

# Human Rights Review

Issue No. 122

December - February 2010



## SILENT ENCOURAGEMENT

**A member from the police riot squad stands nonchalantly as goons allegedly affiliated to the government armed with rocks and iron bars prepare to attack members of the opposition, who gathered before the Premadasa statue near the Hulftsdorp Court Complex on Wednesday to participate in a satyagraha calling for the immediate release of General Sarath Fonseka.**

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>EDITORIAL</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CURRENT ISSUES :</b>	
<b>ELECTION VIOLENCE - DEMOCRACY UNDER THREAT - HR VIOLENCE</b>	
• <i>Anoma : They dragged my husband away like an animal</i>	<b>4</b>
• <i>Two more killings election incidents top 695</i>	<b>5</b>
• <i>Only 32% polling cards issues</i>	<b>6</b>
• <i>Corruption costs country Rs. 210 bn a year—Mangala</i>	
• <i>SF challenges the President</i>	<b>7</b>
• <i>The impact of the jumbo Cabinet on the cost of living</i>	<b>8</b>
• <i>Presidential Election 2010 &amp; the integrity of the electoral Process by Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu</i>	<b>9</b>
• <i>Our double tongued Election commissioner D. Dissanayake</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION DENIED</b>	
• <i>Thank you for standing by me in these traumatic Times</i>	<b>11</b>
• <i>Hero' Honour For Lasantha</i>	<b>12</b>
<b>WAR CRIMES</b>	
• <i>Lanka rejects Dublin war crimes probe, calls for....</i>	<b>14</b>
• <i>Dublin Verdict</i>	<b>15</b>
• <i>Govt. not guilty, says Army</i>	<b>16</b>
• <i>President scoffs at Dublin verdict</i>	
<b>PLIGHT OF IDPS</b>	
• <i>Over 30,000 IDPs missing</i>	<b>17</b>
• <i>Healthcare withdrawn from all the IDP camps</i>	
<b>ARTICLES</b>	
• <i>Do we need a change?</i>	<b>18</b>
• <i>Why do you tolerate waste &amp; corruption?</i>	<b>20</b>
<b>UNIT REPORTS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>STAFF INFORMATION</b>	<b>24</b>

**INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS**  
**No. 42, SKELTON ROAD,**  
**COLOMBO 05.**  
[www.ihrsrilanka.org](http://www.ihrsrilanka.org)

EDITED BY

LEELA ISAAC

LAYOUT DESIGNED BY

HASHINI RAJARATNA

COVER PAGE PICS BY

Sunday Leader - 14/02/2010

## DO WE WANT DEMOCRACY?

There seems to be a yearning among the majority of Sri Lankans (more than 6 million) to go back to the glorious past when the Sinhala kings ruled over the country. It was only in 1815 that the last king of Kandy disappeared and the democratic system that the British gradually introduced thereafter is quite alien to us. Even today democracy is resented by some as a system imposed on us by our colonial masters.

With a king to rule over them the people were not burdened with the responsibility of electing a ruler. The king was simply anointed and was believed to have inherited the 'divine' right to rule over his kingdom. It was his duty to feed his people, fight the invaders and safeguard the sovereignty of the country. People were willing to worship and obey him. Those who disobeyed his orders received summary justice and many ingenious methods of execution were used.

The desire of the people to return to this ancient system where they could be free of all responsibility and simply obey the king's commands has been expressed in the way they voted in the Presidential election. They voted overwhelmingly for the leader who single handedly saved the country from the Tamil Terrorists. In their eyes he alone symbolises the true Sinhala Buddhist nationalism. They are jubilant over the 'most stunning victory of all' and they marvel at the 'spectacular margin' with which he won the election. He is the one fit to be a 'King from the right caste and class'.

"Why should we have elections at all?, an 'educated' elderly lady queried. Hasn't Mahinda Rajapakse won the war for us? Thanks to him, we are able to live without fear today, so why shouldn't we crown him our king and express our gratitude?" If the majority of the people reject the democratic system and want to bring back a king to rule over them, no one can deny them that right. Certainly not the international community, by which we mean the Western powers. We now have other friends in the East ready and willing to help us. They too are not enamored by democracy and one of them has even given our president a crown.

The international community is hated for different reasons. They are accused of destroying our culture and of having exploited our resources during the colonial days. At the moment they are being accused of conspiring against Sri Lanka in order to destabilize it and help the Tamil separatists to achieve their goal. General Fonseka and the opposition leaders are also seen as part of the conspiracy. Perhaps they will be tried for treason. There are journalists who scream hysterically that "international vultures are hovering around Mahinda Rajapaksa, our President who won the war for us". War crimes need not be probed, they say. (Look at what they have done in Iraq and Afghanistan). How can they question our President about war crimes?. It is our duty to protect him from these 'international vultures'. We don't need their GSP + concessions.

Such is the mood of the people. The opposition leaders and General Fonseka are questioning the validity of the presidential election results. But they

cannot prove these allegations of fraud. The election commissioner who was moaning and almost crying that he was being harassed on Election Day, today challenges the opposition to prove that the election was fraudulent. They can howl and protest that democracy is being eroded, that post election violence is being continued and that the parliament is being made redundant. But majority of the people according to the election results are not with the opposition. They want a king who will feed them and protect the country from the Tamil terrorists. Corruption, nepotism and human rights violations do not worry them. The opposition is left helpless and they cannot save democracy unless the people themselves want the democratic system. Finally it is the people's verdict that will decide what direction the country is to take - democracy, family oligarchy or even monarchy.

The general election too will be won by President Rajapaksa and his supporters. There is no doubt about that. They will not only win but also get a two thirds majority in parliament. That would mean that the President would have 150 MPs to hold together. Each one of them would want a ministerial post. If denied they can do the usual jump across and Rajapakse would lose his two third majority in parliament. Therefore we will have to support a cabinet of 150 ministers or rather chieftains, whether we like them or not. Today even well known 'intellectuals' are prepared to accept "a little more corruption (unprovable) and a little more nepotism (which is understandable)" from the Rajapakse brothers. And so there will be no protest from the majority.

Those who still believe in democracy and human rights are in a minority. Left leaders who at one time stood for the ideals of democracy, liberty, equality and fraternity are no more. Today they are ready to serve a leader who they believe destroyed the Tamil Tigers single handedly and has the power to destroy anyone who challenges his authority. Vasudeva Nanayakara a one time Leftist and a close friend of Mahinda Rajapakse has decided not only to abandon all the ideals he stood for but also his own party the Democratic Left Front in order to fully support his friend and master the President. Wickramabahu Karunaratne seems to be the only samasamajist leader left of the Old Left.

Sarath Fonseka has been arrested by the military and is to be tried at a court martial. As a 'traitor' he could face even the death penalty.

If what was expressed through the recent election result is the wish of the majority of the people, the opposition and Human Rights activists will be forced to accept this verdict of the people. It is time then to bid goodbye to "alien" democracy and welcome the ancient "indigenous" feudal system hoping that benevolent kings will emerge to rule over us, should we then say amen?

Perhaps not. The number of people who are gathering to protest against this erosion of democracy seems to be increasing. Even some of the Buddhist clergy have now come forward to protect democracy. Therefore it may not be easy for those in power to bury Democracy. There is still hope.

# ELECTION VIOLENCE DEMOCRACY UNDER THREAT HR VIOLENCE

## Mahanayake decries Fonseka's Arrest

**Malwatte Prelate hits out at hypocrisy of political leaders**

The Mahanayaka of the Malawatte Chapter the most Venerable Tibbotuwawe Sri Siddhartha Sumangala Thera said yesterday it was a grave crime to imprison a war hero who had done an immense service to Sri Lanka in its fight to eradicate terrorism.

"Even if such a person does something wrong he should be pardoned," the Mahanayake Thera said.

The Prelate expressed his views when missing Lanka e news journalist Pradeep Ekneligoda's wife and two children met him in Kandy yesterday.

"The peoples' right to know the truth has to be safeguarded. For the people to know the real situation of the country, the truth should be written. Everyone has the right to know the truth. The truth should not be hidden. Depriving that right is not democracy," the Prelate said. "Various political party leaders come to us dressed in white attire and seek our advice. They just listen to what we say and do something different. I have an entire file of letters sent by innocent people who have been victimized for voting for the other side. Some people in Anuradhapura and Matara are afraid to stay in their homes at night and are hiding in the forest fearing for their lives. What is the need of a leader who harasses poor people? When casting their vote the voters should know not to send

They dragged my husband away like an animal



A visibly shocked and shaken Anoma Fonseka - wife of common opposition candidate General Sarath Fonseka -- pleaded for help to trace the whereabouts of her husband whom she alleged was abducted and treated like an animal by the military police on Monday night.

- Daily Mirror - 10 / 02 / 2010

this sort of people to such positions. If this situation continues we will not be able to see development in the country. People who were around Mr. Fonseka have been imprisoned. Their families have become destitute. Is this democracy," the Mahanayake asked "No one listens to what we say. I also cannot do anything. The leaders don't listen to what I say. I feel like stopping politicians from coming to this temple to meet me. Is it democracy to abduct journalists who reveal the truth? Even a media organization was sealed recently," he said.

At the meeting and on behalf of the National Intellectual Collective Professor Oliver Abeynayake handed over a document to the chief prelate regarding the abduction of journalist Ekneligoda who is still missing.

- Daily Mirror - 10 / 02 / 2010

## Death penalty or long jail terms

### FACT BOX



Former Army Commander and Chief of Defence Staff General Sarath Fonseka was arrested by the Military Police on Monday night.



He is facing charges of conspiring to overthrow the government and acting against the Army.

General Fonseka will be allowed to be represented by a lawyer at the trial at a Court Martial.

DM GraphicsDesk

The Army Act authorizes the Army Commander to set up a Court Martial with powers to impose the death penalty or lengthy jail terms on those found guilty, former Attorney General C.R. De Silva said yesterday.

He said a Court Martial normally comprises three high-ranking gazetted officers and its ruling is similar to a judgment + delivered by a court of law.

- Daily Mirror - 10 / 02 / 2010

## HRC raps police

In its final report on the inquiry into the killing of two youth in Angulana, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) claimed that police torture of those in custody had not changed despite pressure and a large number of Supreme Court rulings on the violation of fundamental rights.

