

Chemmani Accountability · Mass-grave casework — MP Evidence Pack

Court-supervised Chemmani / Ariyalai Siththupaththi mass-grave excavations in Jaffna. 480 sets identified across phases 1–3, 479 fully exhumed over 96 days of work (Tamil Guardian, 28 Jul 2026); third phase halted 28 Jul with resumption reported for 4 Aug 2026. Of the 1999 phase, 8 of 15 remain un-retained after 27 years per UN AL LKA 1/2025. Largest identified mass grave on the island. Sits inside OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project (HRC res. 60/1). ITJP 13 Jul 2026 report anchors continuing accountability gap and publicly names a shortlist of SL Army officers (cite-only mirror at </institute/chemmani/perpetrator-record>). HRCSL Sep 2025 findings on worker intimidation. State-Silence Ledger at </institute/chemmani/state-silence-ledger> logs institutional non-response. Standing demand of Bishop of Mannar 2013, OHCHR, ITJP, PEARL, Adayaalam for independent international forensic oversight, victim-safe DNA pathway, and continuous site protection.

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Audience

- UK MPs
- Lords
- FCDO South Asia
- APPG for Tamils
- Journalists

Best used for

- Urgent questions or adjournment debates on Sri Lankan mass-grave casework
- Letters to FCDO on UNHRC resolution 60/1 implementation
- APPG Sri Lanka briefings on Chemmani court phases and DNA pathway
- Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day (18 May) statements anchored on Chemmani
- Briefings to journalists covering the 2024–25 renewed exhumations

Tier-A evidence anchors

- Office on Missing Persons (Sri Lanka) — official mandate, reports, and statistics
- Accountability for enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka — Report of the OHCHR
- Right to the Truth — transitional-justice resource hub
- OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project (standing; HRC res. 46/1, 51/1, 57/1, renewed 60/1) —

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/sri-lanka>

- Jaffna Magistrate's Court record — Chemmani exhumations 1999 -> present; renewed 2024–25 — <https://www.tamilguardian.com/category/tags/chemmani>
- Bishop of Mannar (Rt Rev Rayappu Joseph) LLRC testimony 2013 — standing call for independent international forensic oversight — <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/sri-lanka>
- ITJP — mass-grave casework — <https://itjpsl.com/>
- PEARL Action — disappearances casework — <https://pearlaction.org/>
- Adayaalam Centre for Policy Research — Northern transitional-justice monitoring — <https://adayaalam.org/>
- Office on Missing Persons (Sri Lanka) — statutory body — <https://ompsrilanka.org/>

Policy asks

- UK Government (FCDO): Set out HM Government's public position on UNHRC resolution 60/1 implementation, with specific reference to mass-grave protocol compliance at the Chemmani exhumations (480 sets identified across phases 1–3 and 479 fully exhumed at day 96, 28 Jul 2026).
- UK Government (FCDO): Support the standing 2013 call by the Bishop of Mannar (Rt Rev Rayappu Joseph) for independent international forensic oversight of mass-grave sites in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.
- UK Government (FCDO): Support a victim-safe DNA identification pathway for remains recovered at Chemmani, consistent with international forensic standards and the OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project mandate.
- UK Government (FCDO): Issue a public démarche to the Government of Sri Lanka requesting a substantive response on the public record to UN Joint Allegation Letter AL LKA 1/2025 (21 Jul 2025), including the eight sets of 1999 remains still not returned to families.
- UK Government (FCDO): Table an oral update on Chemmani at the HRC 60 cycle, referencing the ITJP 13 Jul 2026 report and the HRC SL Sep 2025 findings on intimidation of Chemmani site workers.
- UK Government (FCDO / OFSI): Confirm whether the individuals publicly named for command-responsibility scrutiny by ITJP in its 13 Jul 2026 Chemmani report have been screened against the UK Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 designation criteria.
- APPG Sri Lanka: Maintain a standing watch on Chemmani court phases, victim-safe DNA pathway progress, chain-of-custody compliance, site-protection status, and the State-Silence Ledger tracking institutional response cadence.

Draft parliamentary questions

- [FCDO] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment has been made of mass-grave protocol compliance at the court-supervised Chemmani / Kokkuthoduvai exhumations, and what representations HM Government has made to the Government of Sri Lanka on independent international forensic oversight of the site, consistent with the OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project mandate renewed under HRC Resolution 60/1.
- [FCDO] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps HM Government is taking to support a victim-safe DNA identification pathway for remains recovered at Chemmani, consistent with international forensic standards.
- [FCDO] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether HM Government will publicly support the standing 2013 call by the Bishop of Mannar for independent international forensic oversight of mass-grave sites in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.
- [FCDO] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what evaluation has been made of the chain-of-custody regime at the Chemmani site, and what international forensic standards HM Government applies as a reference.

- [FCDO] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what UK funding or technical-assistance routes have been considered to support credentialed independent forensic capacity at mass-grave sites in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, including at Chemmani.

Civic remembrance

This pack does not aggregate victim or remains counts. The figure is cited exactly as it appears on the judicial record. The pack does not name victims, survivors, families, or alleged perpetrators. The framing is judicial process and forensic standards under international law, never a Tamil-versus-Sinhalese question. UK Lobbying Act 2014 transparency note applies on every printed brief.

Pack rules

- Never name victims, survivors, families of the disappeared, or alleged perpetrators.
- Never aggregate victim or remains counts — cite the judicial-record figure as it appears on the court record.
- Always pair the OHCHR file reference with at least one independent diaspora-side source (ITJP or PEARL).
- Always frame as judicial process under international standards, not as a Tamil-versus-Sinhalese question.
- Always reference the Bishop of Mannar's 2013 standing call when invoking the demand for independent international forensic oversight.
- Lobbying Act 2014 transparency note on every printed brief.

Transparency

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