

Beyond Accountability: The Struggle For Co-Existence



A Tamil and a Sinhalese man conversing

Here's a very strong [piece](#) from two Sri Lankans looking at the uses – and abuses – of the demand for accountability in post-war Sri Lanka. In particular the politicization – domestic and international – of the accountability agenda and the way in which it is used by hard-liners on both sides of the ethnic divide to attempt to 'discipline' their only people.

Don't give into demands for international involvement in war crimes investigations – that's imperialism pure and simple (Sinhalese version). And don't countenance, let alone attempt to accommodate proposals for a domestic accountability mechanism – that the siren call of the sell-out, the lure proffered by traitors to the nation (Tamils).

That's the issue the piece is mainly addressing, at least as I read it. There's also an impassioned call for introspection and acknowledgement of the real harms done to each other in the past – whether the issue is historic LTTE (and indeed Rajapaksa regime-supported) mistreatment of Muslims, the Tiger's ruthless pursuit of dissident Tamil political voices during the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) era, or the persistent suppression, and more often that not annihilation, of oppositional Sinhalese forces by successive Sri Lankan governments, starting with – but not confined to – the second

JVP uprising of the late 1980s.

I'm not sure Lankan nationalists of any stripe are going to like this piece. But the fact remains that it raises vital – and ultimately, unavoidable – issues in the debate over the country's future trajectory.

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