- Daily Mirror - 10 / 02 / 2010

## Polls Monitors say Govt. ignoring vital guidelines

Transparency International Sri Lanka yesterday said all polls monitors were concerned that the government was showing unprecedented reluctance to comply with the directives and decisions of the Elections Commissioner.

Transparency International Sri Lanka, in a statement issued to the media, said: "All election monitors in the country note with concern that there is unprecedented reluctance on

the part of the Government to comply with the directives and decisions of the Elections Commissioner. "Most of the vital guidelines and Circulars issued by the Commissioner for the conduct of a free and fair Presidential Election are followed in the breach.

"While recognising the Commissioner as the sole authority to conduct any Election in the country, the monitors note that he will be totally

powerless unless there is genuine co-operation by public officials, the police and the military.

"In the backdrop of a highly politicised public service and police, Transparency International Sri Lanka urged the government to comply with the Election Commissioner's Instructions to ensure a free and fair poll.

- *The Island* - 19 / 01 / 2010

## Two more killings election incidents top 695

Two persons were killed in separate incidents in Kurunegala and Wariyapola taking the total elections violence related killings up to four and incidents up to 695. In Kurunegala one person was killed and four injured when a hand grenade was thrown at a residence which was also the election office of Minister Jayaratne Herath yesterday evening.

The victim was Suranga Indrajith (28) a driver attached to the Ministry of Health, police media spokesman I.M. Karunaratne said.

A supporter of the Joint Opposition Presidential Candidate Sarath Fonseka was clubbed to death at Ambakadawara, Wariyapola by a gang alleged to be UPFA supporters in the early yesterday.

A group of ten supporters of Gen. Fonseka had reportedly been pasting posters, when they came under attack by a gang on motorcycles. The supporters had fled to escape the attack, but one of them was killed.

It was alleged that the gang had assaulted with clubs, the men who were pasting posters. The victim H.M. Dhammika Herath (33) was a businessman in the area and

the son of the former Principal of Amakadawara Vidyalaya. The body was to be sent from Wariyapola District Hospital to the Kurunegala Teaching Hospital for a post-mortem. In connection with the killing the police was able to arrest five out of the six suspects who came in six motorbikes. Meanwhile, the Opposition Leader of the Dambulla Pradeshiya Sabha was stabbed by a group of four men yesterday morning.

The victim A.V. Rupasinghe received sharp injuries to his chest area, the police said. He was admitted to the Dambulla Hospital and was transferred to the Kandy General Hospital due to his critical condition and was now receiving treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The masked men have entered the house as he was sleeping at the time of the incident, the Sigiriya police said. According to the owners the mob has entered the house by putting down the front door by attacking it with iron bars. The armed men had then threatened the members of the family saying that they would be assaulted if they started shouting, Dambulla police said.

The mob had then fled the area in a vehicle and the residents of the area who rushed to the scene removed the victim to the hospital.

- *Daily Mirror* - 19 / 01 / 2010

## Fire Again For Tiran Alles

The loud explosion at approximately 4.30 a.m. on Friday, January 22 from the home of Tiran and Lydia Alles, situated in the quiet residential area of Galpotha Road, Nawala caused neighbours to sit up on their beds in alarm.

And at 7.15 a.m as the fire gave way to cinders, among the darkened debris stood the Alles black car - a Toyota worth Rs. 10 million, now a white shell of aluminium.

Scattered glass, broken windows, and strewn belongings gave way to the inside where senior police officers, photographers, relatives, friends and well wishers filled the white-hued, once serene home.

"This attack is politically motivated," said Tiran Alles, opposition member, businessman and one time publisher who came under a series of attacks since he severed connections with the present regime.

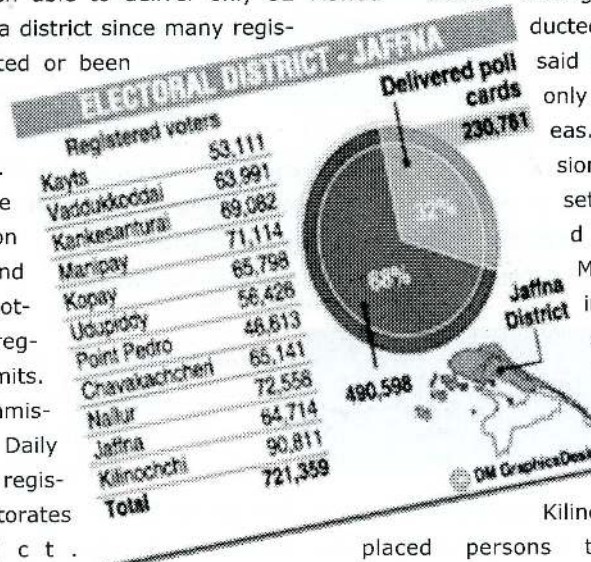
- *The Sunday Leader* - 24 / 01 / 2010

## MANY JAFFNA VOTERS EITHER MIGRATED OR DISPLACED

### only 32% polling cards issued

Official says people can vote with valid IDs

The postal authorities have been able to deliver only 32 percent of poll cards in the Jaffna district since many registered voters have either migrated or been displaced due to the war during the past few decades, election officials said yesterday. The same problem arose at the Jaffna Municipal Council election held last August with only around 50,000 poll cards delivered to voters out of the total of 105,000 registered within the municipal limits. Jaffna Assistant Elections Commissioner P. Kuganathan told the Daily Mirror that there were 721,359 registered voters in the eleven electorates of the district.



Mr. Kuganathan said as at January 16, 230,761 poll cards had been delivered to voters through the post offices in the district. He said that most other voters had either left the country or been displaced due to the war. However, he noted that voters who did not have their poll cards could also cast their ballots by producing valid identity cards approved by the Elections Commissioner. Bundles of undelivered poll cards have now been stacked at the post offices in the Jaffna district.

## Corruption costs country Rs. 210 bn a year - Mangala

Sri Lanka Freedom Party - Mahajana Wing leader MP Mangala Samaraweera said it had been estimated that Sri Lanka lost 210 billion rupees annually owing to corrupt practices during the last four years.

He said that the government had spent only 177 billion rupees on the war in 2009.

Parliamentarian Wijedasa Rajapakshe said that the Sri Lanka Parliamentary Committee on Public Enterprises' (COPE) investigation had recorded that the country had lost more than 300 billion rupees because of corruption.

"In 2009, Sri Lanka for the first time in its history borrowed more than it generated and our total loans amounted to 850 billion rupees," Rajapakshe said.

Every Sri Lankan was now in debt to the tune of 210,000 rupees, which had four years ago stood at 110,000 rupees, he said.

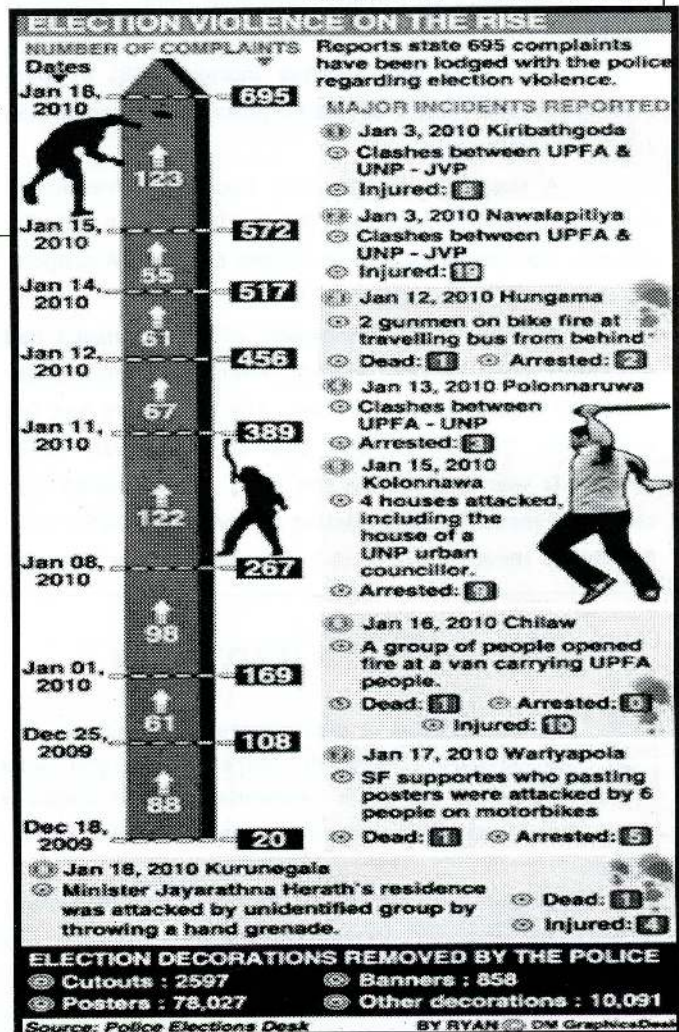
- The Island - 19 / 01 / 2010

only 32% polling cards issued "In Jaffna, most people have their National Identity Cards. They can produce them for voting on the day of polling. We have issued around 7000 temporary identity cards only during this period," he said.

Asked about arrangements for the election to be conducted in the Kilinochchi electorate, he said that people had been resettled only in two Divisional Secretariat areas. In the Poonakry (Pooneryn) division, 11,045 persons have been resettled and 5206 in the Kilinochchi division. Mr. Kuganathan said that he is taking steps to establish 19 polling stations at 12 locations in Poonakry and eight polling stations at four locations in Kilinochchi. Besides, he said a cluster polling booth would be set up at the Kilinochchi Central College for displaced persons to exercise their franchise.

"We will arrange transport facilities for voters to reach the polling stations. Some voters live five or six kilometres away from their respective polling stations," he said.

- Daily Mirror - 19 / 01 / 2010



## SF challenges the President

Presidential candidate General Sarath Fonseka who is held in detention at the Navy Headquarters yesterday filed an election petition before the Supreme Court challenging the re-election of incumbent President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

General Fonseka in his petition asked Court to nullify the election of President Rajapaksa and instead to declare General Fonseka as the duly elected President of Sri Lanka.

