



CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

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Mr. Mahinda Deshapriya, Chairman, Mr. Nalin Abeysekera, P.C, Member, Elections Commission, Prof. S. Rathnajeewan H. Hoole, Member, Elections Commission,

Elections Commission of Sri Lanka,
Elections Secretariat,
Rajagiriya.
2018-01-20

DEAR SIRs,

Hindering The Electoral Process Through Hate-Speech and Causing Discomfort and Disgrace To Female Candidates in The Local Authorities Elections

On behalf of Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), I would like to express our sincere gratitude for the efforts taken by Elections Commission to conduct the upcoming election in a free and fair manner.

In the meantime, we would like to draw the attention of the Elections Commission towards viral videos disseminated through social media, containing insults and hate speech against female candidates in the elections.

As indicated in the video footage we have forwarded to the E-mail account of the Elections Commission, the cleric known as Niyaz Maulavi is responsible for vitriolic and inflammatory criticism of women's involvement in politics and includes his use of profanities in this regard. In addition, he has released degrading statements tarnishing the reputation of female candidates thereby indicating that his objective is their withdrawal from the elections. Female candidates from the Puttlam district, the Northern and Eastern Provinces are particular targets. The cleric claims to be a member of the Jamiuththowheed also known as Thowheed Jamath. Moreover, we have learned of the possibility of candidates from other parties utilizing the aforementioned videos in their campaigns.

Consequent to the sentiments aroused by these videos, on 19th January an office of a female candidate in the area was set on fire. Other female candidates in the area have expressed their concerns to us regarding the intimidating environment created around them owing to these incidents. (Another complaint of a similar nature will be sent to you in due course).

We strongly urge you to take appropriate measures in this regard and thereby both protect and strengthen the integrity of the electoral process.

Thank you
Yours sincerely
Dr. P. Saravanamuttu,
Co-Convener

Copies: Mr. Poojith Jayasundera, Inspector General of Police, Sri Lanka Police, Police Headquarters

Mr. C. D. Wickramarathne, Senior Assistant head of police (Administration and elections), Sri Lanka Police

B. M. I. S. I. Bandara, Assistant Election Commissioner, District office of Elections, Putlam.