



NEWSLINE

Daily by Faraz

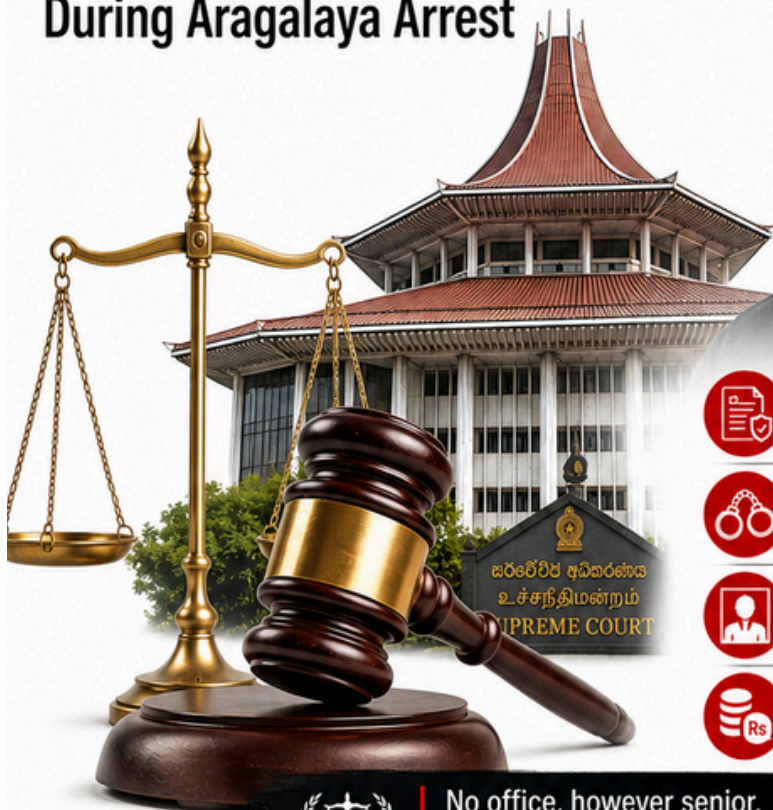


“Questioning
The Answers”



WHEN THE LAW JUDGES ITS OWN ENFORCERS

Supreme Court Rules
Deshabandu Tennakoon
Violated Fundamental Rights
During Aragalaya Arrest



FUNDAMENTAL
RIGHTS VIOLATED



UNLAWFUL ARREST
& DETENTION



ABUSE OF POLICE
AUTHORITY



FORMER IGP ORDERED
TO PAY COMPENSATION



No office, however senior,
stands above the Constitution.

Justice. Accountability. Rule of Law.



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WHEN THE LAW JUDGES ITS OWN ENFORCERS

SUPREME COURT RULES DESHABANDU TENNAKON VIOLATED FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS DURING ARAGALAYA ARREST

One of Sri Lanka's most consequential judgments on police accountability in recent years was delivered yesterday when the Supreme Court ruled that the former Inspector General of Police Deshabandu Tennakoon - who was removed from the Police service - violated the Fundamental Rights of a young man who was arrested and detained during the Aragalaya protests in 2022.

The judgment reaches far beyond the conduct of one senior police officer.

It speaks directly to the constitutional limits of police authority during periods of political unrest and reinforces an enduring principle that even in times of public disorder, law enforcement remains subject to the Constitution and the protection of individual liberties.

The case arose from the arrest and subsequent detention of the petitioner during the height of the anti-government demonstrations that swept the country in 2022. The Supreme Court found that the petitioner's constitutional rights had been infringed and directed that compensation be paid, while identifying the responsibility of former IGP Tennakoon in the violations.

Although the Aragalaya has now passed into history, its legal consequences continue to unfold.

The judgment will almost certainly become an important reference point whenever future courts are asked to consider the legality of arrests made during demonstrations, political protests or public emergencies.

It also serves as a reminder that police powers, however extensive, are never unlimited.

For the disgraced Deshabandu Tennakoon, the ruling adds to an already extraordinary legal journey.

Having previously faced adverse judicial findings relating to police conduct and subsequently becoming embroiled in separate criminal proceedings, another adverse determination by the country's highest court inevitably raises broader questions regarding leadership, institutional accountability and public confidence in policing.

