



# British Tamils Forum United Kingdom

11 August 2025

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **DETERIORATION OF TAMIL HOMELAND – MANAL AARU (மணல் ஆறு) & WELI OYA (වෙලි ඔය)**

Manal Aaru, a historically Tamil region located in the Mullaitivu District of Sri Lanka, has endured a tragic transformation over the past several decades. Once a vibrant Tamil village, it has been forcefully renamed and repopulated under the guise of development — specifically through the Maduru Oya irrigation scheme.

On 16th April 1988, a Gazette notification by the Sri Lankan Government officially renamed Manal Aaru to Weli Oya, a Sinhala name. This was not a mere renaming — it was part of a broader and calculated strategy to alter the demographics and cultural identity of the region.

#### **Forced Displacement and Violence**

Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December 1984, coordinated massacres were carried out in Tamil villages located between Mullaitivu and Trincomalee. These brutal attacks targeted Tamil civilians, many of whom had ancestral ties to the land going back centuries. Survivors were driven out of their homes, and the state-sponsored Sinhala colonization of the region began in earnest.

Under the pretence of development, Sinhala settlers were brought in, heavily protected by the Sri Lankan military. Dispossessed and displaced Tamil natives were left in poverty, with limited access to their lands, livelihoods, and cultural heritage. The use of draconian laws like the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) provided a legal cover for such actions and impunity.

#### **Demographic Shift and Systematic Colonization**

Since the 1980s, and particularly after the end of the war in 2009, state-backed encroachment has continued. Sinhala settlements have grown in number and infrastructure, while Tamil communities remain marginalized, under-resourced, and often intimidated or surveilled by the military.

The demographic maps (attached below) highlight the alarming transformation of Weli Oya from a predominantly Tamil area in 2015 to its current state — a visual representation of decades of orchestrated displacement and colonization.

1 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weli\\_Oya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weli_Oya)

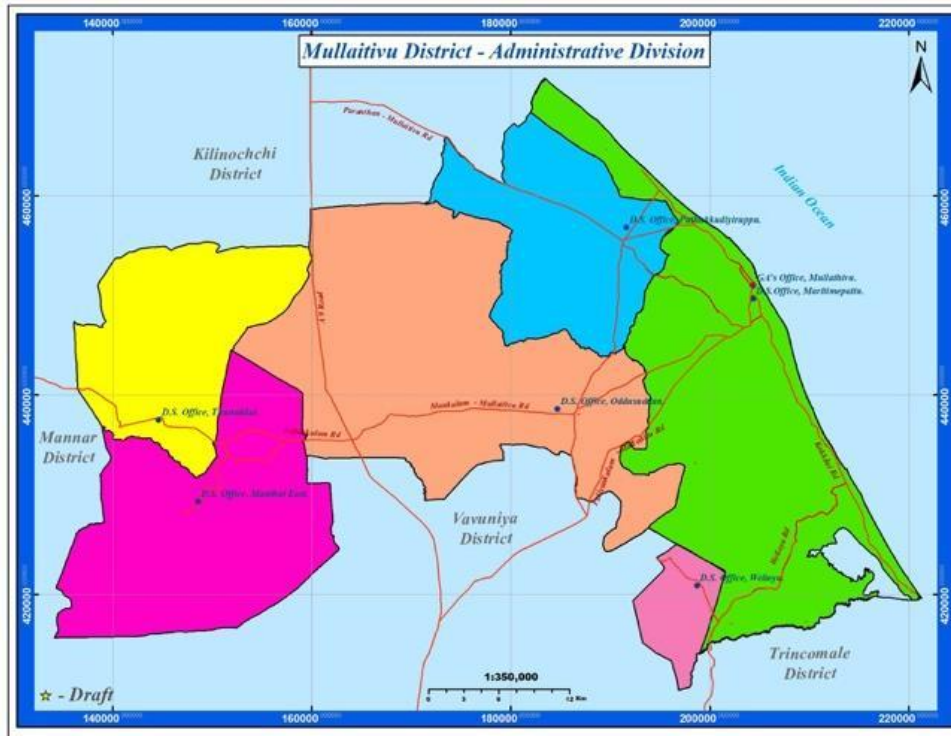
2 <https://web.archive.org/web/20101019025338/http://www.nakkeran.com/colonization3A.htm>