## EC: GSP if HR improve

The European Commission says the latest developments in Sri Lanka have been taken into consideration when deciding on the GSP+ concession for the country and insisted that there needs to be more improvements in Sri Lanka's human rights situation.

## Workers dress up for showdown

A trade union which claims to represent the largest group of apparel sector workers said yesterday it would take to the streets against the government and the employers for the loss of the European Union tariff concession -- the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP+). Free Trade Zone Workers' Union

## Act of cruelty says Congress of Religions

The Congress of Religions which condemned the arrest of General (Rtd.) Sarath Fonseka said it could be considered as a cruel act committed at a time when the opposition was preparing to file a petition challenging the results of the recent presidential election and when the general election was declared.

## Democracy threatened; political rivals in jeopardy: IUSF

The Inter University Students' Federation (IUSF) held a protest yesterday in front of the Kelaniya University against the arrest of the main Opposition Presidential Candidate, General Sarath Fonseka.

"We are here today because democracy is threatened; those who don't have the same political views and who oppose the present government are being in jeopardy," said Convener for IUSF, Sanjeewa Bandara.

He pointed out that if there was anyone against the government today they had only two choices and that was either to die or to get arrested. He also said that the government had threatened media persons during the election and he asked the people of the country not to let a rule like Hitler's or Idi Amin's be there in the country and asked them to take to the streets against this.

## Presidential Poll did not fully meet the key benchmarks

*Commonwealth observers recommend remedial measures in Final Report*

The Commonwealth Expert Team that monitored the presidential election last month in a final report yesterday said the 2010 presidential election did not fully meet the key benchmarks for a democratic poll though the Election Day was free and fair.

The Commonwealth observers expressed concern over abuses by state institutions, increasing politicisation of the military and non adherence to the rule of law.

They warned the cumulative effect on pre-election problems and post-election incidents and the undermining the integrity of the democratic process in the eyes of the population could undermine public confidence and trust in elections and politics in Sri Lanka.

## Kandy Sanga powwow put off

**KANDY** – The four Mahanayaka theros yesterday decided to put off a special meeting of the Maha Sangha scheduled for Thursday (Feb 18) at the Mahamaluwa opposite the Sri Dalada Maligawa to discuss the situation in the country in the aftermath of the recently concluded presidential polls.

The Maha Nayaka Theros, who had convened the meeting recently following representations made by the joint Opposition issued notice of cancellation on Tuesday afternoon, stated that the Congress had been postponed indefinitely taking into consideration security of the Sangha and laymen and the dignity of Sri Dalada Maligawa.

## The impact of the jumbo Cabinet on the cost of living

Our people are being crushed by the heavy cost of living. Even basic commodities are beyond the reach of many and prices are continuing to increase with no end in sight. Some months back inflation hit 29.9 percent; a record in our 62 years of independence. The main reason for the high cost of living is the enormous taxes being heaped on our people to meet the wasteful expenses of the Government

Sri Lanka has 132 ministers and deputy ministers to 'govern' a country of 20 million, when our giant neighbour India has only 48 ministers to govern 1.2 billion people. Sri Lanka has entered the record books today by being the only country in the world to have more than 90 percent of the governing party MPs sitting in parliament being either a minister or a deputy minister. These ministerial portfolios have been dished out purely to sustain a majority in Parliament, due to the incumbent regime's selfish hunger to stay in power. A few days ago yet another ministerial portfolio was created to accommodate an opposition MP who crossed over.

Just for the upkeep of the 132 cabinet, the people of our country have to incur at least Rs. 4 billion a year in taxes. In contrast, the budgeted allocation for the entire Samurdhi Programme which provides welfare to some 9 million of this nation's poorest families is only 10 billion. To meet the runaway cost

of maintaining the present cabinet, the government imposes numerous taxes. Even essential food such as milk powder, rice, sugar, onions and dhal is taxed making the common man's burden almost impossible to bear. In actually this government is making you pay for their lust for power.

For each liter of petrol you purchase, you are paying a tax of Rs. 65. if on the other hand, the tax on petrol can be reduced, the cost of transportation would also decrease and with it, the cost of living in a meaningful way. The present government has no interest in putting an end to this unjust taxation that represents a colossal drain on our national economy. There is a form of governance motivated solely by staying in power.

### *My solution:*

I will immediately disband this jumbo Cabinet and limit the number of ministries in my Cabinet to bring the cost down to a manageable level. This simple measure would result in a massive saving that could easily be passed on the public by minimizing irrational taxation. I will reduce duties and taxes on essential food and fuel as soon as assuming office. By doing so, I hope to provide tangible economic relief to the general public, I have pledged to serve.

**By Sarath Fonseka**

## Kusuma's fatal bus ride

The first fatality of poll related violence in the run-up to the presidential election, Kusumawathe Kuruppuarchchi (58) was a resident of Mali Hena, Bimbadu Yaya of Vitharandeniya and a mother of five children.

According to Nandana Siriwardena (33) the UNP organiser of Vitharandeniya who had witnessed the incident their bus passed a UPFA Elections Campaign Office around 12.30.p.m. where he claims to have seen a van nearby, which had started following the bus with a motorcycle.

Then, the three of them riding the motor cycle started firing at the bus. I ducked, but I realized that someone in the bus had got hit.

Thereafter I helped to take the injured to the hospital," Siriwardena added.

The bullet had hit Kusumawathie on her stomach and she started bleeding profusely.

We took her to the Tangalle Hospital from there she had been transferred immediately to Matara Hospital, where she succumbed to her injuries.

**- Daily Mirror - 14 / 01 / 2010**



## Presidential Election 2010 and the Integrity of the Electoral Process

By Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu

Elections are the basic mechanism for choice and change in a functioning democracy. Through the exercise of our fundamental right of the franchise, through elections we choose those who will make the decisions in public affairs that decisively affect our welfare, wellbeing and interest. Accordingly, the integrity of the electoral process is paramount. A flawed or sullied process robs the credibility and legitimacy of those chosen through it and erodes public trust and confidence in the available processes and institutions of representative democracy. As a range of public authorities and political actors have roles and responsibilities for the conduct of elections – the Department of Elections and the Commissioner, the public service and Police, the political parties and civil society and the media – elections also provide a good gauge of the state of governance in the country. In this respect, recent developments in the context of the Presidential Election are cause for grave concern.

As reported in the Daily Mirror of 13 January 2010:

The Election Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake threatened yesterday to withdraw from his duties related to the Presidential Election asserting that the authorities concerned had not aided him by adhering to the guidelines and regulations issued by him to create an atmosphere conducive to a free and fair election.

The Election Commissioner is the key official entrusted with the responsibility for the conduct of the elections. The Seventeenth Amendment to the Constitution, which is being intentionally violated through non-implementation, provides for the establishment of

an Election Commission. It also entrusts the powers of this Commission to the current holder of the post of Election Commissioner until such time as the Commission provided for under the Amendment is established. Amongst these powers is the authority to appoint a Competent Authority for the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation – both named in the Amendment – should their reportage of the election be deemed to be partisan and biased. The Election Commissioner appointed Mr Hettiarachchi to this post and as reported banned a number of programmes of these two institutions. It has been reported that at the 13th meeting, he also said that he would consider withdrawing the Competent Authority. According to the Daily Mirror report the Commissioner had said that the Competent Authority “had been humiliated by the state media”.

In the matters of the Competent Authority, the removal of posters and cutouts and the flagrant abuse of state resources, the Commissioner by his own admission and despite his best efforts – as exemplified in his directives, guidelines and appeals to the Police, the public service and political parties – has been ineffective. In a context of scant respect throughout government for the rule of law and constitutionalism, it is hardly surprising that this is the case in this historic and important election as well. The overwhelming need to cling onto and consolidate state power hastens the erosion of democratic rights and freedoms, institutions and processes. We are proud of our exercise of the franchise over seven decades. At the same time, we must be aware that we are exercising it in increasingly

insalubrious times.

Mr Dissanayake has given vent to his frustration and despair. He may have hoped that this would in turn, have even a mild deterrent effect on those who flout his authority.

One hopes that he will not disengage or withdraw from the process and moreover that there will not be occasion for him to even consider this, in the just under two weeks to polling day. Those who flout his authority should take a break from their hypocrisy and chutzpah and consider for a moment as to what the impact on democratic governance and the rule of law in this country would be if the opposition took the law into their own hands on account of a collapse and the dysfunction of the agencies of the state charged with the responsibility for the conduct of elections? What if vigilante groups spring up to defend and protect opposition interests in levelling the playing field in the face of the inability and/or unwillingness of the agencies of the state to do so?

The spike in the number of incidents of election-related violence as polling day approaches profiled by the murder in Hungama and the clash in Polonnaruwa coupled with the expectation of the great probability of more violence as the race gets tighter, underscores the concerns for the rule of law and the integrity of the electoral process. This is not the first election campaign in which there has been violence nor is it the worst up to date. However it is the first in which the Commissioner has expressed his frustration and despair in the way that he did on the 13th and the worst by all accounts with regard to the scale of the abuse of state resources. It is an election in which there is a considerable polarization of opinion and common consensus on the stakes

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 09)

being very high. Especially worrying is the speculation over voter and polling agent access to polling stations in certain areas, fears about the count being disrupted, acceptance of the result and post election violence. The current context has fuelled this speculation. Unequivocal action demonstrating commitment to defend the integrity of the electoral process is critically necessary by all concerned including the main candidates, to squash this speculation

and ensure that despite the setbacks to the process in the early stages of the campaign, the integrity of the process can not only be salvaged but strengthened beyond doubt as well.

Whilst all sides have the right to fight hard for their cause, they must do so within the law. They cannot be allowed to get away with flouting the law with impunity and with taking the law into their own hands.

The victory of either of the two

main candidates must not be at a cost to democratic institutions and processes. This is a very important election and all citizens eligible to vote and who want to, must be able to do so in the fullest confidence that their vote counts.

Whoever wins, it must be without prejudice to the institutions and processes of liberal democracy in Sri Lanka. It is our right and our duty to ensure this.

- Daily Mirror - 18 / 01 / 2010

## Our double tongued Election Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake



1. It is observed with much concern that certain violent incidents occurred during the poll and also during the counting of votes.
2. My directives and guidelines to prevent misuse of state resources and the state media were disregarded.
3. I feel harassed.
4. I will resign from my post with immediate effect. I will not stay to conduct another election.

1. It was a very clean and peaceful election, I challenge the opposition to prove that it was a fraudulent election.
2. I appreciate very much state owned and private media organizations which helped me in my work.
3. I was not harassed by any party. I had had no sleep for 37 hours and I was fatigued. The opposition misinterpreted my body language as being under duress while announcing the final results.
4. I will not resign. But will be very happy to conduct the forth coming general election.

# FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION DENIED

**“Thank You For Standing By Me In These Traumatic Times”  
-Tissainayagam**

**A**n editor, writer and columnist for The Sunday Leader, The Sunday Times and thereafter editor of the controversial North Eastern Monthly magazine, J.S. Tissainayagam, winner of the US based Peter Mackler Prize for Courageous and Ethical Journalism was released on bail last Wednesday morning.

News of Tissainayagam's bail order of Rs. 50,000 reached the media Monday. On Tuesday afternoon, journalists gathered at the entrance of the Welikada Prison waiting for their friend and fellow journalist Tissainayagam to walk out at 12.30 p.m, but were told that there were a few more formalities before he could be let out on bail.

Tissainayagam who was sentenced to 20 years rigorous imprisonment by the High Court of Colombo was granted bail, pending an appeal in the Court of Appeal.

And at 10.28 am on Wednesday, January 13, he walked out of the Court of Appeal in Colombo, about twenty kilos lighter, yet carrying a heavy heart. Wearing a red tie and a faded striped shirt, this once dynamic journalist who bubbled with energy, enthusiasm and confidence seemed a broken man.

“I thank my colleagues and fellow journalists, and all those who supported me during this traumatic period,” said the soft spoken journalist as he smiled into the cameras around him.

It seemed ironical that this veteran journalist, who was always in the centre of the news room was now the centre of news coverage. When asked about his days in jail, Tissainayagam shook his head dejectedly not wanting to say anything at all, but his red-rimmed eyes and pale, drawn face seemed to say it all.

J.S. Tissainayagam was convicted on three counts, including editing, printing and distributing the North Eastern Monthly magazine during the period be-

tween June 1, 2006 and June 1, 2007.

Tissa's release came two weeks after the Sri Lankan Government informed court that it had no objection if bail was given to Tissainayagam, the first journalist in the island nation to be convicted under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)

He stands charged on the count of inciting communal disharmony, which is an offence punishable under Prevention of Terrorism Act. He was also convicted for collecting money to run the magazine and thereby furtherance of terrorism, an offence punishable under Emergency Regulations.

Tissainayagam was arrested in March 2008, when he visited the Terrorist Investigation Department in search of his colleague and publisher V. Jasikaran. He was held without charge for almost six months and then on August 25, he was charged with writing to incite ethnic disharmony.

The trial lasted one and a half years and Tissainayagam was convicted for 20 years hard labour on August 31. The case attracted attention within and outside Sri Lanka. US President Barrack Obama reportedly said that he was concerned about threats against the media the world over, and mentioned the plight of J. S. Tissainayagam, who had been detained for over a year at the time. “In every corner of the globe, there are journalists (who are) in jail or being actively harassed: from Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe, Burma to Uzbekistan, Cuba to Eritrea,” President Obama said in a statement marking World Press Freedom Day on May 3.

**- The Sunday Leader - 17 / 01 / 2010**

## Hero' Honour For Lasantha

Founder Editor of The Sunday Leader, Lasantha Wickrematunge, who was shot dead in January 2009, has been posthumously declared a hero for freedom of the press by the International Press Institute (IPI).

In a statement, the Institute honoured Wickrematunge as an IPI World Press Freedom Hero. The nomination of Wickrematunge was unanimously approved by the five-member IPI World Press Freedom Hero jury.

Wickrematunge will be one of 60 World Press Freedom Heroes honoured in a ceremony to commemorate the IPI's 60th year of defending press freedom worldwide at the IPI World Congress in Vienna and Bratislava from September 11-14.

"The murder of Wickrematunge was a shocking reminder of the dangers facing Sri Lanka's courageous journalists, for whom death is all too often the ultimate form of censorship," said IPI Director David Dudge. "By naming him an IPI World Press Freedom Hero, IPI honours his memory and his sacrifice, and sends the strongest message possible to the Sri Lankan government that the international community will not forget his murder and that the perpetrators must be found and punished."

According to IPI Death Watch Count figures – highlighted in the recent release of the organisation's World Press Freedom Review 2009 – 17 journalists were killed in Sri Lanka because of their work over the last decade. Two, including Wickrematunge, were killed in 2009.

- *The Sunday Leader of 21/02/2010*

### FLASH BACK



#### January 8:

Sunday Leader chief editor Lasantha Wickramatunga is shot at by unidentified gunmen at the Bakery Junction, Attidiya. After being admitted to the Kalubowila Hospital he is pronounced dead.

The only suspect arrested in relation to the crime was Sugath Perera who had the mobile phone of the suspect in his possession.

Sugath Perera was repeatedly re-remanded as the since he was arrested, by the Mount Lavinia Magistrate.

#### October 1:

The Mirihana inform court that they are yet to establish if the murder was carried out by the suspect in custody or another group.

DM GraphicsDesk

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION DENIED

The regime is also planning to clamp down on the internet, reportedly with Chinese help. The Director General, Media Centre for National security, Lakshman Hulugalle is reported to have said: "If you go through the internet, SMS and e-mails, a lot of damage was done over the last one month by circulating rumors and unproved allegations. We cannot allow these people to do whatever they want. We want to go into these details, find out the people behind this and stop it". The future in which internet is as unfree for Sri Lankans as it is for the Chinese or the Iranians may not be far.

-*Tisarane Gunasekare*

- *The Sunday Leader of 14/02/2010*

## "Lanka " Editor taken into custody

The CID yesterday said the Lanka Newspaper Chief Editor Chandana Sirimalwatte had been taken into custody for questioning.

According to sources, the Lanka Editor had been taken into custody when he had called over at the CID Headquarters to make a statement.

They said the editor was being interrogated in connection with an alleged conspiracy against the Government.

CID Director Senior DIG Nandana Munasinghe said he could not officially comment on the arrest and the search on the Lanka office as the investigations were still being carried out.

Earlier it was reported that a CID team had entered the Lanka office yesterday evening

- *Daily Mirror - 30 / 01 / 2010*

## Rajapaksa Gets Astounding 98% Of Time On State Media

Detailed monitoring by the Paris-based Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has revealed that the state media, which have been turned into presidential propaganda outlets, have allocated an astounding 98.5 per cent of news and current affairs air-time to President Mahinda Rajapaksa whilst the main opposition presidential candidate General Sarath Fonseka was given a meager 1.6 per cent of air time on state-owned TV stations Rupavahini and ITN.

RSF noted that this was a direct flouting of the January 15 Supreme Court ruling and also violates the constitution, above all its Seventh Amendment and Article 104 (b) empowering the electoral commission.

"Alarmed by Gen. Sarath Fonseka's candidacy, President Rajapaksa and his followers are using and abusing all of the state's resources to get the President reelected," Reporters Without Borders said. "The TV propaganda is deafening and the figures we are releasing today are worthy of the Burmese or North Korean regimes."

The Reporters Without Borders monitoring on January 18 and 19 found that, of a total of 472 minutes and 5 seconds of news and current affairs air-time on Rupavahini and ITN, Gen. Fonseka and the other opposition candidates were granted only 7 minutes and 50 seconds, or 1.6 per cent, while the President, his government and his party were granted 465 minutes and 25 seconds.

According to RSF, on ITN one had to wait until the 7 p.m. Sinhalese-language news programme for coverage of

opposition activity (Gen. Fonseka for 30 seconds, the UNP for 40 seconds and the JVP for 45 seconds), while President Rajapaksa got 3 minutes on the 9 a.m. programme, 2 minutes on the 10 a.m. programme, 4 minutes 45 seconds on the noon programme and 4 minutes 20 seconds on the Tamil-language programme at 6 p.m. Rupavahini is giving the government an overwhelming air-time advantage. In the 8 p.m. Sinhalese-language news programme on January 18, for example, the government got 8 minutes and 30 seconds and the President got 7 minutes and 10 seconds, while Gen. Fonseka, the UNP and the JVP got a combined total of just one minute. The 20 or so other candidates are totally ignored by the state media.

Granting so much time to propaganda on behalf of the incumbent is not new. On January 11, for example, Rupavahini carried a live broadcast of President Rajapaksa's election programme launch that lasted one hour and 15 minutes.

"The President and his allies have abused other state resources in the course of the campaign. The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, for example, forced all mobile phone operators to send SMS messages signed by President Rajapaksa to all their clients, while soldiers have been seen putting up the President's election posters," RSF added.

- *The Sunday Leader* - 24 / 01 / 2010

## Five media groups seek free post-poll environment

Five major media organizations in the country have expressed deep concern over what they called increasing media suppression in the post presidential election situation.

They alleged in a statement that the presidential election was marred by various threats to non state media and misuse of state controlled public media.

"The post election period media situation is becoming serious day by day as clearly shown by the development in last few days. We, the Five Media Organizations condemn these suppressive measures in the strongest terms and express our unconditional solidarity with the media and journalists who are under attack, the statement said.

The organizations alleged that Lanakenews journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda, disappeared on January 24 night

on his way home from the office. There has been no news on his whereabouts till now. The only answer given to the complaint made is that they are carrying out investigations.

The State controlled Sri Lanka Telecom blocked the [www.lankaenews.com](http://www.lankaenews.com) on the Election Day making it impossible for Sri Lankan citizens to visit the site. Lankaenews had been providing much needed space for opposition news and opinions, it the statement said.

It added that the Election Commissioner (EC) ordered Sri Lanka Telecom to lift the blockade in response to the complaint made by its editor. But soon after the final election result was announced by the EC, Sri Lanka Telecom re-imposed the ban, this time more strictly. Meanwhile the editor and staff of the lankaenews continued to receive death threats on their phones.

On January 28 night an unknown group surrounded the lankaenews office located in Rajagiriya, and stayed there for nearly two hours inquiring about the staff, according to the statement.

