

# CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

මැතිවරණ ප්‍රචණ්ඩත්වය නිරීක්ෂණ මධ්‍යස්ථානය  
தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

24/2, 28<sup>th</sup> Lane, Off Flower Road, Colombo 7.

Tel: 11 4062180-190, 011 2565304, Fax: 011 4714460, 0114503001.

E-mail: [cmev@cpalanka.org](mailto:cmev@cpalanka.org) Website: [www.cmev.org](http://www.cmev.org)

## Presidential Election 2015

### Media Communiqué 11

On 4<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 1.00 pm:

#### 02<sup>nd</sup> January, Common Candidate Maithripala's rally was attacked- Pelmadulla

It was reported to CMEV that a public meeting conducted by Common Presidential Candidate Maithripala Sirisena near Pelmadulla depot came under attack at about 7.20pm (2<sup>nd</sup>Jan).

As soon as the Sabaragamuwa Provincial Councilor Manjula Dias Wikramanayake's speech was concluded, assailants aimed stones at Mr Sirisena, who was soon ushered away by his security officers. Pelmadulla Electorate Organizer H.D.D Senavirathne was injured and later admitted to the Pelmadulla Base Hospital.

When CMEV spoke to Ratnapura Senior Superintendent of Police, Palitha Fernando, he said that he received a verbal complaint about this incident from the United National Party (UNP) headquarters "Sirikotha" operations unit. Officer-in-Charge L.P.K. Rajamanthri in Kahawatta Police Station stated that the situation was now under control and that two suspects have been arrested. Investigations are underway.

The incident has been confirmed by Rathnapura District Election Operation Unit officer in charge K.T.M.P.D Thilakarathne. He also said that he was following up on the incident with the Kahawatta Police Station.

Pelmadulla Base Hospital Medical officer in charge Dr. Waruna Sampath confirmed that Mr Senavirathne had been admitted to Hospital and that he had sustained minor injuries to the head.

## **Army and Navy attempt to obtain details of polling centres from Assistant Election Commissioner, Mullaitivu**

Assistant Election Commissioner of Mullaitivu Mr R Saslaian reported to CMEV that he was requested to provide details of the polling centres of the Mullaitivu electorate, specifically the number of voters per polling station.

According to Mr Saslaian two persons from the Navy approached him on January 1<sup>st</sup> requesting the above information. Mr Saslaian refused this request on the basis that he is not authorised to disclose it. Mr Saslaian informed the officers that if they wish to get this information they would have to obtain a letter of authorisation from the Election Commissioner. On January 2<sup>nd</sup> the same individuals had arrived at the Department of Elections, Mullaitivu and repeated the request, having identified themselves as being from the Nandikadal Navy Camp. Mr Saslaian had denied the request for the second time.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup> an unidentified individual telephoned Mr Saslaian and requested the same information. Subsequently two Army officers approached Mr Saslaian and stated that Major Mendis had sent them to obtain the said details. Mr Saslaian denied this request, too.

According to Mr Saslaian, the individuals had stated that the information requested was required for security purposes. He further stated that the information had already been made available to the Police, and that the Army and the Navy are not entitled to receive it unless the Election Commissioner grants written permission.

CMEV states that it is incongruous for the Army and Navy to request for information for “security purposes”. There has been no public statement by any of the officials involved that the Army and Navy have been requested to support the Police to provide security on Election Day.

### **1<sup>st</sup> January attack on UNP office in Beliatta – Hambantota**

An attack on United National Party (UNP) Beliatta electorate organizer W.B.Wimal Jayasiri's house at about 6.45pm yesterday (01<sup>st</sup>), was reported to CMEV. According to Mr. Jayasiri, a group of six people arrived in motorcycles while he was at a meeting with three (03) UNP supporters at the above location. Four (04) armed individuals with T56s fired shots into the sky, removed campaign decorations in the vicinity, entered the house and damaged furniture, destroyed important documents and assaulted his wife A.M.P Priyanka, whose forehead was injured as a result. Four motorcycles parked in their residence were also damaged.

According to Mr. Jayasiri, they had threatened him and his family saying “*Meh dewana wathawata kiyanne umbalata aye kiyanena. Umbala okkomala maranawa, 8 wenidata kohomath maranawa itakalin marun noka hitapan.*”

Furthermore he reported to CMEV that another complaint was previously made to the Beliatta Police Station about a similar assault and threat (on December 29<sup>th</sup>) on him (CIB (2) 347/446). CMEV contacted Beliatta Police officer in charge Mr. Wijerathne who confirmed that a complaint was filed about the previous incident. He added that two suspects were arrested in connection with the incident and that further investigations are underway. He directed any further inquiries about the incident to the Police media spokesman and refused to give the complaint number.

