

Statistics on Civilians Affected by War in Northeast

1974-2004

Disappeared

Deaths

Torture

Disabled

Arrested

Mentally Affected

A Report by NESOHR

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Important note:

The total number of civilians killed and disappeared according to the statistics collected in this project totals 37,806. As described below this project was disrupted in the east due to the tsunami. Also not included are statistics about civilians who have displaced from Northeast. It is estimated that if all of these cases are included the above total will exceed 75,000.

1. Background

What is presented here is statistics on civilians affected by war in Northeast of Sri Lanka between the years of 1974-2004. By the end of 1960's Tamils have faced communal violence, denial of language rights, denial of land rights, and discrimination in education. Many negotiated pacts between Tamil political leaders and the Sri Lankan government were abrogated. Satyagraha protests were attacked by the Sri Lankan armed forces throughout Northeast and also in Colombo. Since the early 1970's, as Tamil youths, affected by these policies of the Sri Lankan state, attempted to take up armed struggle the Sri Lankan military brutality against civilians intensified, further driving the youths to join the Tamil armed groups.

While the military reprisals were carried out mainly by the Sri Lankan military, between the years of 1987-1990, Indian military also played its role in committing violence against the Tamil people. Indian military (IPKF) was invited by the Sri

Lankan government to implement an accord signed by the two governments. In addition Sinhala thugs armed by the Sri Lankan military also perpetrated violence against Tamil people. Many Tamil armed groups formed to wage the struggle of liberation turned on the Tamil people when the Indian and Sri Lankan military managed to buy their loyalty. LTTE too had a role in committing human rights violations against Tamil civilians as it tried to contain Tamil elements that have chosen to work with the Indian and the Sri Lankan militaries.

The statistics presented here covers attacks by all of these groups. People of Northeast have paid an immense price to wage the struggle for self determination right. Yet, these statistics tell only part of the story. These statistics do not cover loss of property, multiple displacement, loss of education, loss of earning, destruction of cultural, economic, and community life of people and above all the persistent fear with which they had lived under the shadow of occupying military that has committed such brutal attacks on them.

2. Method of collection

The data collection project was started after the signing of the ceasefire agreement in 2002 which allowed relatively free access to all areas of Northeast. Yet, it must be noted that large scale displacement had taken place among the Tamil community. The data collection did not include those who have moved to places outside Northeast, many of whom are infact living as refugees in other countries. *Given that at least half a million Tamils have displaced to outside Northeast and that the vast majority of them were people badly affected by war, the statistics given below is incomplete. It will be a much larger project to include this sector of the Northeast population.*

Also problematic was the data collection in the east. *The actual data collection started only during the later part of 2004 and before its completion the people were visited by the tragic tsunami disaster. The project was therefore never completed in the eastern regions. This can be seen in the tables as very low figures in eastern district.*

The questioner used to collect data is a table printed over both sides of a large sheet of paper with 21 columns in it. Data on each affected person is entered in one row. The columns in the table are,

1. Row number
2. Full name of informant
3. Full name of affected person
4. Relationship to informant
5. Age of the affected person at the time of incident
6. Sex
7. Permanent address
8. Temporary address
9. Location of incident
10. Year of incident
11. Occupation of the affected person at the time of incident
12. Number of dependents on the affected person under the age of 18 at that time
13. Incident on Land or Sea
14. In what form the person is affected

15. What type of violence was used
16. Offender
17. Occasion of arrest
18. Occasion of disappearance
19. Type of limb lost
20. Other type of injury
21. Notes

Data collectors were employed on contract basis. A graduate was appointed as the coordinator for each district. Permission was obtained from the District Secretariat (Kachcheri) and the help of the Grama Sevakar was sought to ensure all households were covered. In addition, the team for each village had at least one person from that village as additional method of ensuring no household in the village is missed in the data collection.

In addition to collecting the above data affidavits were collected from families where the affected person has either died or disappeared.

3. Tables and Graphs

Tables 1-6 give most of the data that will be of interest to those wishing to understand the human rights situation of Northeast.