For the Police Department itself, however, the significance is even greater.

Modern democratic policing depends not simply upon authority, but upon legitimacy. Public cooperation is secured not merely through the enforcement of law, but through confidence that officers themselves remain accountable to the same legal standards imposed upon every citizen.

The Supreme Court's decision therefore should not be viewed as weakening the Police.

Quite the contrary.

By reaffirming constitutional safeguards, the Court has reinforced the principle that effective policing and respect for fundamental rights are not competing objectives but complementary obligations within a democratic society.

Be that as it may, perhaps the most enduring message from yesterday's judgment is that in Sri Lanka, the Constitution remains the ultimate guardian of liberty - and no office, however senior, stands above it.

GOTABAYA SEEKS COURT SHIELD FROM ARREST COURT OF APPEAL HEARS FORMER PRESIDENT'S APPLICATION OVER EASTER SUNDAY INVESTIGATION

The legal aftermath of the 2019 Easter Sunday terrorist attacks entered another significant chapter yesterday as the Court of Appeal considered an application by former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa seeking relief against any possible arrest arising from the continuing criminal investigations into the bombings.

The application does not determine whether the former Head of State bears criminal responsibility for the attacks.

Rather, it raises an important procedural question: whether a citizen who believes arrest is imminent may seek the protection of the superior courts before any arrest is effected.

The application comes against the backdrop of continuing investigations into one of the darkest chapters in Sri Lanka's modern history.

Seven years after coordinated suicide bombings claimed more than 260 lives and injured hundreds more, investigators continue examining questions surrounding intelligence failures, decision-making and possible criminal liability.

The former President's legal team argues that he faces the prospect of arrest and has therefore sought judicial intervention to ensure that any investigative steps are carried out within the framework of the law.

The State, meanwhile, is expected to maintain that investigators must be permitted to perform their duties without undue judicial interference unless there is evidence of illegality or abuse of process.

The Court of Appeal now finds itself balancing two fundamental constitutional principles.

On one hand lies the individual's right to liberty and protection from arbitrary arrest.

On the other rests the State's responsibility to investigate one of the gravest terrorist atrocities in the nation's history thoroughly, independently and without obstruction.



Whatever the eventual outcome, the proceedings are likely to be closely watched by lawyers, constitutional scholars and victims' families alike.

The case also serves as a reminder that criminal investigations involving former Presidents inevitably test the strength of democratic institutions. The question before the Court is not whether history should be rewritten, nor whether public opinion has already reached its conclusions.

It is whether the law will be permitted to take its course while ensuring that constitutional safeguards remain available equally to every citizen - former Presidents included.

Be that as it may, the true measure of the rule of law is not how it treats the ordinary citizen, but how faithfully it applies the same principles to those who once occupied the highest office in the land.





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OIL TOPS US\$100 A BARREL

**THE WORLD MAY FEEL THE SHOCK.
SRI LANKA WILL FEEL THE BILL.**

The price of Brent crude oil has climbed above the psychologically significant US\$100-a-barrel mark for the first time since May, reviving fears that the global economy could once again be entering a period of energy-driven inflation.

For Sri Lanka, still recovering from its worst economic crisis since Independence, the implications are immediate and potentially far-reaching.

The island imports virtually all of its petroleum requirements. Every sustained increase in global oil prices eventually finds its way into the cost of transport, electricity generation, manufacturing, aviation, shipping and agriculture.



It also places additional pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves at a time when economic stability remains fragile.

While motorists may be watching the next revision of domestic fuel prices with understandable concern, the effects extend well beyond the petrol station.

Higher diesel prices inevitably affect public transport, freight charges and the movement of goods across the country. Businesses facing increased energy costs are often left with little choice but to pass at least part of those costs on to consumers. Inflation, which has only recently begun to stabilise after years of turbulence, could once again face upward pressure if elevated oil prices become a prolonged trend.

The aviation and tourism sectors are also vulnerable.

Jet fuel represents one of the largest operating costs for airlines. Rising prices can translate into higher airfares, potentially affecting tourist arrivals at a time when Sri Lanka has been enjoying one of its strongest tourism recoveries in recent years.

Shipping costs may similarly increase, affecting imports and exports alike. For an economy heavily dependent on international trade, the consequences could be felt across numerous sectors.

