) exists for mass grave exhibits.
- At Duraipappah Stadium, renovation (funded by India, inaugurated by PM Modi) proceeded before comprehensive forensic clearance — potentially destroying in-situ evidence.

§ 2.4 JMO (Judicial Medical Officer) Turnover

Sri Lanka's under-resourced forensic medicine system means that the JMO assigned to a case — typically the only government forensic expert — is frequently transferred before completing analysis. This creates:

- Gaps in expert testimony continuity.
- Repeated court adjournments for new JMO familiarisation.
- Inconsistent forensic standards between officers.

The ITJP 2023 report (p. multiple) and HRCSL Sept 2025 report both explicitly flag JMO understaffing as a systemic constraint.

§ 2.5 Attorney General Passivity

Under Sri Lankan law, the AG must file indictments for murder prosecutions in the High Court. Across all sites reviewed — except Mirusuvil (where the AG did proceed, leading to the 2015 conviction) — the AG has not filed any indictment arising from mass grave investigations. The pattern:

- Magistrate inquiries conclude or stall.
- Files forwarded to police for B-Report (no case) or remain pending.
- AG does not suo motu intervene.
- No Solicitor General guidance issued for mass grave prosecutorial standards.

§ 2.6 Absence of Dedicated Forensic Legislation

Sri Lanka has no dedicated mass graves legislation specifying:

- Chain-of-custody standards for exhumed remains.
- Mandatory international forensic oversight.
- DNA banking and family reference sample collection requirements.
- Time-bound court procedures.
- Victim/family participation rights in inquiries.

All proceedings occur under the 1979 CrPC framework — designed for routine criminal investigations, not atrocity-era mass grave exhumations. The Vavuniya HC's ruling on Mannar (on families' right to participate) illustrates how even basic procedural rights remain litigated rather than legislated.

§ 2.7 The Presidential Pardon as Impunity Mechanism

The Mirusuvil case — Sri Lanka's only successful prosecution for mass-grave-related killing — was undone by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's March 2020 pardon of Sgt Ratnayaka. This sends a structural signal: even when the judicial system delivers a conviction, executive power can nullify it. This chilling effect on prosecutors, witnesses and survivors is non-quantifiable but real.

§ 2.8 OMP's Structural Limitations

The OMP (established 2016, operationalised 2018) has a humanitarian mandate (search, clarify fate, make recommendations) but critically:

- No exhumation authority — exhumations remain under CrPC/Magistrate jurisdiction.
- No subpoena/compulsory evidence power over military or police records.
- No prosecutorial role — OMP findings cannot initiate criminal proceedings.
- Funding constraints — OMP depends partly on USAID (Strategic Roadmap 2023–2025 funded by USAID/Global Communities).
- Output: As of 2025, OMP has registered thousands of missing persons cases but achieved very limited family-tracing closures; no DNA-based identifications from mass grave sites confirmed in public reporting.

The OMP's involvement in Mannar (commissioner accompanying samples to Florida) represents the closest it has come to direct forensic engagement — but this was an advisory/accompanying role, not a lead investigative function.

§4 PART III — OFFICE ON MISSING PERSONS (OMP): MANDATE, AUTHORITY, AND ACTUAL OUTPUT

§ Legal Framework

- Established: Office on Missing Persons (Establishment, Administration and Discharge of Functions) Act, No. 14 of 2016 (certified August 23, 2016; Parliament of Sri Lanka).
- Operationalised: 2018.

- Source: <http://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6016.pdf>

§ Mandate (Section 10(1) of the OMP Act)

The OMP is mandated to:

1. Search for missing persons and clarify the circumstances of their disappearance.
2. Coordinate with relevant institutions.
3. Make recommendations on reparations to the government.
4. Receive and investigate complaints from families.
5. Protect witnesses and complainants.