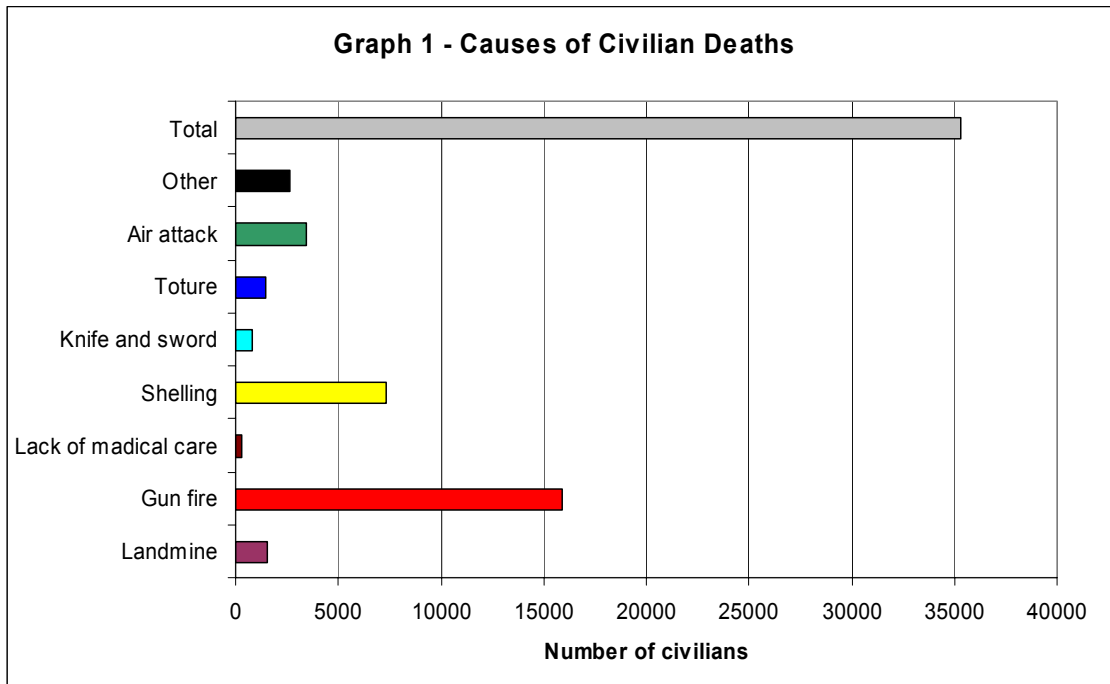
The data presented have the following categories for the forms in which people were affected: *death, disabled, injured, disappeared, arrested, torture, and psychologically affected.*

The Sri Lankan Presidential Commissions on Disappearances have issued death certificates to many of the people who have disappeared without giving any further explanation. Therefore these have been counted as deaths caused by disappearance.

The data is also categorized into the following types of violence causing the above forms in which people were affected, *communal violence, war shock, disappearance, bombing, landmine, boat accident, after arrest, gun fire, lack medical care, helicopter-strafting, shelling, knife & sword, torture, air attack and other.*