There is, however, another side to the story.

Sri Lanka's pricing formula for fuel was introduced precisely to reduce political interference and ensure that changes in international prices are reflected transparently in domestic markets. While painful for consumers, the mechanism is designed to avoid the unsustainable subsidies that contributed to previous fiscal crises.

The Government therefore faces a delicate balancing act.

Protecting consumers from sudden price shocks remains politically attractive, but abandoning financial discipline risks repeating mistakes that the country can scarcely afford.

Global oil markets remain volatile, influenced by geopolitical tensions, production decisions by major exporters and continuing uncertainty surrounding international trade.

For Sri Lanka, events thousands of kilometres away can quickly become kitchen-table issues at home.

Be that as it may, every dollar added to the price of a barrel of oil is ultimately measured not on international commodity exchanges, but in the daily budgets of ordinary Sri Lankan families.

WHEN THE POLICE COME UNDER ATTACK

**Does the Dickwella Incident Reflect a
Wider Erosion of Respect for Law
Enforcement?**

The assault on police officers in Dickwella this week has once again raised an uncomfortable question that extends well beyond the immediate incident.

Is Sri Lanka witnessing a growing decline in respect for law enforcement, or is this simply one of the unfortunate occupational hazards faced by police services throughout the region?

The incident, in which police officers reportedly came under attack while carrying out their duties, has prompted concern within the Police Department and renewed debate over the increasingly difficult environment in which officers are expected to operate.

Violence directed against police officers is not unique to Sri Lanka.

Across South and Southeast Asia, officers have increasingly found themselves confronting aggressive crowds, organised criminal groups and politically charged demonstrations.

In **Bangladesh**, police have repeatedly come under attack during episodes of political unrest, particularly in the lead-up to elections and during anti-government protests.

Officers have suffered injuries while attempting to disperse violent crowds, with police stations themselves occasionally becoming targets.

In **Thailand**, police continue to face sporadic attacks, particularly in the southern provinces where insurgent activity remains a security concern.

Elsewhere, officers dealing with organised crime and narcotics operations have also encountered violent resistance.

Malaysia has generally experienced fewer direct attacks on police officers, although isolated incidents involving armed criminals and drug syndicates continue to occur. Compared with many neighbouring countries, however, assaults on police remain relatively uncommon.



Against that regional backdrop, Sri Lanka's experience does not yet suggest a systemic collapse in policing authority.

Nevertheless, isolated incidents should not be dismissed lightly.

Policing in a democratic society depends upon two equally important principles: public confidence and lawful authority. Officers must exercise their powers responsibly, while citizens must recognise that disagreement with police actions can never justify violence against those enforcing the law.

The Dickwella incident therefore deserves careful investigation - not simply to identify those responsible, but to understand whether changing public attitudes, organised criminality or broader social tensions are contributing to an increase in confrontations.

The answer matters.

A society in which police officers fear carrying out their lawful duties is no healthier than one in which citizens fear unlawful policing.

Both represent failures of the rule of law.

Be that as it may, respect cannot be demanded through uniforms alone.

It is earned through professionalism, accountability and public trust - but once violence becomes an accepted response to lawful authority, the foundations of civil society begin to weaken.



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WHO IS WATCHING SRI LANKA'S PRISONS?

NEGOMBO MAY HAVE FADED FROM THE HEADLINES, BUT THE QUESTIONS IT RAISED HAVE NOT.

Nearly three weeks have passed since Sri Lanka witnessed one of the bloodiest prison disturbances in its modern history.

Twenty-six people lost their lives. Seven were prison officers. Nineteen were inmates.

More than a hundred others were injured as violence swept through Negombo Prison before security forces eventually restored control.

The headlines have since moved on.

The cameras have left.

But the questions that emerged from Negombo deserve far more attention than they have received.

The Justice Minister informed Parliament that rival drug gangs were at the centre of the violence. If that assessment is correct, the implications extend well beyond the walls of a single prison.

They raise uncomfortable questions about the extent to which organised criminal networks continue to operate even while their members are supposedly under the custody of the State.

The incident also highlighted the risks faced daily by prison officers.

They are expected to maintain order among some of the country's most dangerous offenders, often within ageing institutions that struggle with overcrowding, limited resources and increasing security challenges.