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Weli Oya - Before 2015 (Pink)



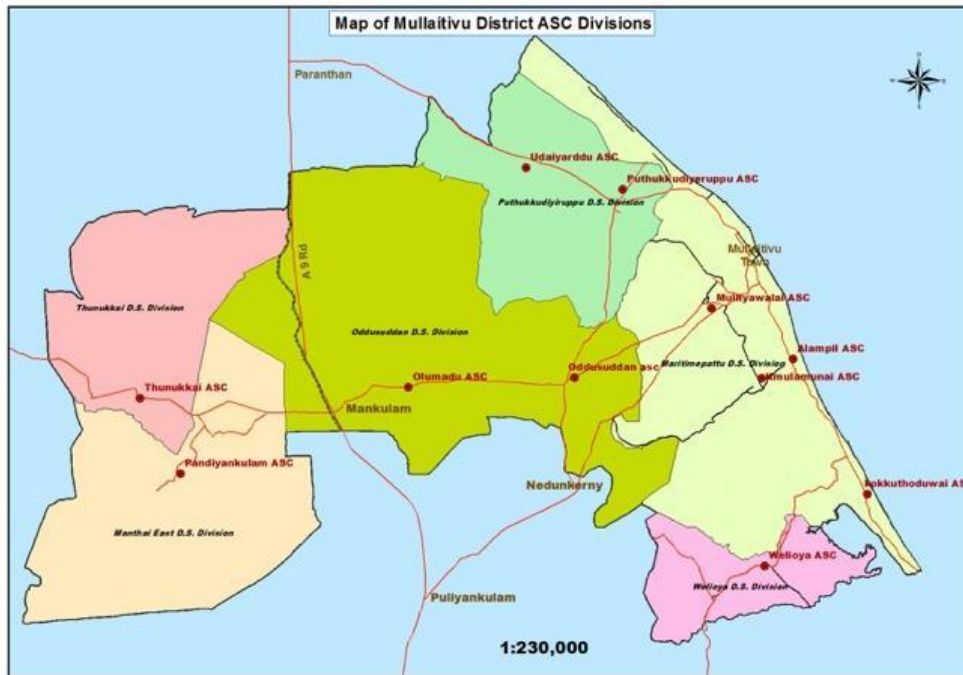
Weli Oya in 2015

Weli Oya – At Present (Pink)



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Weli Oya at Present

## What Are Our Leaders Doing?

While the Tamil homeland is being quietly taken over, what are our Members of Parliament, and the civil society organizations doing? Why is there such undue silence from those entrusted with protecting our rights and our identity?

## Our Language, Our Land, Our Future

Land is not just soil — it is culture, identity, memory, and future. The erosion of our land directly impacts the survival of our language, religion, and the way of life.

Over the last 77 years, we have lost too much. Now is the time to rise and act. We must come together — not tomorrow, not next year — now, to protect our legitimate rights, to preserve and treasure our Tamil homeland, and to demand justice.

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### Notes to Editors:

**British Tamils Forum** exists to harness the skills and the knowledge of the members of the forum, well-wishers and significant others including mainstream decision makers in the UK with the aim of alleviating the sufferings of the Tamils community in the Island of Sri Lanka and to further their right to self-determination within a democratic frame work under pinned by international law, its covenants and conventions. For more information [info@britishtamilsforum.org](mailto:info@britishtamilsforum.org) and/or visit: [www.britishtamilsforum.org](http://www.britishtamilsforum.org)