4. Table & Graph on causes of civilians being affected

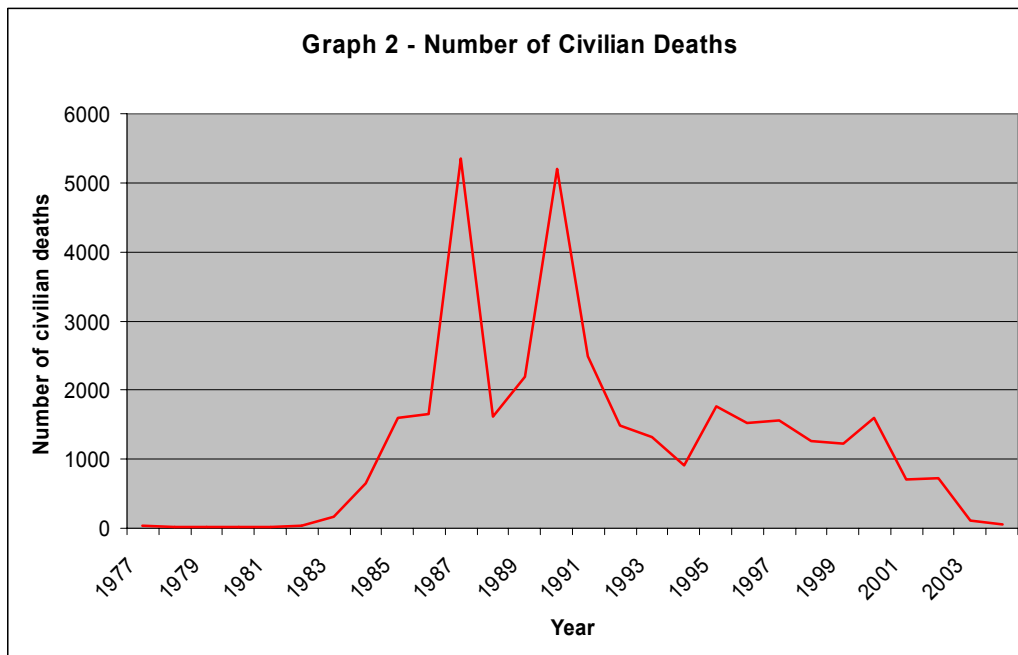
Table 1 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1974-2004 (How they were affected)																	
	Communal violence	War shock	Disappearance	Bombing	Landmine	Boat accident	After arrest	Gun fire	Lack of medical care	Helicopter strafing	Shelling	Knife and sword	Torture	Air attack	Other	Total	
Death	662	102	606	37	1528	141	126	15910	318	138	7360	777	1461	3449	2609	35323	
Disabled	16	42		2	700			521	26		1028	88	489	427	195	3534	
Injured	24	10	8	15	319		219	998	13		2488	98	954	1279	380	6805	
Disappeared	17				2		615	6	1		3	1	94	2	1742	2483	
Arrested	38	3	4		1		5258	35	1		7	9	2347	6	841	8550	
Tortured	2	1	1		2		933	12			7	5	2519	5	12	3505	
Mentally affected		154			2			4	6		21		106	4	20	317	
Total	759	312	619	54	2554	141	7151	17486	365	138	10914	978	7970	5172	5799	60517	



5. Table & Graph on number of affected civilians (year based)

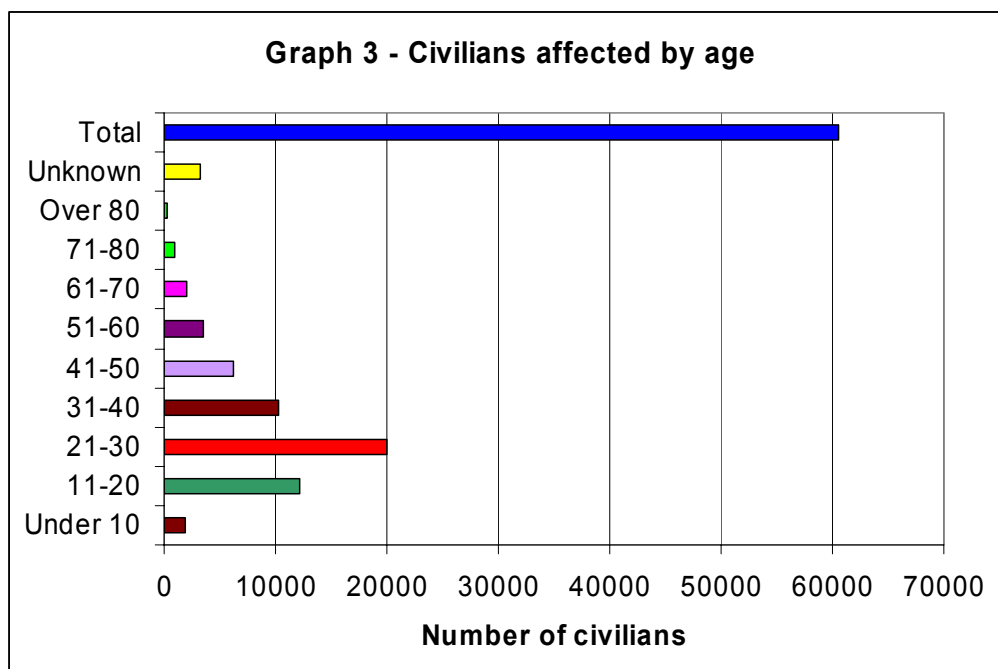
Table 2 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1977-2004 (Year based data)