"Further it has been reported that at least four more websites with critical content has been blocked by state as well as privately owned servers in Sri Lanka. Those are [www.lankanewsweb.com](http://www.lankanewsweb.com), [www.srilankaguardian.org](http://www.srilankaguardian.org), [www.infolanka.com](http://www.infolanka.com), and [www.nidahasa.com](http://www.nidahasa.com)" the media organizations alleged.

It further said that On 28th January morning Ravi Abewickrema, a programme producer of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) was assaulted by SLRC deputy transport manager G.D. Somapala at the

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

office of SLRC Chairman Ariyaratna Ethugala. Later Chairman Atugala, additional Director General Devapriya Abeysinghe threatened programme producers Kanachana Marasinghe, Herbut Kumara Alagiyawanna and Gamini Pushpakumara using abusive language. These media personal are being targeted for their leading roles in advocating the compliance of Election Commissions media guide lines by the institution to ensure fair coverage for all sides.

"On 28 January the leader of the major opposition collation partner,

the Peoples Liberation Front (JVP) Somawansas Amarasinha told a news conference that Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa calling on his mobile from Rajapaksa's mobile threatened to set fire to the Lanka newspaper which is a pro JVP Sinhala weekly. Later it was reported that unofficial ban on carrying this news item was imposed. Incidentally none of the TV news bulletins carried the news."

The organizations claimed these developments would hamper any informed discussion on the aftermaths of presidential election and the malpractices reported. "The result will be the violation of people's right to infor-

mation."

"In this context, considering that the news freedom as the expression of people's right to information and freedom of speech, we, the five media organizations in Sri Lanka earnestly urge all democratic forces in the country, diplomatic corps in Sri Lanka, United Nations, International human rights, press freedom and journalists safety organizations to use their good offices to ensure that the government of Sri Lanka stop the media suppression and create a free and democratic post election environment" the five media organizations said.

- Daily Mirror - 30 / 01 / 2010

# WAR CRIMES

## Lanka rejects Dublin war crimes probe, calls for an end to witch hunt

Sri Lanka yesterday urged the international community to end its campaign against the country for eradicating the LTTE. Government sources said that a section of the international community was relentlessly hounding the government.

An elite panel of 11 judges will decide if Sri Lanka had violated human rights and involved in war crimes against civilians during the last phase of the Vanni battle last May.

Government sources said that Milan based Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) was scheduled to investigate allegations on January 15 and 16 at the Trinity College, Dublin, with provisional findings to be announced at a public meeting on Saturday (Jan 16). Sources said that it was unfortunate the international community was harassing Sri Lanka for meeting a terrorist threat with legitimate military means.

The following is the full text of a statement issued by the Presidential Secretariat yesterday:

The judgements of the so-called 'Permanent People's Tribunal on Sri Lanka' will do nothing to further efforts to cement a permanent peace in Sri Lanka.

The body is ad-hoc, has dubious terms of reference and has no status in inter-

national law.

Furthermore the timing is clearly designed to influence the forthcoming Sri Lanka election on Jan 26, and suggests a degree of political motivation or manipulation.

There is nothing to suggest that this 'tribunal' will be conducted in a fair or representative fashion and its agenda is highly suspicious.

We strongly condemn any unaccountable organisation, whether it purports to be a quasi-legal entity or not, irresponsibly distorting events and seeking to selectively pass judgement from afar.

This 'tribunal' continues to sow the seeds of division that has gone on for 25 years, is backward looking and it will not help the important recovery and unification process.

In fact the 'tribunal' is itself a serious threat to stability of the country. The members of the 'tribunal' should be helping Sri Lanka unite, and move on at the end of a terrible conflict, not continue to stoke it.

What many activists criticising the Government of Sri Lanka serve to conveniently ignore is that Sri Lanka was terrorised for over a quarter of a century.

Indeed, it is strange that organisations that appear to stand for peace can find

themselves in a situation where they are overlooking the activities of terrorists while seeking to undermine and question the actions of a Government and an entire nation to bring lasting peace to its country.

All Sri Lankans; Tamil and Sinhalese, Muslim and Buddhist, Hindu and Christian, suffered at the hands of the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) a ruthless organisation that was banned by the United States and the European Union and was described by the FBI as "one of the most dangerous and deadly extremist outfits in the world.

The military action taken by the Government of Sri Lanka was not taken lightly, but having exhausted all other options it was felt that decisive military action was required to defeat terrorism so that all Sri Lankans could live in peace and enjoy the manifold benefits that peace brings.

For the first time in almost three decades, Sri Lanka can now look to a future of peace and prosperity, one in which all Sri Lankans will benefit.

It is time for Sri Lanka to unite, build its economy, create prosperity, and look to the future. It is time that the international community supports Sri Lanka as its people start this new chapter, not continue to stoke division and conflict.

- The Island - 15 / 01 / 2010

## DUBLIN VERDICT: SL GUILTY OF WAR CRIMES

The Dublin war-crimes tribunal, conducted by Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) based in Milan, which held hearings on Thursday and Friday on war-crime charges on Sri Lanka from eye-witnesses and other material evidence, in the preliminary findings issued Saturday said, Sri Lanka Government is "guilty of War-Crimes" and "guilty of Crimes Against Humanity." The tribunal also concluded that the charge of Genocide requires further investigations.

Full text of the press release issued in Dublin follows:

### DUBLIN TRIBUNAL FINDS AGAINST SRI LANKA ON CHARGES OF WAR CRIMES

In Dublin today at 2:00 p.m. the Peoples Tribunal chairman Francois Houtart read the preliminary findings of the Peoples Tribunal on the war in Sri Lanka and its aftermath. There are 4 findings:

- That the Sri Lankan Government is guilty of war crimes
- That the Sri Lankan Government is guilty of crimes against humanity
- That the charge of genocide requires further investigation

That the International Community, particularly the UK and USA, share responsibility for the breakdown of the peace process.

Harrowing evidence including video footage was submitted by eye witnesses of the use of heavy artillery and phosphorous munitions, and of the continuous violation of human rights by military activity to a panel of 10 international ju-

rors over two days.

Irish members of the jury were Denis Halliday and Mary Lawlor.

The Irish Forum for Peace in Sri Lanka welcomed the preliminary findings of the tribunal. Responding to the findings the forum issued the following five demands:

1. We call on the Sri Lankan Government to allow the UN to conduct an inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated during the final stages of the war between the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and the LTTE, and during the war's aftermath.
2. We call on the Sri Lankan Government to release all those being detained in concentration camps and the estimated 11,000 people being held secretly at unknown locations.
3. We call on the Sri Lankan Government to end the use of extra-judicial killings, sexual violence and the deprivation of food and water as weapons against a civilian population.
4. We call on the Sri Lankan Government to end the suppression of political dissent by violence or other means.

We call on the Sri Lankan Government to fully implement human rights for all citizens of Sri Lanka and a political solution involving the full participation of the Tamil population, ending the systematic historical discriminatory measures of the Sri Lankan state against the Tamil people.

The Irish Forum for Peace in Sri Lanka asserts that long term peace and stability can only be established on the basis of full justice and rights for all the inhabitants of the island.

- *The Island* - 18 / 01 / 2010

## Lankans can't be tried in International Criminal Court, says Dr. palitha Kohona

Dr. Palitha Kohona, Sri Lanka's permanent representative to the UN, said yesterday that no person in Sri Lanka could be taken before the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face alleged war crimes charges.

He also noted that only a "handful" of foreign countries were making various allegations against Sri Lanka whilst a majority of the international community, including some "major" countries, had not expressed any concerns about Sri Lanka.

"The International Criminal Court has no jurisdiction over Sri Lanka; first and foremost because Sri Lanka is not a member of the ICC. The ICC has jurisdiction over individuals not countries. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that any individual in Sri Lanka will end up before the ICC," Dr.

Kohona told Daily Mirror Online.

Dr.Kohona explained that, although certain countries had attempted to bring Sri Lanka before the UN Security Council, these efforts had proved fruitless. "Sri Lanka, with the help of her friends, warded off the efforts by certain countries to bring Sri Lanka before the Security Council," he said.

"The responsible elements of the international community will give Sri Lanka the opportunity to go forward with the process of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, to ensure a decent living standard for all its citizens," he added.

- *Daily Mirror* - 19 / 01 / 2010

## President Scoffs At Dublin Verdict

President Mahinda Rajapaksa last week scoffed at the explosive judgment delivered recently by a Dublin based International Tribunal which found the Sri Lankan Government, its military and aligned paramilitary groups guilty of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity during the war.

At a meeting he had with editors of several weekend newspapers at his official residence in Kandy last Wednesday, in response to a question raised by The Sunday Leader Rajapaksa dismissed the war crimes tribunal and its findings – insisting they were unimportant and insignificant.

Asked if he would at any stage hold an independent inquiry on the allegations of war crimes based on the Dublin tribunal – if so pressured to do so by the United Nations, he replied curtly, "We will see about it at that time."

In response to the war crimes tribunal the Sri Lankan Government has consistently maintained that Western forces are aligned in an 'international conspiracy' to tarnish this Government's image and taint its victory against the LTTE.

Meanwhile, issuing the final report made public yesterday, the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal concluded that the international community, particularly the United Kingdom and United States should share responsibility for the breakdown of the island's peace process.

The Tribunal ruled that the European Union in particular had been complicit in the obstruction and dismantling of the peace process and stigmatizing Tamil groups in banning the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"The International Community has neglected its duty to promote peace in the region," the tribunal said.

The Tribunal's ten member international jury panel has recommended the Sri Lankan government establish an authoritative Truth and Justice commission; Immediately repeal of Prevention of Terrorism Act, 1979; Disband all paramilitary forces and reduce military presence in Tamil areas; and Implement a political power sharing solution with the full participation of the Tamil people.

## Govt. not guilty, says Army

The accusation made by the People's Tribunal on Sri Lanka (PTSL), an initiative by the Ireland peace process supported by the University of Dublin and Dublin City University, that the Sri Lanka Government was guilty of crimes against humanity is not true, Military Spokesperson Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said

Speaking to Daily Mirror Online yesterday the brigadier said that "the tribunal had not conducted a proper inquiry." He also alleged that the tribunal does not have any evidence to prove that any war crimes took place in Sri Lanka.

