



CANADIAN TAMIL CONGRESS ■ CONGRÈS TAMOUL CANADIEN

31 Progress Avenue, Suite #202, Scarborough M1P 4S6 T: 416-240-0078 F:416-240-1601 e-mail:info@ctconline.ca

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Tamil Canadians remember Black July 1983

Canada thanked for Saving Tens of Thousands of Tamils

WHAT: We remember so we can say never again.

On July 25, 2009, Tamil Canadians will take a stand at Queen's Park against racism, discrimination and persecution in an event marking one of the darkest periods in Tamil Canadian history – the Sri Lankan anti-Tamil pogrom of July 1983. The event will also thank Canada for saving thousands of Tamils fleeing from persecution.

Black July was a pivotal and dark period where Tamils in Sri Lanka became the victims of unchecked racism and discrimination. Armed with voting lists, pipes, machetes and bats, mobs searched, attacked and killed Tamils while authorities watched. Thousands of Tamils saw their homes and businesses burned and looted. Though accustomed to institutionalized discrimination, the tragic events of Black July stripped away any security Tamils felt living in Sri Lanka and forced many of them to flee for their lives.

After the brutal events of 1983, Canada was the savior for Tamil Canadians as it welcomed, with open arms, several thousand civilians. Tamil Canadians feel a deep sense of gratitude for Canada, where equality, justice, and respect for human rights thrive. While Black July remains seared in the memories of Tamil Canadians, this anniversary also serves as a reminder to the miracle of a country they now live in which gave so many a chance to feel safe and build a new life.

Tamil Canadians will also gather to pray for the nearly 300,000 internally displaced Tamils who are currently being held in Sri Lankan internment camps in what human rights groups are calling "appalling conditions," with restricted movement and little access to clean water, food and medical aid.

WHO: Organized by the Canadian Tamil Congress, this remembrance event for the Tamil Canadian community will feature: Interviews, stories and photo opportunities with survivors of Black July 1983, <http://www.blackjuly83.com/Survivors.htm>; speeches by community leaders, human rights groups and elected officials; and cultural performances.

WHEN: **5:30 pm to 8 pm, Saturday July 25, 2009**

WHERE: **Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario.**

CONTACT: David Poopalapillai, National Spokesperson
(416) 240-0078 or david@canadiantamilcongress.ca