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Death	42	25	15	22	26	38	162	657	1602	1656	5352	1620	2193	5198	2496	1477	1321	914	1767	1530	1561	1262	1220	1592	703	719	106	47
Disabled	10	6	1	6	3	8	25	31	93	95	271	160	140	335	170	133	124	94	275	348	214	215	203	266	174	71	59	4
Injured	30	4	2	7	5	10	40	43	137	165	758	348	219	622	230	301	250	146	644	573	456	396	470	634	206	93	33	3
Disappeared	3	3	3	5	5	6	26	36	63	69	123	45	97	656	186	204	60	47	171	211	170	73	80	66	54	8	11	2
Arrested	21	9	13	14	9	22	79	163	486	484	861	730	383	1284	422	414	256	203	322	479	424	425	467	310	210	27	23	10
Tortured	7	4	6	7	3	3	36	90	125	159	542	454	267	258	90	103	70	78	132	209	213	197	200	141	83	15	13	
Mentally affected		1	1	1			4	7	6	7	49	25	11	35	16	9	11	5	31	29	19	9	23	10	8			
Total	113	52	41	62	51	87	372	1027	2512	2635	7956	3382	3310	8388	3610	2641	2092	1487	3342	3379	3057	2577	2663	3019	1438	933	245	66



6. Table & Graph on number of civilians affected (age based)

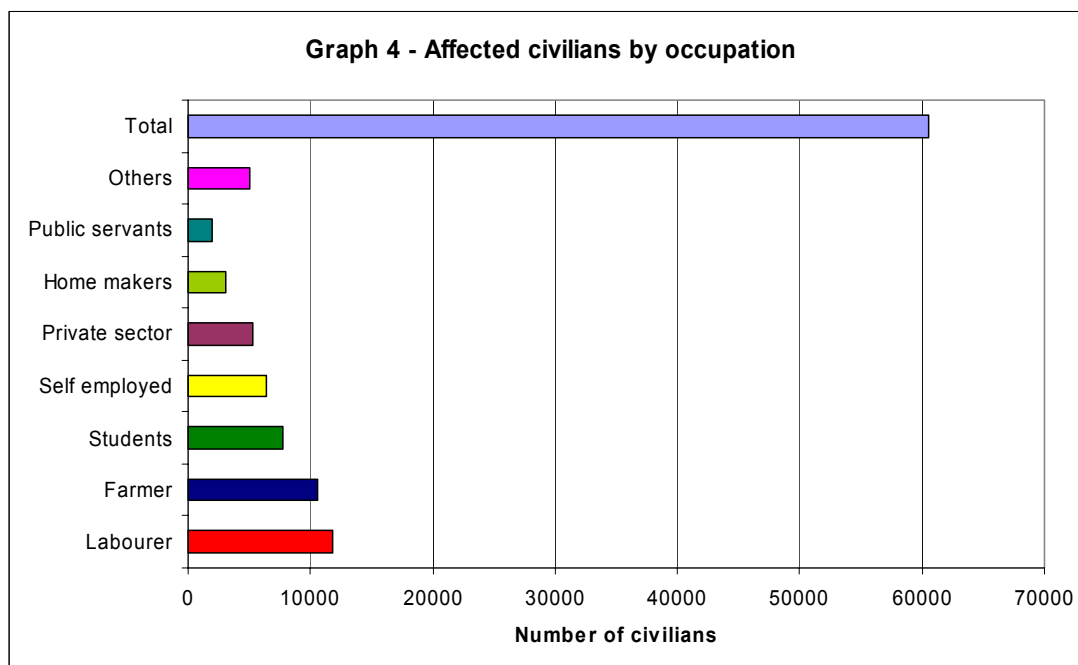
Table 3 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1977-2004 (Age based data)											
	Under 10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	Over 80	Unknown	Total
Death	1185	7177	11318	5428	3479	2389	1578	795	207	1767	35323
Disabled	143	738	1126	611	446	213	96	39	5	117	3534
Injured	444	1500	1756	1266	898	476	216	69	20	160	6805
Disappeared	23	500	942	366	167	84	37	20	7	337	2483
Arrested	39	1587	3374	1740	777	236	49	12	3	0	7817
Tortured	21	679	1418	827	354	104	33	4	0	733	4173
Mentally affected	43	46	80	59	48	15	15	1	0	65	372
Total	1898	12227	20014	10297	6169	3517	2024	940	242	3179	60507