The PTSL had announced that the Sri Lankan Government was guilty of crimes against humanity after an inquiry held in Dublin last week

Harrowing evidence, including video footage, was submitted by eye-witnesses to a panel of ten international jurors, of the use of heavy artillery and phosphorous munitions and of the continuous violation of human rights by military activity, the inquiry claimed.

They even alleged some members of the Sri Lanka military had provided the PTSL with evidence of war crimes. - DM online

**- Daily Mirror - 19 / 01 / 2010**

The Tribunal has further urged the International Community, including the Sri Lankan Government to appoint a UN special rapporteur for Sri Lanka to investigate and identify responsibilities for human rights violations, violations of humanitarian law and war crimes committed by all parties in conflict.

The Tribunal also called for the establishment of an independent group of eminent persons to investigate the responsibilities of the international community in the disruption of the ceasefire agreement and subsequent war crimes and crimes against humanity and provision of the Sri Lankan Government with weapons during the ceasefire.

**- The Sunday Leader - 24 / 01 / 2010**



# PLIGHT OF IDP S

## Over 30,000 IDPs Missing

Uncertainty prevails over the whereabouts of approximately 31,903 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who left the Menik Farm in Vavuniya using their temporary travel passes.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its latest bulletin covering the period from January 2 to 15 said there are inconsistencies reported between the IDP camp zones.

The fortnightly bulletin quoting government statistics said that from December 1, 2009 to January 5 a total of 220,950 persons have left Menik Farm on (renewed) passes, while 189,047 IDPs on passes have returned."

"The balance of 31,903 cannot be differentiated between IDPs failing to return and those outside the camp who are still with valid passes. No arrests or detentions of IDPs having failed to return to the camp have been reported," the report added.

IDPs are issued with travel passes granted for up to 30 days, which allow them to leave the IDP camps but require them to return to the camps before the expiration of the passes.

- *The Sunday Leader-24/01/2010*

## SL Among Those Having Secret Detention Camps

A group of four independent U.N. rights investigators have, in a report, noted that Sri Lanka was among dozens of countries where people were detained at secret locations and grilled to gather information. The report is to be discussed at the UN Human Rights Council in March.

The 221-page report constitutes the most exhaustive U.N. study of secret detention practices, examining abuses by the United States and dozens of countries, including Iran, Pakistan, China, Russia, and Sri Lanka.

The report notes that in Sri Lanka, the protracted conflict between the Government and the LTTE has perpetuated the use of secret detention and that in general, Sri Lankan army officials, dressed either in military uniform or civilian clothes, would arrest ethnic Tamils and hold them in secret places of detention for a week or longer.

One such location mentioned in the report of the Special Rapporteur on torture was an army camp located off Galle Road, Kollupitiya, Colombo. The detainees were often interrogated under torture, the purpose of which was to make them confess their involvement with the LTTE. In 1992, the Government adopted a law giving more power to the armed forces and authorizing the use of secret detention camps. Although the emergency regulations issued subsequently in June 1993 outlawed secret detention, there were reliable reports indicating that people continued to be held in undisclosed places.

- *Daily Mirror - 30 / 01 / 2010*

## HEALTHCARE WITHDRAWN FROM ALL IDP CAMPS

Healthcare officials in the IDP camps had been asked to withdraw from duty from February 1st, officials said.

Healthcare and Nutrition Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva instructed officials to withdraw from healthcare services in the IDP camps in the North from February 1st as it is not required any further, ministry spokesman W.M.D.Wanninayaka said.

The decision was taken at the Health

Ministry monthly review committee convened yesterday.

It was revealed at the meeting that the number of IDPs in the camps have now come down to about 90,000 from a nearly 300,000 during the peak in May last year, he said.

The Ministry had spent Rs. 30 million a month to provide healthcare facilities to IDPs with a staff of 410. With the

decrease of medical care activity at the IDP camps it was decided to hand over the job to the governor of the North with a medical staff of 110, Wanninayaka said.

The equipment and drugs left unused will also be handed over to the governor.

Minister instructed officials to send medical staff withdrawn from the North to their respective healthcare institutions they had been assigned before the endorsement to the governor of the North, he added.

The Ministry review committee headed by Minister De Silva was attended by acting Secretary Dr. Nihal Jayatilaka, Director General Dr. Ajith Mendis, Deputy Director General Dr. Palitha Mahipala and other officials.

- *Daily Mirror - 30 / 01 / 2010*

## DO WE NEED A CHANGE?

By Rohini Hensman

At a time when so many urgent tasks are pending – not least that of rebuilding the war-ravaged areas of the country and resettling lakhs of IDPs in proper homes with proper facilities – colossal expenditure on a premature election could be seen as criminally irresponsible. Why, then, was it undertaken? Clearly, the incumbent president sought to reinstate himself and his family in power while post-war euphoria was still high, and before the inevitable disenchantment with his regime gripped the majority of the population.

However, given that we are encumbered with this election, it certainly becomes more interesting with the prospect of a real challenge. It is true there are several candidates, but only two can realistically be expected to win: Mahinda Rajapaksa and Sarath Fonseka. Do they offer us any choice at all?

When we remember that not so long ago Fonseka declared that Sri Lanka belongs to the Sinhalese, and that he played a major role not only in defeating the LTTE but in inflicting the enormous civilian casualties which accompanied that defeat, it comes as a surprise to find that Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MPs are supporting him. These MPs have betrayed their constituents in the past, acting at the behest of the LTTE rather than in the interests of their constituents. But now that the tyranny of their erstwhile armed master no longer rules them, it is likely that they have to represent their electorate more honestly in order to survive. So what possible reasons could they have for preferring Fonseka to Rajapaksa? The latter never expressed Sinhala supremacism in quite such a crass manner, though his actions showed him to be no less committed to it. Both were responsible for massive civilian casualties inflicted

during the war; perhaps Rajapaksa was slightly more responsible, as the ultimate commander-in-chief, but Fonseka displayed no reluctance to carry out his orders. At first sight, there seems to be no reason why Tamils of the North and East should vote for either of them.

However, when we consider that some of the other minority parties have also thrown their weight behind Fonseka, and even anti-LTTE Tamils have observed that it was only after Fonseka joined the fray that the Vanni IDPs were released from detention, two interesting hypotheses emerge. One is that just as much as the carnage at the end of the war, it is the events that preceded and followed it which are responsible for the disenchantment of minorities with Rajapaksa. Fonseka has promised an end to the state of Emergency and the 'white van' culture of disappearances and extrajudicial killings, but makes no mention of a political settlement. His promises are minimal, and there is no guarantee that he will deliver on them. What *is* guaranteed, however, is that if Rajapaksa comes back to power, there will be no political settlement, nor an end to the culture of impunity for gross abuses of human rights. He has had plenty of opportunities to achieve these things, and has failed to do so. Even if he claims it was impossible to bring about a just political settlement and reconciliation between communities during the war, he could have achieved these goals in the two-and-a-half years of his incumbency remaining after the war ended. The cruel treatment of Tamil IDPs after the war is simply one indication that he had no such agenda in mind. Partial restoration of freedom of movement in the North started only after it became clear that he could no longer count on overwhelming support from Sinhalese

voters.

As Namini Wijedasa pointed out, the fact that the TNA could be won over to support Fonseka by a written commitment from him to restore basic democratic rights and civil liberties to Tamils should make us ask: why were these not restored earlier? President Rajapaksa gave us the answer when he said at an election rally that he would abrogate this agreement (!) if he were re-elected: i.e., he gave us a commitment that minorities would continue to be deprived of basic democratic rights and civil liberties if he came to power. His 'Mahinda Chintanaya 2010' promises to 'accord Buddhism pride of place as the state religion,' and to retain the 'Unitary state'. His attempt to woo Sinhalese Buddhist voters by projecting himself as the most hardline Sinhala supremacist in the fray disregards the risk that carrying out his promises would re-create precisely the conditions that led to the war in the first place. Genuine Buddhists would not want their great and noble religion to be hijacked thus by a corrupt, unjust and brutal state.

The second hypothesis is that Tamils and Muslims are no less concerned about general issues of democracy and governance than their Sinhalese compatriots. For the majority of Sinhalese, Rajapaksa's strongest recommendation is that he presided over the demise of the LTTE. But just as Fonseka shares the blame for crimes committed at the end of the war, he shares the glory for ending the threat of terrorist separatism. Again, perhaps Rajapaksa is more responsible for the victory because he was ultimate commander-in-chief, yet it should be obvious that he could not have achieved the victory without Fonseka. On this count, therefore, there is not much to choose between them.

(Continued on page 19)

(Continued from page 18)

The foremost grievance of Sinhalese opponents of the incumbent seems to be the mind-boggling levels of nepotism and corruption that have engulfed the country during his rule. According to Ven. Dhambara Amila Thero, 391 members of the Rajapaksa family have been installed as heads in various government institutions. If this is anywhere near the truth, it must surely be unprecedented in the thousands of years of Sri Lanka's history!

That one family should monopolise so much power and wealth while the majority are struggling to survive is an understandable source of bitterness.

This is exacerbated by the shameful abuse of this power. A recent example is the use of the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), a public body, to order all mobile operators to send a free SMS to their subscribers on 1 January supporting the president's re-election bid. [As an irate subscriber commented on Groundviews](#), 'However much Mr Rajapakse and his humungous extended family believe that anything called an institution in this country – from every branch of government to the media, the arts, sports, and civil society, to St Thomas' College – is theirs for the taking, invading and populating, I am sorry to say it is not so; and if we value our dignity and democratic citizenship, we should tell them that very clearly.'

The ugly face of this abuse of power is illustrated by the murder of Lasantha Wickramatunga a year ago. Gotabhaya Rajapaksa's responses in a BBC interview made it clear that this was in reprisal for his criticisms of the regime, which allegedly put him in the camp of the terrorists. The fact that the self-confessed killer, Mervyn Silva, remains at large and continues to be close to the president fuels the suspicion that he was acting as the Raja-

paksa brothers' hit-man. No one can feel safe under such mafia-like conditions unless they are part of the president's coterie.

