

CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

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North Central and Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council Elections 21st August 2008 - Media Communiqué No 03

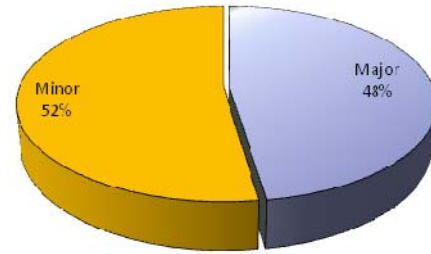
The Centre for Monitoring Election Violence [CMEV] has commenced its monitoring of the Provincial Council Elections in the North Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces. CMEV has deployed 28 field monitors, whilst a further 450 day observers and 12 mobile teams have been trained for the process of Election Day monitoring in the 27 polling divisions of the two provinces.

A total number of 218 incidents have been reported to the CMEV since the close of nominations on the 04/07/08 up to 20/08/08.

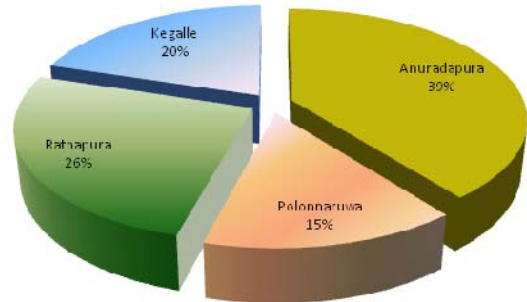
Of these, 104 have been classified as Major incidents and the remaining 114 have been classified as Minor incidents.

Of the total number of incidents recorded, 118 are reported from the NCP. Of these, 86 are from the Anuradhapura district and 32 are from the Polonnaruwa district. The Sabaragamuwa Province records a total number of 100 incidents 56 from the Rathnapura district and 44 from the Kegalle District.

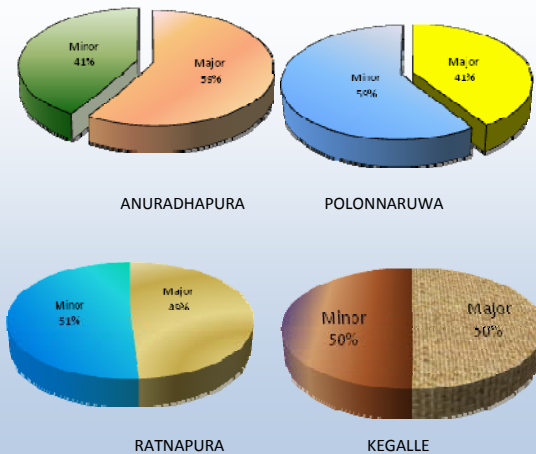
TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BY TYPE (218)



INCIDENTS BY DISTRICTS



TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT

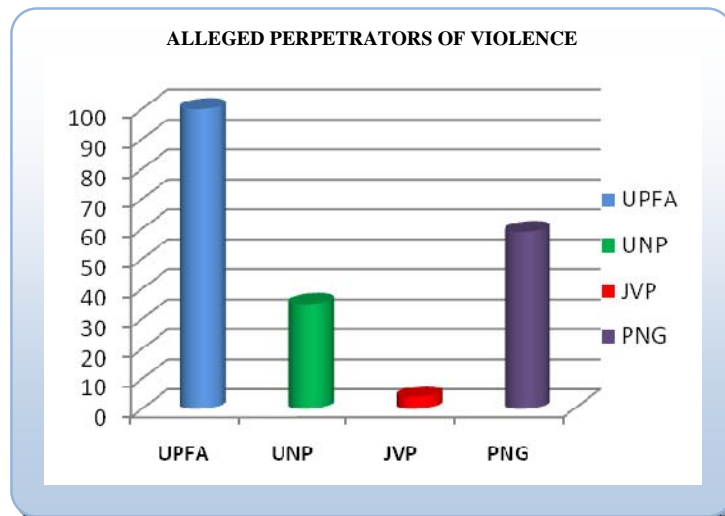


Of the 86 incidents recorded from Anuradhapura, 37 are Major incidents and 49 are Minor incidents. Of the cumulative number of incidents recorded from Anuradhapura district, the highest number of incidents (19) has been recorded from the Kalawewa electorate.

Of the 32 incidents recorded from Polonnaruwa, 18 are Major incidents and 14 are Minor incidents). Of the cumulative number of incidents recorded from Polonnaruwa district, the highest number of incidents (19) has been recorded from the Polonnaruwa electorate.

Of the incidents recorded (56) from Ratnapura, 27 are Major incidents and 29 are Minor incidents. Of the cumulative number of incidents recorded from Ratnapura district, the highest number of incidents (13) has been recorded from the Kolonna electorate.

Of the incidents recorded (44) from the Kegalle, 22 are Major incidents and 22 are Minor incidents. Of the cumulative number of incidents recorded from the Kegalle district, the highest number of incidents (20) has been recorded from the Kegalle electorate.



Of the total number of incidents recorded so far, 115 complaints are against the UPFA, 35 complaints are against the UNP, 04 are against JVP, 1 is against National Congress, 2 are against Police and in 61 incidents, the alleged perpetrators have not been identified.

