

Reconciliation in Sri Lanka

Why in news?

\n\n

Recently the UN released a report on the **progress of reconciliation efforts** by the Sri Lankan government.

\n\n

What did the report say?

\n\n

\n

- The UN warned that a range of serious abuses, including torture, still appear to remain widespread in Sri Lanka.

\n

- The report said the prevailing **culture of impunity** for perpetrating torture has undoubtedly contributed to this situation.

\n

- It acknowledged that the govt had made positive advances on constitutional and legal reforms, land restitution and symbolic gestures towards reconciliation.

\n

- But it cautioned that the **measures taken so far had been inadequate**, lacked coordination and a sense of urgency.

\n

- It urged the govt and people of Sri Lanka to prioritise justice alongside reconciliation to ensure that the horrors of the past are firmly dealt with and never to recur again.

\n

- Report also made recommendations including urging the govt to prioritise the return of private land that has been occupied by the military, adopt laws allowing the **creation of a hybrid court** and invite the UN rights office to establish a presence in the country.

\n

\n\n

Where did the present regime failed to act?

\n\n

\n

- In 2015, when **Sri Lanka agreed to a host of measures at the UNHRC**, including a judicial process to look into the war crimes, hopes were high.

\n

- The present govt also came to power on a promise that he would restore the rule of law, end the country's international isolation and take steps towards reconciliation with the Tamil ethnic minority.

\n

- But, key issues such as establishing a hybrid judicial mechanism and returning the military-occupied lands to Tamil civilians in the north and east still has made no tangible progress.

\n

- Issues such as continuing use of excessive force and arbitrary arrests suggest that the government is either not serious in changing its way or is simply incapable of doing so.

\n

- The delay in providing relief is alienating the govt's allies, **eroding the faith of the public** and also giving more time to the opposition to regroup itself.

\n

- Thus, its time, the present govt seize the moment and swiftly start addressing the core issues.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