It is not enough simply to investigate what happened on the day violence erupted.

The country also needs to understand whether adequate intelligence existed beforehand, whether warning signs were missed and whether operational shortcomings contributed to the scale of the tragedy. These are questions that deserve clear answers, not only for the families of those who died but also for the wider public.

Many countries have fundamentally changed the way prisons are managed over the past decade.

Greater emphasis is now placed on intelligence-led prison management, electronic surveillance, gang-risk profiling, secure communications monitoring and rapid intervention units capable of preventing disturbances before they spiral out of control.

Sri Lanka may now face a similar moment of reckoning.

The objective should not simply be to rebuild damaged prison facilities. It should be to rebuild confidence in a prison system that is expected to protect society, rehabilitate offenders and ensure the safety of both inmates and correctional officers.



Negombo should therefore be remembered not merely as a prison riot but as a warning that meaningful reform can no longer be postponed. If lessons are not learnt now, there is always the danger that history may repeat itself elsewhere.

Be that as it may, a nation's commitment to the rule of law is measured not only by the sentences its courts impose, but by whether the State remains firmly in control of those entrusted to its custody

EU FINES GOOGLE US\$ 1 BILLION FOR 'HARMING' ONLINE RIVALS

The European Union has fined Google €890 million (\$1 billion) for breaching rules designed to promote competition in digital services, the first time the company has been penalized under the bloc's landmark Digital Markets Act (DMA).

The fines highlight Europe's resolve to rein in the power of Big Tech, despite US President Donald Trump threatening to respond with "substantial additional tariffs" on European goods.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said Thursday that Google had failed to comply with the DMA by promoting its own services, including for hotels, shopping and transport, on Google Search over those of competitors and by restricting the way app developers sell services to customers.

"We found that Google harms businesses offering similar services, such as shopping or sports, by not granting them the same level of prominence on Google Search,"

Henna Virkkunen, the European commissioner in charge of tech sovereignty said in a statement.

"We also found that Google has restricted app developers from offering cheaper offers to customers in the Google Play app store," she added.

It fined the company €460 million (\$524.7 million) and €430 million (\$490 million) respectively, for the two separate misdemeanours. The fines took into account "the gravity and duration" of Google's non-compliance, the European Commission said, although it noted that Google had already begun testing and rolling out some changes following "a constructive dialogue."

According to the commission, Google displays its own services more prominently than rivals, including by placing them at the top of the search results page and by "using enhanced visuals and filters."

Google also prevents app developers from promoting offers and entering into contracts with customers in alternative distribution channels, including third-party app stores, the commission said.

Google has 60 days to implement measures directed by the commission, including allowing app developers to enter into contracts with users outside the Google Play app store, or it could face further penalties.



Google hit back at the commission's decision, claiming the DMA "continues to break everyday products."

"To comply, we are having to strip away real-time Search features Europeans love – like instant pricing and direct availability for hotels, flights and restaurants – and dismantle safety protections on Google Play," global affairs president Kent Walker said in a statement.

"This isn't fair competition; it's product degradation driven by a small group of self-serving complainants, with European businesses and consumers taking the hit."

The commission said it "continues to engage with Google to ensure compliance with its decisions and the DMA more generally."

"The best products should succeed because they're better, not because they're owned by the company running the search engine," European commissioner Teresa Ribera added in the statement.

"And European consumers have a right to be told by app developers where to sign up to the best offers, even when the app store owner does not get a cut," she said.



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FISHERMEN ONCE AGAIN TEST THE PALK STRAIT

A dispute that neither Colombo nor Chennai can afford to leave drifting

There are some disputes between Sri Lanka and India that flare briefly before fading into the background. The fishermen issue is not one of them. It has become the most persistent irritant in relations between Colombo and Chennai, resurfacing with almost predictable regularity and leaving politicians on both sides struggling to satisfy domestic audiences while preserving a relationship of immense strategic importance.

The latest arrests of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy have once again placed the spotlight on the narrow stretch of water separating the two countries. For Sri Lanka, the matter is viewed primarily as one of sovereignty, marine conservation and the protection of local fishing communities. For Tamil Nadu, it is seen through a humanitarian and political lens, where every arrest reverberates through coastal villages whose livelihoods depend on the sea.

Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has wasted little time in making the issue one of his government's diplomatic priorities. Within days of assuming office he appealed to India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, urging immediate intervention to secure the release of Indian fishermen and the return of their seized boats.

Later, in his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the matter again featured prominently, with Vijay pointing to repeated arrests during 2026 and calling for sustained diplomatic engagement with Colombo.

Yet the politics often obscures the deeper reality.

Northern Sri Lankan fishermen, many of them Tamil themselves, argue that the continued use of bottom-trawling by sections of the Indian fishing fleet is devastating fish stocks and damaging the seabed.

Bottom trawling remains prohibited in Sri Lanka because of its long-term environmental consequences. Local fishermen insist that unless the practice ends, their own livelihoods will continue to suffer regardless of how many diplomatic understandings are reached.

Indian fishermen, meanwhile, argue that decades of traditional fishing patterns, shrinking catches closer to shore and mounting economic pressures leave them with

little practical alternative. Many insist that they inadvertently stray across the International Maritime Boundary Line while pursuing fish stocks that recognise no political borders.

The result is an unfortunate cycle that has become almost institutionalised. Arrests are followed by diplomatic protests. Courts remand fishermen. Governments negotiate releases. Boats remain impounded. Families wait anxiously on both sides of the Palk Strait before the process begins all over again.

Neither government benefits from allowing the issue to become a recurring political spectacle.

The long-term solution will almost certainly require far more than periodic releases of detained fishermen.

It will demand an agreement that addresses sustainable fishing practices, phased elimination of destructive bottom trawling, compensation mechanisms, modern vessel conversion programmes and significantly greater cooperation between the fisheries authorities of both countries.

The Palk Strait should unite two peoples with centuries of shared history rather than divide them through a dispute that has lingered for generations.

Be that as it may, unless both governments are prepared to confront the economic realities as firmly as the political rhetoric, the fishermen of the Palk Strait will continue paying the highest price.

CHENNAI'S PORT BOOM

Can Colombo remain South Asia's undisputed maritime gateway?

For decades, Colombo has occupied a position few ports could rival. Sitting astride one of the world's busiest east-west shipping lanes, Sri Lanka's principal harbour developed into South Asia's premier trans-shipment hub, handling millions of containers destined ultimately for India.

Today, however, the competitive landscape is changing.

Across India's southern coastline, unprecedented investment is flowing into ports, logistics parks, freight corridors and container terminals. Chennai continues modernising its operations while nearby facilities such as Kattupalli, Ennore (Kamarajar Port) and other east coast developments are steadily increasing their capacity.

Together they represent part of India's broader ambition to reduce dependence on foreign trans-shipment hubs and handle a greater proportion of its own cargo.

For Colombo, this is not an immediate crisis - but it is certainly a strategic warning.

Sri Lanka still enjoys several advantages. Its natural deep-water harbour, decades of operational expertise, efficient container handling and central position on international shipping routes continue to attract the world's largest shipping lines. Colombo remains one of the busiest trans-shipment ports in the Indian Ocean, with Indian cargo accounting for a significant share of its container volumes.

Nevertheless, shipping companies ultimately make decisions based upon economics rather than sentiment. If Indian ports become capable of handling increasing volumes more efficiently and at competitive cost, cargo that has traditionally passed through Colombo may gradually begin remaining within India itself.

That does not mean Colombo is destined to lose. Rather, it means Sri Lanka must accelerate its own reforms.

The expansion of the West Container Terminal, continued development around Colombo Port City, investment in digital customs procedures and improved logistics services all become increasingly important if Sri Lanka is to maintain its competitive edge.

There is another perspective often overlooked.

A stronger Chennai does not necessarily weaken Colombo. Growing trade across southern India could equally create additional shipping demand benefiting both ports, provided each develops complementary rather than competing strengths. Maritime trade is seldom a zero-sum game.

For Sri Lanka, therefore, the challenge is not to fear India's growing port capacity but to remain indispensable within regional supply chains through efficiency, reliability and policy stability.

Competition across the Palk Strait is intensifying. That is not bad news.

It is simply the latest reminder that geography may give Sri Lanka an extraordinary advantage - but only performance will allow it to keep it.

Be that as it may, the race for maritime supremacy in the Bay of Bengal is no longer about who has the better harbour. It is about who runs it better.



