

CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

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Mr. Mahinda Deshapriya,
Commissioner of Elections,
Elections Secretariat,
P.O. Box 02, Sarana Mawatha,
Rajagiriya, 10107.

18th September 2013

Dear Sir

Request to Make a Public Statement Ensuring the Secrecy of Ballots Cast in the Forthcoming Provincial Council Elections

As you are aware, there have been several reports of incidents of voters being told by various individuals that ballots cast at the forthcoming election- including party preference and candidate preference - can be traced. This practice has been especially prevalent in the Northern Province and specifically in remote villages such Thirunagar, Barathipuram and Selvanagar in the Killinochchi District.

Ensuring the secrecy of ballots is an essential prerequisite for the conduct of a free and fair election as it minimises the possibility of voters being influenced. As you will appreciate in the context of allegations of voter buying and intimidation, ensuring that individuals are able to cast their vote freely and without compulsion is of paramount importance.

As such, we call on you to make a public statement to the effect that ballots are specifically designed to prevent anyone from linking a specific voter to a ballot and that there is no possible way for another person to decipher to which political party and candidate(s) a particular person cast his/her ballot.

We urge you to request heads of all print and electronic media institutions- including state owned media institutions- to give to such statement the widest possible coverage in both the Sinhala and Tamil languages.

We will be releasing this letter to the media in the public interest.

Please be assured of our cooperation

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu – CMEV

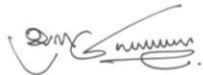
Mr. Rohana Hettiarachchi – Paffrel

Mr. Keerthi Tennekoon – Caffé

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