7. Table & Graph on number of civilians affected (occupation based)

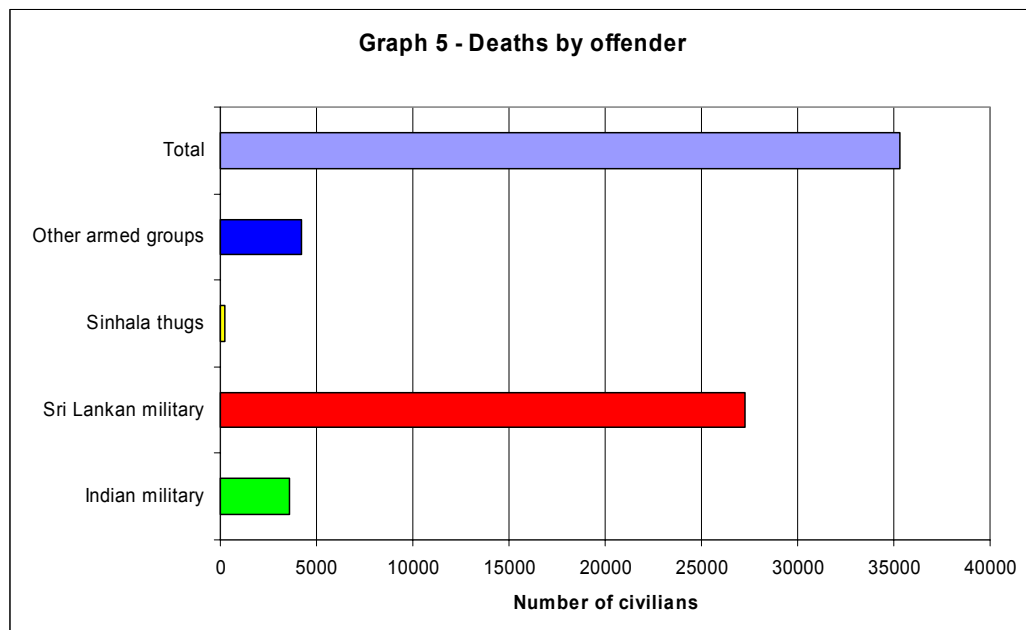
Table 4 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1977-2004 (Occupation based)

	Labourer	Fishing	Educationalist	Private sector	Students	Public servants	Unemployed	self employed	Drivers	Home makers	Farmers	Others	Retired	Total
Death	6551	2935	275	3928	4840	1102	1653	3195	566	1889	5977	2115	297	35323
Disabled	444	287	13	221	500	64	288	492	53	318	572	277	7	3536
Injured	1076	574	9	255	956	168	52	435	46	591	927	1715	1	6805
Disappeared	419	211	9	143	364	78	40	552	46	41	283	297		2483
Arrested	2530	787	55	527	730	241	41	1226	175	108	1759	368	3	8550
Tortured	762	419	17	186	351	117	8	439	70	61	979	93	3	3505
Mentally affected	34	14		15	59	10	16	20	8	29	68	44		317
Total	11816	5227	378	5275	7800	1780	2098	6359	964	3037	10565	4909	311	60519



