

# CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

මැතිවරණ ප්‍රචණ්ඩතාව නිරීක්ෂණ මධ්‍යස්ථානය  
தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

105/1, Fifth Lane, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka  
Tel: 011 5621886, 011 5621904, 011 2564404 Fax: 011 4722632  
E-mail: [cmev@cpalanka.org](mailto:cmev@cpalanka.org) Website: [www.cpalanka.org](http://www.cpalanka.org)

## *Southern Provincial Council Election – 2009*

### **Media Communiqué No. 07**

October 08, 2009

**8<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 Colombo Sri Lanka:** CMEV has recorded a total of 95 incidents of election related violence including breaches of election laws from the Southern Province. Out of the total 95 incidents, 26 have been categorized as Major and 69 as Minor. Fourteen (14) out of 26 Major incidents have been reported from the Galle District as well as the majority of all incidents - 45 out of 95. CMEV has recorded a total of 30 incidents in the Hambantota district out of which 03 are Major and 20 incidents in the Matara district out of which 09 are Major.

Three (03) cases of assault had been confirmed from Kamburupitiya and Deniyaya electorates. One incident of grievous hurt is reported from Weligama and Kamburupitiya electorates respectively, while two (02) threat and intimidation cases had been confirmed - one each from Weligama and Kamburupitiya electorates. Kamburupitiya is the electorate from which the highest number of Major incidents have been reported from the Matara district - 04 out of 09.

#### **Assault on UPFA Supporters in Weligama, Matara**

October 06, 2009 CMEV received reports regarding an assault on supporters of UPFA candidate Mr. Gunasekara Wickramaratne Hemal (Candidate No. 11) allegedly by the Weligama Police. Later it was reported to CMEV that Mr. Mahesh Kumarasinghe, OIC of Weligama Police had received messages with change of his work location to Matara and then to Galle.

On 6<sup>th</sup> October: Hemal Gunasekara informed CMEV that his supporters and members of the audience at a musical show organized by him in Weligama were brutally assaulted by the Weligama Police on the evening of 05<sup>th</sup> October. He stated that Dharsan Sanjeeva, a supporter, was grievously wounded on his shoulder due to a gunshot allegedly fired by the Police. Others sustained injuries as well and Sanjeeva is being treated in the ICU of Matara General Hospital. Mr. Gunasekara informed CMEV that they had obtained the prior approval for the show from the Weligama Police.

On 06<sup>th</sup> October OIC Mr. Kumarasinghe, noted to CMEV that the Police attempted to settle a clash between two groups and ended up being stoned by them before normalcy was eventually restored. He stated that 03 PCs and one WPC sustained injuries while another constable was seriously injured and admitted to the Hospital. He further told CMEV that he had received instructions from the DIG in-charge of Region No 05 to report to the Matara Police and then to the Galle Police.

CMEV Field monitor visited the Walana and Matara Hospitals and informed that Police officer, A.W. Sarath was injured and was being treated in the Matara General Hospital (ward No. 06) while the other 04 police officers namely Nihal (59767), Wijasiri (35240), Jagath Jayanath (13082) and Dilshara Dusmanthi (2266) were receiving treatment in the Walana District Hospital.

At around 8.15 p.m. on 6<sup>th</sup>, CMEV contacted the Police Media Spokesman, SDIG Mr. Nimal Madiwake in this regard, and he noted that the OIC has not been transferred but summoned on special duty and that a decision will be taken after inquires into the incident.

On 07<sup>th</sup> October IP W.H. Jayaratne of Weligama Police informed CMEV that the musical event had gone beyond the approved time and that the police was compelled to intervene in order to ensure law and order. He denied the allegation that Police used firearms to disperse the crowd and that a traffic motor bike (136-3082) had been damaged in the incident. Reportedly a bus (63-0126) belonging to Kurunagala North Depot had also been damaged in the incident.

On 07<sup>th</sup> October CMEV contacted OIC Mahesh Kumarasinghe and he informed that instructions had been received from the DIG to resume duties at the Weligama Police Station.

### **Intra Party Violence, in Kamburupitiya Matara**

On 06<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at around 11.30 p.m. a group of supporters of UPFA candidate Chandima Rasaputhra (Candidate No. 12) were assaulted by a group of supporters of UPFA candidate Don Wijayawantha Prathapasinghe (Candidate No. 15). Samantha, a supporter of Mr. Rasapauthra, had been grievously wounded on his eyebrow and admitted to the Hospital.

Mr. Rasaputhra told to CMEV that his supporters had been assaulted in the Thihagoda area when they were confronted by supporters of Prathapasinghe who were pasting posters over Mr. Rasaputhra's posters. P.M. Saman, a supporter, made a complaint (CIB 02/302/72) to the Thihagoda Police in this regard. CMEV monitor confirmed that the victim was being treated in ward No. 15 of the Matara General Hospital.

CMEV contacted Mr. Prathapasinghe and he refuted the allegations. He said that Mr. Rasaputhra's supporters had assaulted his supporters and attacked his office located in Akurugoda. He further stated that one of his supporter who sustained minor injuries in the incident, is receiving treatment in the Andapana District Hospital and that a complaint has been made to the Kamburupitiya Police in this regard.

CMEV contacted the Thihagoda Police Station; Police Constable Ranjith confirmed the incident and stated that further investigations are underway. A counter complaint (MIB 89/08) has been lodged with Kamburupitya Police by S. Pathirana, a supporter of Mr. Prathapasinghe in this regard. CMEV contacted Kamburupitiya Police station on the 08th and OIC Sunil Mahinda informed CMEV that one suspect had been arrested and that further investigations are going on.

CMEV notes that the prevailing situation reflecting intra-party violence and tension could adversely affect the situation on polling day. The statement made by the Election Commissioner at his press conference of October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at which he took a strong stand on implementing the election law during the next three days and his reiteration of the key responsibility of the Police in this regard, is highly appreciated by CMEV. CMEV urges the political parties, election officials and Police to do everything necessary to ensure a free and fair poll.

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.



Thusitha Siriwardana (Attorney-at-Law)

National Coordinator

0717019730