Fonseka has promised to abolish the Executive Presidency, implement the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment and end the state of Emergency: measures which would go some way towards re-establishing the rule of law and checking the corruption, nepotism and abuse of absolute power that mires the present regime. Again, there is no guarantee that he will keep his promises if elected to power. But the fact that these measures have not already been taken by the incumbent president is evidence that if Rajapaksa were re-elected, this would merely enable his regime to 'consolidate its stranglehold on power,' to quote Lasantha's widow, Sonali Samarasinghe Wickramatunga, and make the further subversion of democracy and looting of our country inevitable.

It is important to note that even if Rajapaksa was the right leader to win the war against the LTTE, this does not make him the right leader in peace-time. Churchill, a great leader during World War II and immensely popular at its end, nonetheless lost in the 1945 elections. Clearly, the qualities that are necessary for winning a war are not the same as the qualities required in a peace-time leader. The British electorate was wise enough not to allow their gratitude to Churchill blind them to the fact that he was not the best leader for the post-war period. Rajapaksa may have the ruthlessness required to eliminate the LTTE, but the demise of the Constitutional Council, vicious attacks on freedom of expression, and discriminatory treatment of Tamils and Muslims have resulted in the inexorable shrinking of democratic space during his term as president. This has continued even after the end of the war. It should be clear that he lacks the qualities of a good peace-time leader. Perhaps he is aware of this

fact, which is why he keeps trumpeting the debt owed to him on account of his success in wiping out the LTTE.

It would be a tragic irony indeed if the Sinhalese people of Sri Lanka express their gratitude to Rajapaksa for ending the war by re-electing him, and thereby allow him to create the conditions for a new terrorist separatist war! There is no doubt whatsoever that our country is better off without the LTTE. But if Rajapaksa's only positive achievement is that he has eliminated it (and it is impossible to think of any others), then it most emphatically means that he does *not* deserve our votes, even as a second preference.

It remains to be seen whether the unlikely consortium which has assembled to support the common opposition presidential candidate will actually deliver in terms of votes. If it does, that would suggest that a large section of Sri Lanka's population finds the present dispensation intolerable. As one despairing citizen put it, 'When you are in a frying pan, you have to jump!' There is, of course, a serious risk that you will land in the fire and perish anyway, but there is also a slim chance that you will jump clear of the fire and escape. It looks as if many of those who vote for Fonseka will do so not because they have any illusions in him, but because they are grasping at the fragile hope that a change of president will open up some democratic space, whereas a return of the incumbent will mean that we remain in the frying pan and get fried.

## Why do you tolerate waste and corruption?

**DEAR MR PRESIDENT...**

Firstly we at the Junction would like to say a "big" thank you for bringing the war to an end. History will remember you for this. There were many in this country who thought that the LTTE was invincible but you were able to provide the leadership to ensure that Sri Lanka escape this almost thirty year old curse. Even while we remember this we at the Junction are unsure that we will vote for you in the upcoming Presidential Election. Six months after the war was over you must be wondering why people who claim to be grateful threaten to turn their backs on you and vote for someone else. Here are our reasons:

Why do you allow all this corruption and waste of the Nations coffers? You have recently complained that you know of corrupt people around you but why do you continue to tolerate their actions? You can try to deny the claims of the opposition that your extended family have amassed wealth but we have yet to hear you convincingly deny the charges of that and nepotism. It is not surprising that many people believe that you have all prospered while the masses have been hoodwinked and made huge sacrifices. The people have been unduly burdened by taxes to the point of exhaustion.

Why do you waste state resources on personal propaganda? Printing notes with your image is a worrying sign of a leader who does not know limits? Entertaining thousands of people at Temple Trees before provincial council and now presidential elections we assume at State expense is really unforgivable – why could you not use that money for those who have returned to the Wannu or to ensure basic nutritional levels for children below the poverty line?

Why have you reduced your cabinet to a propaganda unit of talking heads? It is bad enough that we have more than 100 ministers serving, ministries set up at will, using OUR tax payers money on their (and their families and entourages) upkeep. But to watch so called learned and not-learned individuals spending endless hours defending one Government position or another without doing a proper day's work is horrendous. How you could get educated people to come out and make uneducated statements about the economy etc, like one who recently stated that inflation has come down by another 3%, when the basket of items for the cost of living shows anything but that. There is no glory in being president of a poorer people. People are so heavily burdened and we are a bankrupt nation. The masses cannot even hope to buy a car, or house, leave alone food and decent educations for their children.

Why are you providing protection to various individuals who are nothing short of thugs and communalists? Why have you reduced your parliament to a market? In Sri Lanka politicians are generally seen as a corrupt lot but in the last few years their image has taken a real blow with M.P's shifting to the Government seeking ministerships, status and we assume 'perks'? Never in Sri Lanka's history have so many M.P's crossed over and left their parties for

position. We blame the parties as well but why did you tolerate the breakdown of democracy? M.P's wishing to cross over should have the decency to re-contest in a bi-election. Why have you made a mockery of the constitution of this country and run ruff shod over the rule of law. The reasons for not implementing the 17th Amendment would be laughable if it was not so heinous – are you so afraid of not having your 'yes men (and women) in the independent commissions like the Human Rights Commission? You have made us look like a banana republic by stating you would like to implement "relevant provisions" of the 13th amendment – the law is the law, you don't get to choose which parts you like and ignore the rest? You do know that we, know that it is this flagrant violation of our laws which prevents us from getting GSP plus status? After the war you could have returned to the rule of law but you had no interest. Absolute power has made this government corrupt absolutely!

Why do you allow a culture of lawlessness and thuggery to continue? The horrendous abuses by the police at Bambalapitya Beach and Angulana were reminders that have sent shivers down our spines as to what the next six years could be – where the protectors of the law are also its violators. The suppression of the media continues to make people afraid to speak out. Afraid to go out to cast a vote or attend an election rally even to find out what an opposing candidate in an election might have to say. Isn't it ironic that even after the war people are afraid of the "white van"?

Why have you not brought about a political solution to end this war? You have the credit of having ended the war but can you bring us a lasting peace? You set up an All Party Representative Conference which after so many meetings finalized a document but have you even read it? Immediately after the war you had the people's trust and we could have endorsed such a solution, instead you wanted to buy time. From the East we hear worrying reports of colonization – don't you know our history that led to the outbreak of war? Your post-war speech saying "there are no minorities" instead of saying "there are no majorities and no minorities" has raised concerns that you are not a minority friendly President. Speaking in Tamil is highly commendable and a first but it takes more substance. The treatment of the Wannu displaced when they were incarcerated in camps only added to this. We are glad that most of them are now free but we need to see the leadership taking adequate care of them and giving them a head start to re build their lives not just provide temporary solutions. We need to start treating all our people as citizens not like cattle to be ordered into camps, out of camps. Let's build on measures you have begun like on language and strengthen these while not ignoring the elephant in the room.

**Junction Talk**  
- Daily Mirror - 19 / 01 / 2010

CLINICS

Prison Clinics

Eight prison clinics were conducted during the month of November & December

	PRISON	LAWYERS	INMATES
i	Angoda Hospital	2	14
ii	Jaffna	1	17
iii	Jaffna	1	18
iv	CRP	3	51
v	Jaffna	1	16
vi	Tangalle	2	21
vii	Bogambara - Kandy	4	75
viii	Kuruwita - Ratnapura	4	92

Mobile Clinics

A Mobile clinic was conducted on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in **Jaffna** at Kalaivany Community Center, Maththalodai, Punnalaikkadduvan and two lawyers participated.

3 mobile clinics were conducted with CHA collaboration as follows,

- (i) Kalutara - 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009
- (ii) Matara - 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009
- (iii) Hambantota - 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Awareness Programs

Program held at Divisional Secretariat Nikawaratiya an their invitation on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 for GS and Samurdi Officers. 104 participants participated and 2 lawyers lectured in the session.

BOOSA TRANSPORT

**Eight visits** were made in the months of November and December. Re-opening of A-9 route had increased the number of passengers. Two vehicles were engaged when passengers were more than the required number.

CASE HIGHLIGHT

**Jaffna Prison**  
(Statement by Indian fisherman)

We are **18 Indian fishermen** from Naahaai, Kaaraikal area who were caught by Sri Lankan Navy on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009 for to entering the unauthorized area. We were detained at the Jaffna Prison. **IHR Lawyers met us on 6<sup>th</sup> November at their prison clinic.** IHR appeared for us to obtain our release.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November case was called and postponed to 02/12/2009.

On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 the A.S.P & OIC of K.K.S were present to place a motion in the Courts, and submitted that the matter is an issue between two countries. The Sri Lankan fishermen who were detained in the Indian jails are already released and this may cause rifts in the foreign policy of both countries. At the same time the police assured the Courts to produce the necessary documents required for their release. The Courts allowed the request and ordered the Superintendent of Prison to release them when orders are received.

On 02/12/2009 by about 12.00 noon the A.S.P of K.K.S police rushed to the Courts and placed a motion to recall the case. The A.S.P said that instruction have been received from the Attorney General Department by telephone call and to release the eighteen fishermen with their boats. The Judge directed the registrar of the Courts to release the eighteen fishermen as soon as the written document is received from the Attorney General Department.

The police took the custody of Fishermen and handed over to the Sri Lankan Navy. The Navy made arrangement to send back to India.