§ What the OMP Cannot Do

Function · OMP Authority

Order exhumations · NO — remains with Magistrates' Courts under CrPC

Compel military/police testimony · NO

File criminal charges · NO

Issue binding determinations · NO

Access classified security records · LIMITED / contested

Carry out forensic DNA analysis in-house · NO

§ Actual Output (2018–2026)

Output Area · Status

Missing persons registrations · Thousands received; processing ongoing

DNA reference sampling from families · Initiated but limited completion

Identification of remains at mass grave sites · Zero confirmed (public record)

Exhumations led or ordered by OMP · Zero

Reports to Parliament · Interim Report (Aug 2018); Annual Reports (patchy)

International engagement · OMP commissioners visited ICMP, The Hague, Nov 2018; OMP commissioner accompanied Mannar samples to US (2019)

Prosecutorial referrals · Zero

Reparations recommended · Framework proposed; implementation minimal

Assessment: The OMP functions primarily as a humanitarian documentation body, not an investigative or accountability mechanism. The ICRC-affiliated academic analysis (Wijenayake, International Review of the Red Cross, Vol. 99, No. 905) explicitly frames the OMP's primarily humanitarian (rather than justice-focused) mandate as both a design choice and a structural limitation. The LKI Policy Brief (Dec 2024) identifies operational challenges including: insufficient funding, lack of forensic infrastructure, military non-cooperation, and inadequate victim outreach in remote areas.

Key sources:

- OMP Mandate: <https://www.omp.gov.lk/about/mandate>

- OMP Interim Report (Aug 2018): https://www.omp.gov.lk/storage/29/1741334429_en.pdf

- OMP Strategic Roadmap 2023–2025: https://www.omp.gov.lk/storage/26/1741334284_en.pdf

- LKI Policy Brief (Dec 2024):

<https://lki.lk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Office-on-Missing-Persons-OMP-in-Sri-Lanka-Evolution-Challenges-Lessons-Learnt-and-the-Way-Forward-Final.pdf>

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§5 PART IV — ICMP ENGAGEMENT WITH SRI LANKA: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

§ 4.1 ICMP's Engagement Record in Sri Lanka

Date · Event · Source

November 2018 · Four of seven OMP members visited ICMP headquarters, The Hague. ICMP briefed OMP on legislative/institutional development, civil society engagement, data processing, and DNA-led forensic identification techniques. · ICMP Press Release, Nov 29, 2018:

<https://icmp.int/press-releases/addressing-the-issue-of-missing-persons-in-sri-lanka/>

~2019 · ICMP and Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG) held two roundtables in Sri Lanka (one in north, one south) to discuss forensic identification approaches. · ICMP "A Way Forward in Sri Lanka": <https://icmp.int/ar/news-ar/a-way-forward-in-sri-lanka/>

2019–2026 · No confirmed ICMP field deployment or DNA-led identification mission to Sri Lanka. ICMP engagement has remained at advisory and capacity-building level only. · —

Assessment: ICMP has not deployed a substantive forensic mission to Sri Lanka comparable to its work in the Western Balkans, Iraq, or Colombia. Its engagement is limited to institutional advisory visits. The Sri Lankan government has not formally invited ICMP to lead or co-lead any mass grave investigation. The 2025 Chemmani developments prompted calls (ICJ, HRCSL, Tamil civil society) for international forensic partners — ICMP is the most natural candidate — but no formal agreement confirmed as of mid-2026.

§ 4.2 Comparative Lessons from ICMP's Other Deployments

Country · Context · ICMP Role · Key Outcome · Relevance to Sri Lanka

Bosnia-Herzegovina (Srebrenica, 1995+) · ~8,000 Bosniaks killed; mass graves moved to secondary/tertiary graves to hide evidence. · Led DNA-based identification; established the largest forensic DNA database in the world for this purpose; processed 91,000+ bone samples; issued ~7,000 identifications as of 2023. · ~70% of Srebrenica victims formally identified; ICTY prosecutions used ICMP evidence centrally. · Shows DNA-led identification at scale is feasible; but requires: political will, non-obstruction of evidence, and multi-year institutional commitment. Sri Lanka lacks all three currently. Bosnia had international political pressure (EU accession, ICTY) unavailable to Sri Lanka under current HRC posture.