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VIJAY'S FIRST 100 DAYS

The honeymoon is ending. The real test of leadership begins.

One hundred days is not enough time to transform a State as large and complex as Tamil Nadu.

It is, however, sufficient time for voters to begin asking whether a government is moving in the direction it promised.

When C. Joseph Vijay led the Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam to one of the most remarkable electoral victories in Tamil Nadu's modern political history, expectations reached extraordinary heights.

Millions who had known him first as an actor placed their faith in him as a political reformer capable of breaking the decades-long dominance of the traditional Dravidian parties.

The symbolism was powerful.

The challenge of governing has proved considerably more demanding.

During its first hundred days, the Vijay administration has sought to project an image of accessibility, administrative discipline and clean governance. Ministers have moved quickly to occupy their portfolios, the Assembly has begun settling into a new rhythm, and the Government has attempted to demonstrate that celebrity politics can evolve into competent administration.

The Chief Minister has also sought to establish his credentials beyond State politics.

His intervention on behalf of detained Tamil Nadu fishermen, discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Centre-State issues and emphasis on investment, employment and public service delivery have all been closely watched, not only in New Delhi but across southern India.

Yet expectations remain immense.

Supporters expect rapid improvements in employment, infrastructure, education and healthcare. Businesses want regulatory certainty and investment-friendly policies. Farmers continue seeking practical solutions to water management and agricultural sustainability. Urban voters expect improvements in transport, housing and public services.

The opposition, meanwhile, has begun shifting from post-election introspection to active scrutiny. Every policy announcement, every administrative delay and every perceived inconsistency is now attracting closer examination than it did during the government's opening weeks.

That is entirely normal.

Governments are judged not by the enthusiasm surrounding their election victories but by their ability to convert political mandates into measurable outcomes.

For Sri Lanka, the first hundred days also carry significance.

Tamil Nadu remains India's closest neighbour across the Palk Strait and continues to influence discussions on fisheries, trade, connectivity, investment and matters affecting Sri Lankan Tamils. A stable and economically confident Tamil Nadu is generally in Sri Lanka's broader strategic interest.

The next hundred days will almost certainly prove more important than the first.

Campaign slogans have largely faded. Administration has taken their place.

Be that as it may, history rarely remembers how a government began. It remembers whether, when the excitement subsided and difficult decisions arrived, it was able to deliver on the promises that brought it to office.

MORE THAN A SEA BETWEEN US

Why pilgrims, patients and tourists are quietly rebuilding the Indo-Sri Lankan relationship

When relations between Sri Lanka and India make the headlines, the focus is usually on politics, fishermen, security cooperation or economic agreements.

Yet beyond the speeches, diplomatic notes and official visits lies a quieter story - one that rarely attracts front-page attention but may ultimately prove far more enduring.

Every week, thousands of ordinary people cross the Palk Strait.

Some travel to worship at sacred temples and churches that have linked the two countries for centuries. Others journey to Chennai seeking specialist medical treatment unavailable at home or to obtain a second medical opinion before major surgery. Students enrol in universities and professional institutes, while families separated by history, migration and marriage continue maintaining ties that long predate modern national boundaries.

These journeys are rebuilding connections that politics alone can never create.

For Sri Lankan patients, Chennai has become one of South Asia's most important medical destinations. Hospitals renowned for cardiology, oncology, organ transplantation and advanced surgery continue receiving patients from across the island. Many travel not because healthcare is unavailable in Sri Lanka, but because certain specialised procedures, technology and expertise are concentrated in southern India.

Religious tourism tells a similar story.

Sri Lankan Buddhists continue visiting Bodh Gaya and other sacred sites further north, often beginning their Indian journeys through Chennai. Hindu devotees travel regularly between the temples of Jaffna, Trincomalee and Tamil Nadu, while Christian pilgrims maintain long-standing links with shrines on both sides of the Strait.

Tourism, too, is steadily recovering.

Improved flight connectivity and simplified travel arrangements have encouraged increasing numbers of Indian visitors to Sri Lanka's beaches, wildlife parks and cultural heritage sites. Likewise, more Sri Lankans are discovering that Tamil Nadu offers far more than shopping trips. Heritage tourism, cuisine, performing arts and sporting events have broadened the appeal of India's southern State.