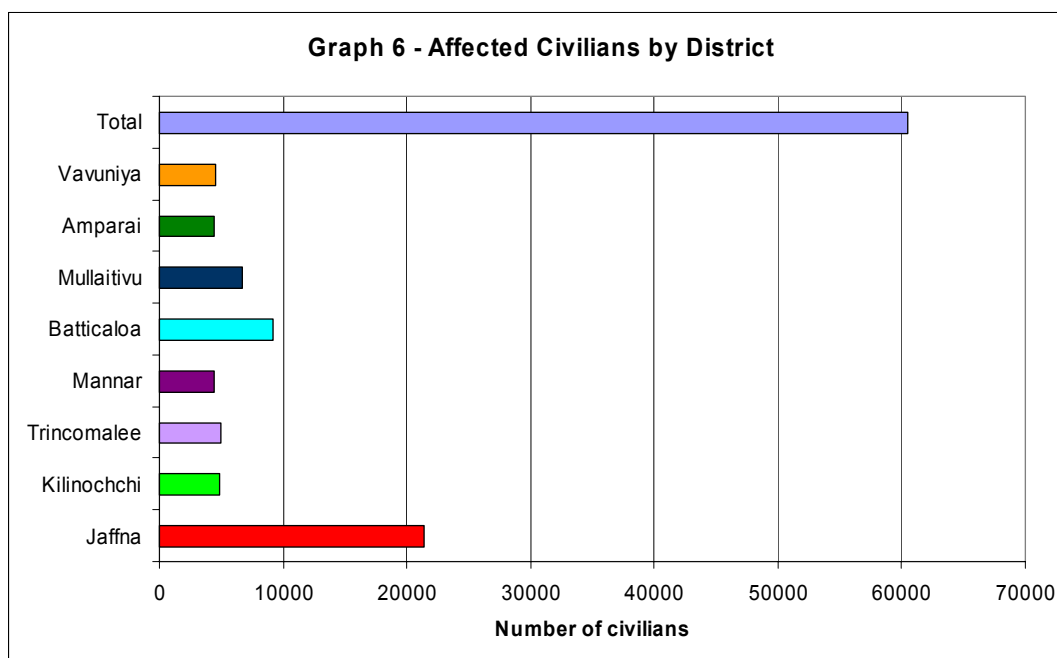
8. Table & Graph on number of civilians affected (offender based)

Table 5 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1977-2004 (Offender based data)					
	Indian military	Sri Lankan military	Sinhala thugs	Other armed groups	Total
Death	3608	27302	228	4185	35323
Disabled	353	3061	30	90	3534
Injured	790	5753	49	213	6805
Disappeared	104	2067	27	285	2483
Arrested	1208	6969	37	336	8550
Tortured	965	2346	26	168	3505
Mentally affected	62	243	2	10	317
Total	7090	47741	399	5287	60517



9. Table & Graph on number of civilians affected (district based)

Table 6 - Statistics on civilians affected by war from 1977-2004 (District based data)									
	Jaffna	Kilinochchi	Trincomalee	Mannar	Batticaloa	Mullaitivu	Amparai	Vavuniya	Total
Death	13050	3303	2683	2093	6246	3239	2410	2299	35323
Disabled	1301	392	224	311	326	593	63	324	3534
Injured	3439	393	300	548	488	1072	171	394	6805
Disappeared	1046	199	263	94	397	115	164	205	2483
Arrested	1438	358	1352	805	1459	1049	1399	690	8550
Tortured	971	202	101	579	243	644	163	602	3505
Mentally affected	140	33	12	37	5	38	6	46	317
Total	21385	4880	4935	4467	9164	6750	4376	4560	60517



10. Recommendation

In January 2006, when this report is published, the attack by military on civilians in Northeast has again begun to increase to alarming levels. This only shows that the lull in the worst form of attacks immediately after the ceasefire was signed is a superficial

change. Many international observers tended to take this lull as a change in the conduct of the Sri Lankan military. This has been proved to be wrong by the recent events. We will be issuing another report on the more recent human rights violations by the Sri Lankan military against the people of Northeast.

Our first recommendation to both parties to the conflict and to the international community is to overcome obstacles to find a resolution to the Tamil aspiration for self determination. Clearly this can occur only with the withdrawal of the Sinhala only occupying military from the Northeast. This is more so when seen against the backdrop of the enormous human rights violations committed by this military.

Our second recommendation is to the international human rights organizations (IHRO). It is indeed difficult to establish to what extent serious human rights violations like that have occurred in the Northeast, are kept away from the focus of the human rights reports by IHRO. It is certain that the human rights violations in Northeast was not focused on sufficiently in the human rights reports of the IHRO. If the IHRO had reported the violations that had occurred in Northeast more thoroughly, it is certain that the level of violations would have been reduced.

IHRO should, therefore, examine their approaches to reporting human rights issues by examining their own reports on the human rights violations in Northeast over the three decades covered in this report.

This, as will be agreed by all, is absolutely essential if human rights is to be protected universally.