Iraq (post-ISIS, 2014+) · ~200,000+ civilians killed/disappeared under ISIS; hundreds of mass graves documented. · ICMP supporting Government of Iraq on mass grave legislation, DNA collection, and identification; online inquiry center established. · Identification process ongoing; legal framework improving with ICMP technical assistance; some identifications made. · Iraq shows ICMP can engage states with mixed political commitment. Key difference: Iraq's government has incentive (Yazidi/Kurdish communities; international pressure) to demonstrate accountability. Sri Lanka's government incentive structure is weaker.

Colombia (post-FARC, 2016+) · ~80,000+ disappeared during 52-year conflict; Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2016) created Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) and UBPD (Unit for Search of Disappeared Persons). · ICMP providing technical support to UBPD; not leading but advising. · UBPD operational; JEP issuing decisions; identifications made. · Colombia model (UBPD + JEP) is the closest structural analog to what Sri Lanka would need: a search unit with operational forensic capacity (analogous to OMP with real powers) + a judicial body

(analogous to a special court or hybrid tribunal). Sri Lanka's OMP has neither UBPD's operational authority nor JEP's judicial power.

§ 4.3 What ICMP Engagement Would Require in Sri Lanka

For ICMP to deploy a substantive mission, Sri Lanka would need to:

1. Issue a formal government invitation or sign a Host Country Agreement.
2. Grant ICMP access to military/police records relating to disappearance periods.
3. Pass domestic legislation creating DNA banking authority and chain-of-custody standards.
4. Allow ICMP-standard exhumation protocols (currently blocked by lack of legal framework and OMP's absence of exhumation authority).
5. Ensure non-interference in sample collection and laboratory analysis.

None of these conditions are currently met as of mid-2026.

§6 PART V — COMPLETE PRIMARY SOURCE LIST (TIER A PREFERRED)

§ Government and Inter-Governmental Sources (Tier A)

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18. CHRD Sri Lanka — Mirusuvil legal assistance — <https://srilankachrd.org/la-mirusuvil.php>
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55. Mirusuvil massacre — https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirusuvil_massacre

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§7 METHODOLOGICAL NOTES AND CAVEATS

1. Confirmed vs. Alleged: Throughout this document, "CONFIRMED" denotes facts established by court proceedings, official government reports, peer-reviewed publications, or direct observation by credible institutions. "ALLEGED" denotes claims made by witnesses, civil society, or media that have not been judicially determined.

2. Remains counts: All counts should be treated as estimates unless derived from formal court or government forensic reports. Remains counts evolve as excavations continue.

3. No family names used: In accordance with project parameters, no names of victim families are used in this document.

4. Duraiappah Stadium dating correction: The user's brief cited "2017 discovery" for Duraiappah Stadium. Primary sources (Wikipedia, Roar Media) confirm discovery was April 1999. The 2017 reference relates to renovation announcement; the Modi inauguration of the renovated stadium occurred subsequently. This correction is factually important for the matrix.

5. Mullivaikkal beach area: No separately documented mass grave site at "Mullivaikkal beach" specifically has been confirmed in reviewed sources, distinct from the broader Mullaitivu/PTK area sites (Kokkuthodavai, Kaiveali). The Mullivaikkal area was the site of the final 2009 offensive; civilian deaths are extensively documented by OHCHR but individual grave sites are not formally catalogued and excavated as discrete mass grave sites in the available public record.

6. Currency: The Chemmani 2025 excavation is ongoing; figures and status may change. The Mannar dating dispute remains unresolved. All statuses reflect available information through July 2026.

End of comparative matrix. Total primary sources cited: 56. Tier A sources (government, UN, OHCHR, peer-reviewed): 22. This document is intended for civic accountability and research purposes only.

What this is not

- A research deposit from the vault, published for reading. Human review of every claim continues; figures are the cited sources' own, never TLTE's.
- Does not name serving personnel, survivors, or families; does not publish verdicts or forecasts.
- Not a statement on behalf of all Tamils, and not a call for any unlawful act.