



CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

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Parliamentary General Election 2015

Media Communiqué 07

10th August 2015 Colombo, Sri Lanka

Below is a summary of the major cases of election related violence reported to CMEV from the 6th of August to the 8th of August 2015.

06th August 2015- Preventing Election Monitoring, Trincomalee.

CMEV field monitor in the Trincomalee district was prevented from carrying out election monitoring activities by the Assistant Returning Officer and another elections officer when attempting to monitor the postal voting at the 6th Wijayaba Army Camp in Trincomalee.

This incident took place at about 1.45 P.M. after the monitor presented credentials and received permission from the officer in charge of the polling station Mr. A.M.P.A Chandrasekara (Major). However, when attempting to commence monitoring, the monitor was prevented by the Election Department officers who demanded that he present his credentials again. Thereafter, the monitor was questioned as to what CMEV was and as to what right Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Co-Convenor of CMEV, had to authorize the monitoring activity, was demanded of him.

As the monitor was under duress at the station, he had chosen to leave the station and report to another polling station to monitor the postal voting.

06th August 2015-Use of Fire Arms, Rathnapura

It was reported to CMEV that an unidentified group has shot at the residence of UNP supporter Mr. Janaka Pushpakumara at around 12.00 A.M. Mr. Pushpakumara had immediately called the police emergency services who had responded to the location in Dammusawana in Rathnapura.

CMEV can confirm that a complaint has been lodged at the Rathnapura Police station under EIB 319/48 and that investigations have commenced.

07th August 2015- Election Offence, Trincomalee

It was reported to CMEV that a supporter of the TNA has been arrested while in possession of forged ballot papers at around 11.30 A.M. Mr. Yogaiah Prabhakaran, the accused was arrested by the Sampur Police station after a tip off was received by police intelligence services

Mr. Prabhakaran, was produced before the Muttur Magistrate courts under M.C 31721/15 and was released after paying a personal bail of Rs.100, 000.

07th Election Offence, Colombo

It was reported to CMEV that a discussion has been organized by the UNP at the Solis Hotel in Kotte from 10 A.M to 2.00 P.M at which members of election violence monitoring bodies have spoken in a biased manner in support of the UNP. Those who spoke have been identified as Ms. Nimalka Fernando, executive at INFORM, Mr. Sudarshana Gunwardhene executive at 'Rights Now Collective for Democracy' and two other entities involved in monitoring election violence.

Those speaking at the event had criticized former president, Mr. Mahinda Rajapakse.

07th August 2015- Assault in Colombo

Colombo district candidate Ven. Wataraka Vijitha thero, of Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) was assaulted by an unidentified group near Keselwatta, Panadura Police station. The thero was admitted to ward No: 72 in the Colombo National Hospital.

When CMEV contacted Vijitha thero, he said that the incident happened while he was engaging in propaganda activities in the Keselwatte area when he was attacked by 4 unidentified individuals who were clad in robes. Elaborating on what had since transpired the thero said that he had discharged himself from the National Hospital as more individuals clad in robes had come to threaten him.

Upon contacting the Keselwatte Police station Mr. J.K.S Jayanetti OIC, he said that there were inconsistencies in the statements made by Ven. Vijitha thero. He said the thero has engaged in canvassing with a group of Muslims near the Keselwatte temple and had acted in manner that incited racism. Mr. J.K.S Jayanetti said that it was at this point the villagers had tried to assault the thero. Responding to the situation, the police officers had rescued the thero and dropped him near Peliyagoda Bridge. After this the thero had gone to a police patrol near the Victoria Bridge and claimed that an unidentified group was following him and requested protection. Subsequently, the police patrol had handed him over to Grandpass Police station.

When CMEV contacted Grandpass Police station OIC Mr. Vimal Shantha, he said that when they attempted to question Ven. Vijitha thero, he has refused to answer claiming that he was feeling hungry and traumatized. Subsequently, the police has offered him food and admitted him to Colombo National Hospital.

When CMEV contacted NSSP leader, Dr. Wickremabahu Karunaratne, he confirmed the claims made by the Ven. thero.

08th August 2015- Attack on party office, Colombo

A UNP campaign office of Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, at Abdul Hameed Mw, Colombo 12, was attacked by supporters of UNP candidate Mr. Mohommed Mujibur Rahuman. The incident occurred at around 3. 30 P.M. when about 150 individuals gathered in support of UNP candidate Mr. Rahuman whose campaign office is a short distance from Mr. Wickremesinghe's office. The group was reported to have been drunk and to have lit fire crackers and yelled in front of the campaign office of Mr. Wickremesinghe.

Subsequently, the group has broken into Mr. Wickremesinghe's office and damaged cut-outs, after which the two groups had confronted each other. Responding to the situation the Keselwatta Police had arrived at the location and fired into the air to dispel the crowd.

08th August 2015- Attack on party office, Hambanthota

A JVP campaign office at Thalagahahandiya, Polonnaaruwa was attacked and additionally, the cut-out set ablaze by a group of 4 unidentified individuals and at around 1.30 A.M.

An entry has been lodged with the Tangalle police station under EIB 127/33. A Police sergeant confirmed the incident and said that they have commenced investigations.

Complainant Mr. H.K Thilekeratne, said that he was unable to identify those involved in the attack but suspected the participation of villagers.

08th August 2015- Assault, Nuwareliya

An unidentified mob attacked Mr. Sellaiyah Vigneshwaran a supporter of the Citizen's Front while canvassing in Pundalu Oya Watta.

Mr. N.P.M Suraweera OIC, of the Pundalu Oya Police station confirmed that a complaint had been lodged in under EIB 2/15. Elaborating on the incident he said that five perpetrators had arrived at the location in a van and assaulted the supporters. However, he confirmed that none of the victims had been hospitalized. He also said that investigation had commenced to locate the owner of the van and press charges.

When CMEV inquired with the Nuwaraeliya divisional election operational unit, they confirmed the claims made by Mr. N.P.M Suraweera. The complainant Mr. Vigneshwaran suspects that the perpetrators were supporters of UNF candidate Mr. Palani Digambaram. He also identified the driver of the van as Mr. Mylvaanagam Raja, and claimed the van was owned by Mr. Palaniwenna Vijitha.

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, FMM and INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.

All CMEV reports and communiqués can be accessed online at 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