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# Statement

For immediate release

## **Statement by the Prime Minister to mark 41 years since Black July**

July 23, 2024

Ottawa, Ontario

Prime Minister's Office

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement to mark 41 years since Black July:

“Forty-one years ago today, violent attacks targeting Tamil civilians and businesses started in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Thousands of innocent lives were lost, and many more Tamils were injured, subjected to sexual violence, and forced to flee the country. The anti-Tamil pogrom, known as Black July, escalated tensions in what became a decades-long armed conflict. It remains one of the darkest chapters in Sri Lanka’s history.

“In 2022, the Parliament of Canada unanimously adopted a motion to make May 18 Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day – a recognition of Canada’s commitment to stand in solidarity with Tamil-Canadians and Tamil communities around the world in remembering and honouring the victims and survivors of these senseless acts of violence. As a steadfast defender of human rights, the Government of Canada will continue to demand accountability for human rights violations and abuses against vulnerable communities in Sri Lanka.

“In the aftermath of Black July, Canada established a Special Measures program to help 1,800 Tamils relocate to safety in Canada and build new lives for themselves and their families. Canada now has one of the largest Tamil diasporas in the world, and we celebrate the contributions Tamil-Canadians make to our country every single day – and we will always protect them.

“On this day, I join Canadians in expressing my deepest condolences to all who have suffered and lost loved ones during Black July. Together, let us honour the victims of this tragedy and recommit to building a more inclusive and peaceful future, free of hate and violence, for people everywhere.”

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