



**CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE**

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**தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்**

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**Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd., and Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu vs.**

**Nimal G. Punchihewa, Chairman - Election Commission and others**

**28th February 2023.** The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) and its Executive Director filed a Fundamental Rights application challenging the failure and/or refusal of several government departments to take the necessary steps to hold the Local Government Elections. CPA is a constituent member and acts as the secretariat to the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV).

Elections to elect persons as members of Local Authorities in Sri Lanka are required to be held every 04 years (48 months) in terms of the relevant statutes. Elections were previously held in 2018, and the term of the Local Authorities that were due to expire in 2022 were extended for a year thereafter, and their term will expire shortly, with no further option available in law for extension.

On 30th January 2023, it was announced that the poll for Local Authorities Elections would be held on 09th March 2023. However, on 13th February 2023, the Elections Commission announced that it had been informed by the Government Printer that it would not be able to print the ballots necessary for the postal voting, if funds were not provided. It has also been reported that the Government Printer had stated that they cannot print the required ballot papers due to lack of Police security.

The Petitioners stated that the conduct of the Government Printer and the Inspector General of Police are indicative of a coordinated campaign to procrastinate the holding of Local Authority elections. The Petitioners also stated that the President, in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, and the Secretary to the Treasury have not, until the very last minute on the 23rd February 2023 indicated that there is a challenge in the allocation of funds to conduct the elections. These actions are prejudicial to the fundamental rights of the Petitioners and citizens of Sri Lanka.

The Petitioners have emphasized that the exercise of franchise as required in terms of the law is essential for a country to be a democracy, and the conduct of elections must be treated as an essential, for Sri Lanka to be and remain a democratic republic.

The Petitioners state that their rights under Articles 10, 12(1) and 14(1)(a) of the Constitution have been violated and/or continue to be violated by such attempts to sabotage and stall the holding of the Local Authority elections.



DR. P. Saravanamuttu  
Co – Convenor