

# CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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*Southern Provincial Council Election – 2009*

**Media Communiqué No. 06**

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**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 Colombo Sri Lanka:** CMEV has recorded a total of 86 incidents of election related violence including breaches of election laws from the Southern Province. Out of the total 86 incidents, 22 have been categorized as Major and 64 as Minor. Thirteen (13) out of 22 Major incidents have been reported from the Galle District as well as most of all incidents - 41 out of 86. CMEV has recorded a total of 29 incidents in the Hambantota district out of which 3 are Major and 16 incidents in the Matara district out of which 6 are Major.

Five (05) cases of threat and intimidation, 01 incident of assault, 01 case of arson and an abduction have been reported from Hiniduma in the Galle district making it the Polling Division with the highest number of Major incidents.

## **Threat and Intimidation at Hiniduma electorate in Galle district**

CMEV monitor reports that Mr. Eranja Pradeep Samarasinghe, a JVP supporter had been threatened with death and intimidated allegedly by UPFA supporters at 11.30 p.m. on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at Weerapana East where he resides. When CMEV contacted the Mr. Samarasinghe in this regard, he informed CMEV that when he was asleep on the 5<sup>th</sup>, there had been a group of people shouting outside his house. Three of them had entered his house and threatened him. They had also attacked the party office situated next to his house. He further noted that when his sister opened the door, the persons who threatened him had harassed his sister by dragging her hand. According to Mr. Samarasinghe, he had identified these attackers (Ajith, Kumara and Sarath Priyantha) as the supporters of UPFA candidate Mr. Randima Gamage (Candidate No. 12). Mr. Samarasinghe informed CMEV that his complaint had been recorded under CIB 1-71/50 at the Hiniduma Police Station and he noted that both parties had been asked to come to the Police for an inquiry on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

CMEV contacted Mr. Randima Gamage regarding the allegations and he categorically denied the involvement of his supporters in this case and further noted that he was not even aware of such an incident.

## **Illegal Election Propaganda Activities in Ambalangoda electorate in Galle**

According to the reports received from field monitors, it has been noted that a number of cases where both UNP and UPFA candidates were using the following vehicles for electioneering with loudspeakers, posters and cut-outs and bearing their respective candidate numbers, during the days of 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> October in Ambalangoda electorate. According to CMEV reports, a double cab (52-1148) with loud speakers and cut-outs had been used for propaganda activities of UNP candidate Mr. S. Jayasekara (Candidate No. 25) at around 4.00 p.m. on 4<sup>th</sup> October along the main roads in Ambalangoda. It was reported that a lorry (68-8922) with loud speakers was being used for propaganda work of UPFA candidate Mr. Sajin de Vas Goonawardana (Candidate No. 25) at about 6.00 p.m. on 4<sup>th</sup> October at the Main Street in Ambalangoda.

CMEV is seriously concerned by the intensification of election related violence in all three districts of the Southern province. This includes certain cases where the election laws (Section 74 of the Provincial Council Election Act No. 02, of 1988, which stipulates the provisions of illegal propaganda activities) were violated by displaying illegal cut-outs and the use of loud speakers at public places by election candidates. CMEV is deeply concerned about the situation at the end of the election campaign and draws attention to section 126 of the Provincial Council Election Act No. 02, of 1988, empowering the Election Commissioner to take necessary action to ensure the proper implementation of election laws regardless of party affiliations. CMEV calls on all political parties to fulfill their responsibility to ensure a violence and malpractice free election.

These circumstances lead CMEV to reiterate its stance on the pivotal importance of the full implementation of the Seventeenth Amendment. CMEV believes that the establishment of independent commissions for the Police, Public Service and Elections provided for by the Amendment, is absolutely necessary for protecting the integrity of the electoral process.

CMEV was formed in 1997 by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), the Free Media Movement (FMM) and the Coalition against Political Violence as an independent and nonpartisan organization to monitor the incidence of election related violence. Currently, CMEV is made up of CPA, FMM and INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.



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