

CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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Central and North - Western Provincial Council Election

Media Communiqué No 08

21st February 2009

14.00hrs

Re - polling at Naykkarchenai Tamil Vidyalaya polling station

Repoll in Nayakkarchenai Tamil Maha Vidyalaya (Polling Centre no-47) in the Puttalam Polling Division started at 7.00 am today. CMEV has deployed a station monitor and a mobile team to monitor the re-poll. Approximately 62% of the 1,195 voters (741) had cast their ballot by 14.00 hrs.

CMEV field reports indicate a tense situation prevails in the area due to presence of a large number of supporters and candidates. Several police personnel have been deployed both within the polling centre and in the vicinity (including 500 meters away from premises) of the centre.

No media persons have been allowed into the polling station. The Senior Presiding Officer (SPO) has the discretionary power to permit media access.

Voters are being transported

CMEV observers report that voters are being transported by UPFA supporters in vehicles. CMEV observers reported, at 9.15 am a white coloured dolphin van (62-5427) is transporting voters to polling station. The van has a flag of Naina Thambi Marikkar Mohamed Thahir of UPFA (preference no 16). CMEV received reports that the police had warned the vehicle driver after which the vehicle and all the documents had been taken into police charge. The vehicle was parked close to the polling station from 9.12 am to 12.15 pm by the police after which it was released. When CMEV contacted the Police, ASP I.B.T.Sugathapala confirmed that the police had issued a warning to the vehicle listed above and that the van had driven away immediately.

CMEV also observed voters are still being transported by vehicles including a cream coloured cab (51-3189) beyond the 500 meter limit.

Other incidents

Amal Chintaka Mayadunne of UPFA (preference no 05) travelling in a Suzuki swift car (NW KS – 3313) and Naina Thambi Marikkar Mohamed Thahir of UPFA (preference no 16) traveling in a double cab (WP PE – 6833) had stickers of the candidates and were circling in areas close to the polling station at around 7.20 am

CMEV monitors report, large number of people who do not appear to be voters are gathering in various locations at Nayakkarchenai Junction, Karambe . As at 12.00 pm, the police is attempting to disperse the crowds who continue to gather.

CMEV urges the authorities to ensure that steps are taken to prevent the types of incidents highlighted above including campaigning during polling, transportation of voters by parties and the gathering of crowds which could affect the outcome of the poll. CMEV stresses that it is the responsibility of the election officials, police and the candidates to ensure a free and fair poll and most importantly, one in which the integrity of the electoral process is protected and in no way affected.

CMEV was formed in 1997 by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), the Free Media Movement (FMM) and the Coalition Against Political Violence as an independent and non-partisan organization to monitor the incidence of election related violence. Currently, CMEV is made up of CPA, FMM and INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.



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