These exchanges also carry economic value.

Every visitor fills hotel rooms, boards taxis, shops in local businesses and supports employment. Educational links encourage research partnerships.

Medical travel sustains aviation routes and strengthens professional cooperation. Cultural exchanges foster understanding that no diplomatic communiqué can replicate.

For policymakers, the lesson is an important one.



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ACROSS THE PALK STRAITS

— FROM OUR CHENNAI DESK —



Strong bilateral relationships are not built solely in ministries or conference halls. They are strengthened every day by people who choose to visit, study, invest, worship or seek treatment across national borders.

The waters of the Palk Strait have often been portrayed as a dividing line.

In reality, they have served for centuries as a bridge connecting two peoples whose histories have always been closely intertwined.

Be that as it may, governments may shape foreign policy, but it is ordinary citizens who ultimately determine whether neighbours remain strangers or become partners.

A NEW ASSEMBLY, A NEW POLITICAL ERA

Tamil Nadu's Legislature is no longer the House it was

For almost six decades, Tamil Nadu politics followed a familiar script. Governments changed, leaders came and went, alliances shifted, but power remained firmly within the orbit of the two great Dravidian parties that had dominated the State since 1967.

That era has now ended.

The election of Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay and his Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) has not merely produced a change of government. It has fundamentally altered the political composition of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and introduced an entirely different dynamic into one of India's most influential State legislatures.

For the first time in generations, the Assembly is being asked to adapt to a government without the political traditions that shaped the Dravidian movement.

Ministers entering office include first-time legislators alongside experienced administrators drawn from outside conventional party structures. The Government has sought to project an image of professionalism, efficiency and clean administration, but expectations remain extraordinarily high.

Equally significant is the role now played by the opposition.

After decades alternating in power, the traditional parties find themselves confronting an electorate that demonstrated a willingness to abandon long-established

loyalties in favour of something entirely new. Their challenge is no longer simply opposing the Government. It is convincing voters that they themselves remain politically relevant.

That creates a more competitive Assembly than Tamil Nadu has experienced for many years.

Debates are expected to become sharper.

Legislative committees are likely to assume greater importance. Every policy announcement will inevitably be measured not only against manifesto commitments but also against the enormous expectations that accompanied Vijay's remarkable rise from cinema icon to Chief Minister.



For New Delhi, the changing political landscape also presents new opportunities and new uncertainties.

Relations between the State Government and the Union Government will inevitably influence infrastructure projects, investment decisions, language policy, fiscal allocations and Centre-State cooperation. Investors will be watching carefully to determine whether political stability translates into administrative certainty.

Sri Lanka, too, has reason to pay attention. Tamil Nadu has historically played an influential role in shaping India's policy towards Sri Lanka, particularly on issues affecting the Northern Province, fisheries, refugees and post-war reconciliation. The tone adopted within Fort St. George often resonates far beyond Chennai.

The Assembly that has now convened is therefore more than simply a State legislature.

It is one of India's most closely watched political institutions and, increasingly, one whose decisions may have consequences extending well beyond Tamil Nadu's borders.

Be that as it may, elections change governments. Occasionally they change history. This Assembly has every indication of being one of those rare legislatures that may ultimately do both.

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**SEMINAR ON
THE CHANGES TO SRI LANKA'S
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING
REGIME**

Three amendments were passed by Parliament on 9 July 2026 to strengthen Sri Lanka's AML/CFT regime in line with international standards and enhance the country's framework for combating money laundering, terrorist financing, and financial crime.

Guest Speaker Justice A. H. M. D. Nazeer, Judge of the Supreme Court

Key note Speaker Dr. Subhani Keerthirathne, Director, Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU)

Speakers Dr. D.C. Jayasinghe PC, Finance Minister; Chathura Gunasekara PC, Commissioner, Department of Customs; Malik Cader, Chairman, Anti-Money Laundering Unit

This seminar will discuss the changes made to the following Acts that are crucial and needs to be complied by the financial institutions and stakeholders. The Three Acts that were amended are:

1. Prevention of Money Laundering Act, No. 5 of 2006 (as amended)
2. Financial Transactions Reporting Act, No. 6 of 2006 (as amended)
3. Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing Act, No. 25 of 2005 (as amended)

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