Of the 34 incidents reported from the Anuradhapura district against the UPFA, 4 are against the supporters of Berty Premalal Dissanayake. Of the 18 incidents reported from the Polonnaruwa district against the UPFA, S.M. Jayantha, Adam Lebbe Fais and D.S. Dayawanse, each has become liable for 1 incident. Of the 7 incidents reported against UNP, UNP candidate Sydney Jayaratne is identified as the alleged perpetrator in 1 incident. Of the 30 number of incidents reported from the Ratnapura district against the UPFA, 4 are against the supporters of their candidate Premalal Jayasekara, including 1 directly naming him. Likewise, there are 4 are against the supporters of Kanchana Jayaratne another UPFA candidate. Of the 11 incidents reported against the UNP, 1 complaint is against the supporters of UNP candidate, Hasitha Samantha. Of the 33 incidents reported from the Kegalle district against the UPFA, 7 are against the supporters of Maheepala Herath, 3 are against Imitias Cader and 2 are against the supporters of Saman Jayasinghe. Imitias Cader and Saman Jayasinghe are UPFA candidates.

In the cumulative total mentioned above, there are 3 complaints by the UPFA against the UPFA, which implies that there are internal conflicts within the Party. The UNP has also made 46 complaints against the UPFA while the JVP has made 52 complaints. Furthermore, Ruhunu Janatha Party (RJP) has made 4 complaints in addition to the 2 complaints made by the CWC. Moreover, CMEV monitors directly reported 5 complaints against the UPFA while the Police has made 1 complaint. There are 2 complaints by unidentified groups against the UPFA. Among the total number of complaints made against the UNP, there are 30 complaints by the UPFA, 4 complaints by the JVP and 1 complaint by the CWC. There were only 4 complaints against JVP. All of them were made by UPFA. In addition, there were 59 complaints in which the party of the alleged perpetrator has not been identified.

The complaints made by the 3 major political parties- UPFA, UNP, JVP, can be classified as follows:

Incidents Parties	Attempted murder	Grievous hurt	Hurt	Assault	Threat & intimidation	Misuse of State Resources	Robbery	Arson	Abduction
UPFA		1	3	12	5		3	1	
UNP	1		6	12	6		3	1	1
JVP	1		1	12	9	2	3	1	

On account of the grave nature of incidents that have occurred up to 20th August 2008 at 5.00pm, the following incidents highlighted below require the immediate attention of all parties concerned especially the Commissioner of Elections, Senior DIG, Elections and the IGP etc.

Use of Firearms

CMEV observes that there is a rising trend in the use of firearms. Firearms have been used in 23 incidents that were reported or 10.5% of the cumulative total. CMEV emphasizes that this is a cause for concern. In 8 incidents, firearms have allegedly been used by the UPFA and in 2 incidents by the UNP. The JVP has not been involved in any incident in which firearms have been used. In fact, there are 13 incidents in which the firearms have been allegedly used by persons whose party affiliation is not known.

Misuse of State Resources for election campaign

Of the cumulative incidents (218) recorded, there are 8 complaints regarding the flagrant misuse of State property (all the facilities including vehicles belonging to the Provincial

Councils, Chief Ministers' Offices and official residences, telephones). All complaints are against the former UPFA Chief Ministers who are standing for re- election.

Issuance of temporary Identity Cards

CMEV believes that the step taken by the Commissioner of Elections to certify identification of voters is a positive and a progressive step towards ensuring a free and fair election, since it would reduce the instances of fraudulent voting. However, this has not been a total success.

In Monarathenna of Welikanda, a person who did not like to reveal his identity stated to CMEV that, a considerable number of voters have not received their identity cards or the certified identification documents (e.g. a certified photograph)as on the date of 20th August. In this situation, some candidates have provided photographs at their own expense. In an interview with Assistant Election Commissioner, Mr. W.H.R. Udaya Kumara in the Polonnaruwa district, a programme for the issue of temporary identification documents has been implemented on the advice of the Commissioner of Elections and about 8000 people have received them. He further stated that it was conducted until 20/08/08. However, he stated that he does not have any statistics of those who did not receive identification documents.

Police Bias

CMEV strongly believes that the partisan bias of the Police in some electorates militates against the conduct of a free and fair election. This factor will be crucial particularly in the Anuradhapura district. Mr. Ruchira Weliwatte, Magistrate and District Judge of A'pura has observed that the main reason behind the increasing violence in A' pura is the inefficiency of the Police. He has ordered DIG K.P. Pathirana NCP range and SSP H.P. Ilangasiri of the A'pura Police division to tighten the security of the city, immediately and directly supervise the operation.

Apart from A'pura district, Polonnaruwa electorate of the Polonnaruwa district, the Rambukkana and Kegalle electorates of Kegalle district may also be prone to Police malpractices, which would give rise to the fraudulent voting. The UNP and JVP have already informed the Commissioner of Elections and the IGP about this issue.

Summary of the observations- Pre- election period

CMEV emphasizes that there is a rapid increase in the election violence as a consequence of the:

- Infringement of the laws relating to the election campaign by the two main political parties, UNP and UPFA
- Political bias of the Police
- Competition within the UPFA for preferential votes in order to be appointed Chief Minister in the NCP

- The targeting of the JVP by the UPFA in Polonnaruwa electorate of the Polonnaruwa district
- Violent behaviour of Mr. Maheepala Herath, former CM of Sabaragamuwa particularly in Rambukkana, Kegalle and Mawanella electorates

The presence of TMVP cadres in the Polonnaruwa district is also a cause for concern.



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