CMEV spoke to Hambantota District election operation unit who confirmed the receipt of the complaint on 01<sup>st</sup> January at about 8.30pm, and added that they visited the location at about 9.00pm.

Mr. Jayasiri's wife identified the persons to be 'Karambakatiye Hichchi Malli' and 'Dammulle Gedara Sudda'. She also says that they were the same two people involved in the assault on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> January attack and assault on postman in Badulla**

CMEV received a report of an assault in Badulla where a postman named Periyasami Gnanasekaram who was on duty in the Newburg area was attacked by a group of unidentified people who arrived in three vans. They had accused him of not attending meetings by United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) Uva PC Minister Senthil Thondaman and beaten him, stolen valuable documents and personal belongings such as phone and his gold necklace. In the Police Complaint filed at the Ella Police Station (222/5) Mr. Gnanasekaram, says that 35 voting cards were stolen along with Rs 40,000. According to P.G. Gunawati, Post Master of Ella Post Office, the victim Periyasami was hospitalised.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> January, Clash between Puttalam UC Chairman K.A. Bais, his supporters and members of Puttalam Public Awareness Forum.**

A dispute between members of the Puttalam Public Awareness Forum (PPAF) and supporters of Urban Council Chairman K.A. Bais around noon on 3<sup>rd</sup> January was reported to CMEV. Police had called both parties to settle the dispute on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and the clash had occurred when both had left the Police. PPFA members had been attacked but no serious injury is reported. This second incident was also filed as a complaint by both parties EIB /1/15 and EIB / 2/ 15. This case is presently before the Puttalam Magistrates Court

The previous day (2<sup>nd</sup> January) there was an incident at about 7.20 p.m. in the evening when members of PPAF had been holding a small informative gathering at the Puttalama Muslim Mosque to educate women in that area about the importance of voting. Supporters of K.A. Bais had arrived at the gathering and asked the PPAF members to take the meeting elsewhere and to not hold it near the mosque. One person had received minor injuries during this dispute while several others had been assaulted. Supporters of PPFA filed a complaint at the Puttalam Police Station CIBI 197/90.

The CMEV monitor who had gone to the Police to verify the incident was informed by supporters of UC Chairman Bais not to take any pictures or videos of the discussion between the two parties.

### **January 3<sup>rd</sup> shots fired at NDF party office in Polonnaruwa**

CMEV received a complaint about a shooting at a New Democratic Front (NDF) party office in Polonnaruwa at about 6.30 pm. According to an eye-witness, about 50 armed individuals with T56s guns had arrived in about 10 Defenders and attacked the office. Damages include destruction of cut-outs and damage to a motorcycle and lorry that was parked in the vicinity. The eye witness also suspects the identities of two of the assailants to be United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) Dimbulagala Pradeshya Sabha members Dammika Nishantha and Ananda Wijeyaraja.

Former United Nations Party (UNP) Pradeshya Sabha member S.A. Janaka Samarasinghe who was at the office at the time was attacked with a glass bottle by one of the assailants and hospitalised at the Polonnaruwa Base Hospital as a result of the severe injury to his head.

Three complaints were filed at the Aralaganwila Police Station namely EIB 13/2015 (complaint filed by H.M. U. Alahakoon), EIB 14/2015 (filed by R.M. W. G.Podibanda) and EIB 15/2015 (filed by D.M. K.P. Dissanayake).

### **2<sup>nd</sup> January shooting at North Western PC member Lakshman Wendaruwa residence in Kurunegala**

CMEV received a report of a shooting at the residence of UPFA North Western Provincial Council Lakshman Wendaruwa at about 11.45 pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Two men who arrived in a jeep (plate number unknown) had shot Samarakoonge Abeykoon, driver of Mr. Wendaruwa. At the time, Mr. Wendaruwa was out at a meeting. The driver who had heard a vehicle outside the gate, had gone out to open the gate when he was shot. He was taken to the Kurunegala General Hospital and has undergone minor surgery for his injuries.

CMEV notes that the shooting took place just hours after Mr. Wendaruwa announced his decision to support the Common Candidate Maithripala Sirisena at the Presidential Election.

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 organisation to monitor the incidence of election related violence. Currently, CMEV is made up of CPA and INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.

**I CMEV reports and communiqués can be accessed online at [www.cmev.org](http://www.cmev.org)**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Saravanamuttu', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. P. Saravanamuttu  
Co – Convener