# RESTORATION & PROTECTION UNIT (R&P Unit)

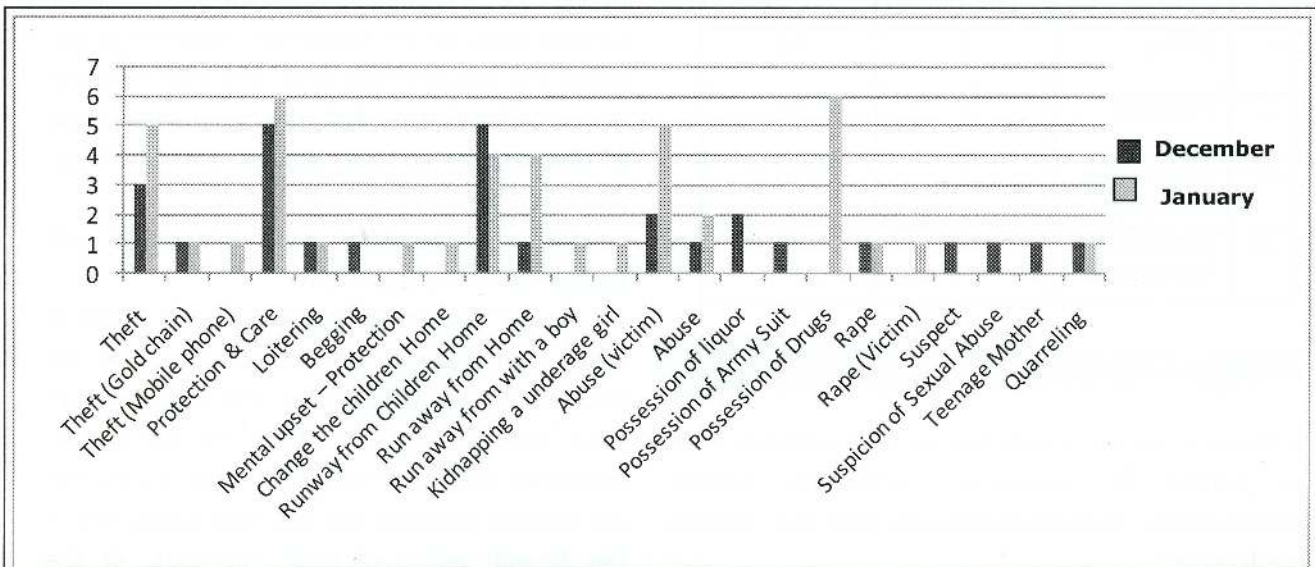
## REUNIFYING & REINTEGRATING CHILDREN FROM REMAND HOMES (MAKOLA & RANMUTHUGALA)

## LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR CHILDREN AS FOLLOWS

	December	January	Total
Collection of new cases	18	16	<b>34</b>
No. of cases Referred to Network Lawyers	27	43	<b>70</b>
Legal representation	27	48	<b>75</b>
No. of children represented in Court	32	43	<b>75</b>
No. of children reunified with guardians	01	06	<b>07</b>
No. of children placed in Institutions	01	03	<b>04</b>

- Cases represented by the Network lawyers within the, Colombo jurisdiction : **52**
- Cases represented by the Network lawyers out of the, Colombo jurisdiction : **23**

## CASES HANDLED FOR THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER 2009 & JANUARY 2010 BY NETWORK LAWYERS



## CHILDREN IN HOMES, CIRCUMSTANCES, ISSUES, SOLUTIONS

The main focus in all interventions should be the "best interest of the child." and, best practices in all activities for children in difficult circumstances.

Institutionalization seems to be the first option in most cases and the only option available in dealing with children in difficult circumstances. It can effect a child emotionally and physically. It is vital to look at the full process of institutionalizing a child, from the time a child is taken away from a circumstance, until the child is reunified with his/her family.

There are positive / negative impacts in institutionalizing / separating a child from a family and the reintegration process.

Remand homes are set up to detain children while their cases are being heard in Court of law. What happens to the children of the school going age? The right to education / Going to School is denied, due to security reasons. Non formal education or vocational training / education is rarely found in implementation, due to the duration a child spends in a remand home.

Though the children are expected to spend short term, until the investigation is over, they end up spending long-term which denies them their right to education.

The length of a child's stay in a remand home is uncertain. No library facilities for the children to read during free time. There are hardly any recreational programs, other than Carom, drafts and watching TV.

There used to be, playing Cricket, for boys, which has come to a halt, due to security reasons, as one or two children's attempt to run away and lack of staff for strict supervision has resulted in no playing Cricket in the evenings.

The majority of the children are victims, while the offenders and the victims are detained together and there is a tendency for the victims to be re-victimized.

Children of different age groups are detained together and its a hindrance to the very young children, due to bullying, assault and homosexuality tendencies etc.

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

They are sent in most cases for Security, Care and protection. At present the children are divided into 2 groups only. Eg: age groups between 5-13 and 13-18 and are detained in 2 dormitories.

Cases with No dates result in the child staying for longer period, in the remand homes due to various reasons. Individual solutions are necessary, if it is not possible in practice, alternative solutions has to be sought, on a case by case basis .Eg: A monthly No date meeting with the relevant authorities to discuss solutions and options will result in expedition of the cases and placements .The state does not provide free legal representation for them, at Magistrate Courts where their cases are heard at present.

95% of the guardians have no economic means to retain a lawyer and the social economic situation on the ground is not child friendly.

There is no State Doctor allocated to provide a health Clinic with the assistance of a nurse providing medicine. No vehicle to provide transport, in an emergency / accident.

The staff cadre in most of these homes are 50% than the stipulated numbers. Eg: If 22 staff members are

required only 11 staff members are there, at Present, therefore the older children have to cover tasks, such as washing / cleaning Toilets, assisting in cooking and moving /carrying large hot cooking utensils from the stove, washing clothes of smaller children, supervising the smaller children's dormitory etc.

Lack of Privacy for children in homes. They do not have individual cupboards in the remand homes.

Clothing is provided twice a year by the state, it is insufficient as approximately 800 to 1000 children access the remand homes. In most cases children come with only one set of clothes, therefore a set of clothes given to one child, to wear to Courts is given to another, due to lack of stocks for all .

In spite of efforts taken, to reduce the number of children in the remand, children entering the system is yet the same. With the amendments to the Children and Young persons Ordinance, we anticipate positive changes that will prevent children, sent through the juvenile justice system, unless its really necessary thus institutionalization should be the last resort to, any child.

By Shirmilla Perera

## EDUCATION UNIT

# GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST

### Calling applications for the Diploma in Human Rights

The next batches are to commence on 08<sup>th</sup> May 2010 and applications are being called.

**Course Duration** : 06 months (Sessions every Saturdays from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm)  
The lectures will be conducted in Colombo

**Course fee** : Rs.15,000/-

**Registration fee** : Rs. 150/-

**Deadline for applications** : 30th April 2010

Members who are interested please visit our website for application forms or contact the following staff:

Hashini at [engdip@ihrsrilanka.org](mailto:engdip@ihrsrilanka.org) for  
English medium

Priyanthi at [sindip@ihrsrilanka.org](mailto:sindip@ihrsrilanka.org) for  
Sinhala medium

Unita at [tamdip@ihrsrilanka.org](mailto:tamdip@ihrsrilanka.org) for  
Tamil medium

Tel. Nos : 0112502703 or 0113158863

Website : [www.ihrsrilanka.org](http://www.ihrsrilanka.org)

### Certificate course in Human Rights

IHR has called for application through Udayan Newspapers in Jaffna to conduct Certificate Course in Human Rights (Tamil Medium). The Course to commence on 20th March 2010.

**Course Duration** : 32 hours  
(Saturdays & Sundays)

**Course fee** : Rs.6,875/-

**Registration fee** : Rs. 50/-

Same will be organized in Anuradhapura, Matara & Hambanthota in Sinhala Medium & Tamil Medium.

For further details contact the following staff :

Sinhala Medium - Priyanthi

Tamil Medium - Menaka

Tel. Nos : 0112502703 or 0113158863

**Chairman**

Jeevan Thiagarajah

**Board of Directors**

Michelle Gunaratne  
Leela Isaac  
M.S.M.T. Samaratunga  
Tahirih Q Ayn  
H.G.Dharmadasa

**Legal Unit**

Manager – Legal  
Legal Officer  
Legal Officer  
Legal Officer  
Legal Officer  
Senior Coordinator  
Coordinator  
Coordinator  
Coordinator  
Legal Consultant

**Hot Line : 077-3760680  
011-2585812**

Neel Sujith Silva  
Unica Fonseka  
Wasana Ellawala  
Ireshika Goonawardena  
V.S. Nirarjan  
K Premaseeli  
Ayesha Shibly  
Dinusha Bandara  
Varahini Canisius  
B.N. Thamboo

legal@ihrsrilanka.org  
sujith@ihrsrilanka.org

**Education Unit**

Education Administrator  
Education Coordinator (Sinhala)  
Education Coordinator (English)  
Education Coordinator (Tamil)

**011-2502703**

Menaka Shanmughalingam  
Priyanthi Gamage  
Hashini Mahesha Rajaratna  
Unita Ferly Bastian

edu@ihrsrilanka.org  
educoord@ihrsrilanka.org  
sindip@ihrsrilanka.org  
engdip@ihrsrilanka.org  
tamdip@ihrsrilanka.org

**Grants Administrator**

Gayani Meegamuge

grants@ihrsrilanka.org

**Restoration and Protection Unit**

Manager – Restoration and Protection  
Coordinator

**011-5368910**

Shermila Perera  
Nithyavani Baladasan

rehab@ihrsrilanka.org  
shermila@ihrsrilanka.org

**Finance Unit**

Accountant  
Finance Officer  
Accounts Assistant  
Accounts Assistant

**011-2502810**

Gimhani Jayathunga  
Champa Jayakody  
Ayesha Jeewanthi  
Shashika Jayasinghe

fin@ihrsrilanka.org  
gimhani@ihrsrilanka.org

**Administration**

Manager – Administration  
Senior Office Assistant / Driver  
Front Officer  
Office Assistant  
Driver / Office Assistant

**011-2585815**

Ajantha Ismail  
M Kannadasan  
V P Chandima Padmasiri  
Samantha Wijerathne  
Duminda Attygala

info@ihrsrilanka.org

**Jaffna Branch**

Legal Consultant  
Supervisor  
Coordinator  
Office Assistant

**060-2218338**

Jayasingham Jeyaruban  
T. Sanmuganathan  
Shiyamini Rajaratnam  
S Nanthakumar

ihr@sltnet.lk

**Anuradhapura Branch**

Legal Officer  
Coordinator

**025 3899218**

Erandhi Thilakarathne  
Sameera Sanjeevani

ihrapura@gmail.com

**Ampara Branch**

Legal Officer  
Coordinator

**0633635825**

Nayana Kumudini  
B.G. Chandra Dilhani

ihrampara@sltnet.lk

**Kotapola Branch**

Legal Officer  
Coordinator

**041-5621457**

J.D. Ajantha  
Deeshani Prabhasari

ihrkotapola@gmail.com