



Sri Lanka is a multi-religious country. After independence, the constitutions of 1972 and 1978 gave priority to Buddhism. The 1978 Constitution recognises freedom of religion as a fundamental right. However, discrimination on the basis of religion, attacks on religious places, and violence on religious grounds were not rare throughout the history of Sri Lanka. After 2009, there was a spate of violence, particularly targeting Muslim and Christian communities.

Extremist groups such as Bodu Bala Sena and Sinhala Ravaya spread extreme violence against Muslims. The destruction in Dargah, Digana, and Minuwangoda areas is proof of that. However, the law has not been enforced against any of that violence and justice has not been served.

In addition, the Sri Lankan government forcibly cremated the bodies of those who died of Covid-19, violating the standards of the World Health Organisation. Although the fundamental right to religious freedom of Muslims and Christians was severely violated, justice was not served to any to them and the perpetrators were not brought to justice.

Discrimination against minority groups on the basis of religion occurs at various levels including by the state. It has been reported in many cases that the state security forces support violent acts against religious minority groups.

**Religion can be easily provoked.
But the scars can never be healed.**

FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF