

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

1st - 30th June 2020



Sunil Jayawardane- the Chairman of the Lanka Self Employed Professionals' National Three Wheeler Federation was killed after being assaulted by a group linked to a leasing company in Mirihana, Nugegoda in Colombo suburbs. Before his murder, Jayawardane exposed the injustices of leasing companies. Photo Courtesy: Newswire

INFORM

Human Rights Documentation Centre

www.inform.lk

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka in June 2020.

Published in July 2020.

© INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre

Colombo, Sri Lanka

<https://www.inform.lk/>

INFORM was established in 1990 to monitor and document human rights situation in Sri Lanka, especially in the context of the ethnic conflict and war, and to report on the situation through written and oral interventions at the local, national and international level. INFORM also focused on working with other communities whose rights were frequently and systematically violated. Presently, INFORM is focusing on election monitoring, freedom expression and human rights defenders. INFORM is based in Colombo Sri Lanka, and works closely with local activists, groups and networks as well as regional (Asian) and international human rights networks.

Contents

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Methodology.....	5
3. Context.....	6
4. Major incidents and trends related to dissent.....	9
4.1 Repression of freedom assembly.....	9
4.2 Repression of freedom of expression	10
4.3 Repression of civil society and trade union activists	11
4.4 Reprisals faced by state officials	11
4.5 Other incidents	12
5. Updates on previous legal cases related to dissent.....	13
6. Statistical Analysis.....	14
7. List of incidents:	16
List of Acronyms /Key words.....	31

1. Executive Summary

There were 38 incidents reported during this month of June, reporting more than one incident per a day. This report was prepared mainly based on the information reported in mainstream and social media, but in few cases through other sources.

The context in this month more or less connected with the upcoming Parliamentary Election. The Fundamental Rights petition filed by opposition parties and civil society activists about postponing election was rejected by the Supreme Court. Election commission announced August 5th as the new election date. The Presidential Task Forces were subjected to criticisms by activists, civil society and opposition party politicians.

The major trends reported in this month were in relation to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, attacks, threats and intimidation on civil society activists and trade unionists, and reprisals against state officials.

At least two court orders were issued banning protests. In one case, 53 protesters were arrested and some were assaulted. A lawyer who questioned the arrest of protestors was also arrested. Health Minister and state officials made problematic statements calling for restricting protests due to COVID19, though this was denied by the government's Director General of Health Services.

Government blocked access to a Tamil media website. CID seized a laptop used by an exiled journalist. A citizen journalism website had to shut down its whatsapp groups due to digital security risks they faced. The president advised a state media institution to promote his previous manifesto. Buddhist monks made a complaint to the CID asking to take action against a social media commentator.

A trade unionist was brutally assaulted and killed in the premises of a leasing company. Another civil society activist reported that he received death threats in social media and a previous complaint he made regarding threats he received remains uninvestigated. A newspaper accused a former UN high commissioner had participated in an LTTE event. Intelligence head sent a letter of demand against an international human rights activist for alleged defamation. Twitter handle of a campaign advocating for release of a detained activist was temporarily restricted.

Presidential Commission of inquiry (PCoI) issued summons to AG department in a manner that could have impact on ongoing legal cases. False accusations were made against Election commission and its members. One minister called public to surround the EC premises. Nationalist newspapers accused a Tamil EC member as an LTTE supporter, despite him having faced threats from the LTTE. PM Mahinda Rajapakse making a special speech undermined the parliamentary act criminalizing enforced disappearances, powers of the Office of Missing Persons, Office of Reparations and advocated for non-investigation of alleged war crimes and cases of disappearances. In two incidents bank officials were physically assaulted by the

customers in the context that COVID19 financial concessions failed to become realities on the ground.

Two left leaning candidates who oppose the government in Jaffna district alleged that they were visited and questioned by military intelligence officers. A lawyer was not allowed to get an affidavit from an eyewitness of a murder that occurred in a prison. Investigations were held against cricketers for alleged match fixing after they criticized a government project based on an accusation made by a minister.

Hejaaz Hizbullah – the arrested attorney-at-law, and Ramzy Razeek arrested social media commentator still remains behind the bars. An identification parade scheduled to be held against Hizubullah was dismissed after magistrate learnt that the children who were witnesses have been allegedly threatened by Police¹. Ramzy Razeek was further remanded. By the end of June he has been in jail for more than 80 days. The daughter of late journalist Lasantha Wickrematunge wrote a letter to the Police Commission against the appointment of SSP Prasanna Alwis as the head of the CID in last May. He has been accused of concealing evidence related to Lasantha Wickrematunge murder. Two FR petitions challenging former President's decision to pardon Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) General Secretary Ven. Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara Thera were refixed for support by the Supreme Court.

¹ [Identification parade for Hejaaz case withdrawn; case to be taken up 1 July](#). The morning. Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

2. Methodology

This report provides some general trends and details of some significant incidents related to the repression of dissent in Sri Lanka in the month of June.

This report was prepared mainly based on the information reported in mainstream and social media, however in few cases information was gathered from direct interviews, or discussions INFORM staff had with activists, witnesses and survivors. Incidents of repression mentioned in this report include arrests, threats, intimidation, investigations against human rights defenders (HRDs) etc. and potential threats such as new repressive laws, appointments, policy decisions etc., which may have a negative impact on freedom of expression, assembly, association and dissent in the future.

In this report, “dissent” is broadly defined to include acts of protest, resistance, defiance, challenge against, question or attempt to record rights violations, social injustice at the hands of state or non-state apparatus, including police, armed forces, religious groups, and politicians among others. “Repression” is defined as any attempt by the above state or non-state actors to suppress the acts of dissent. Any rhetoric decrying human rights has also been considered as repression of dissent because of its potential to erode rights. We have also included government officials who had faced reprisals when trying to do their duties.

3. Context

The Supreme Court rejected petitions filed regarding the general election on 2nd June. Seven parties including Attorney-at-Law Charitha Gunaratne, the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), journalist Victor Ivan, and the political party Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) had filed FR petitions challenging the date for the general election set by the EC. The General Election previously planned to be held on 20th June, was further postponed until 5th August 2020 due to COVID-19 health concerns². Directions to prevent the misuse of state property (including knowledge, skills and time of the public officers) during the election period causing prejudice to any party, group or candidate were issued by the EC³. A code of conduct for Election candidates,⁴ and media guidelines during the election period⁵ were also gazetted. Media reported that 20,000 intelligence officers will be deployed to observe health regulations at election polling stations⁶. Same as the previous elections, it was reported that female Buddhist monks (Bhikkunis) continue to be disenfranchised since they were not issued with National identity cards- a key requirement for voting. According to CMEV statistics, there are nearly 8,000 female Buddhist monks in the country in over 345 monasteries and only 300 of them will qualify for voting in the upcoming election.^{7 8}



The Election Commission held a series of mock polls to test health and safety measures amid the #COVID19 pandemic. Chairman of Election Commission observing a mock polling station. Photo courtesy- [SLBC](#)

² [Parliamentary Elections Act, No. 1 of 1981, Notice under section 24 \(3\)](#). Published 10th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

³ [Gazette Notification No 2178/29](#) published 6th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

⁴ [Gazette Notification No. 2178/25](#) published 3rd June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

⁵ [Gazette Notification No. 2178/24](#) published 3rd June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

⁶ [ජනද පොලවල සෞඛ්‍ය නීති අධීක්ෂණයට බුද්ධි නිලධාරීන් විසි දාහක්](#). Lankadeepa epaper. 5th June. p1. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

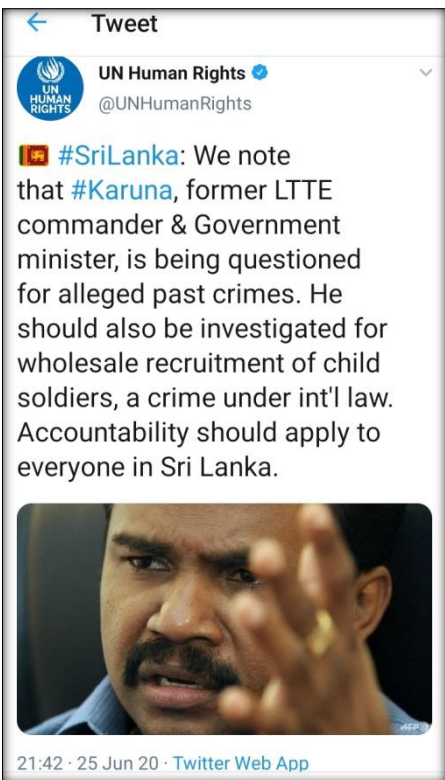
⁷ [Bhikkunis' Continue to be Disenfranchised](#). Counterpoint.lk. published 18th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

⁸ [Sri Lanka's Bhikkuni nuns and their fight for identity papers](#). BBC. Published 22nd Dec 2019. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

Few incidents of clashes between candidates in the same party, and attacks to political party members and supporters were also reported^{9 10}. Some of the restrictions and reprisals faced by candidates are included in the report.

Two Presidential Task Forces were appointed (1) To build a Secure Country, Disciplined, Virtuous and Lawful Society and (2) For Archaeological Heritage Management in the Eastern Province which were subjected to criticism of the human rights activists for their militarized leadership, negative impact on ethnic minorities and other issues. Tamil National Alliance Leader (TNA) leader R Sampanthan alleged that Task Force to manage “Archaeological Heritage” in the Eastern Province serves only the interests of Sinhala Buddhists¹¹.

An opposition party MP was subjected to strong criticism after criticizing the Archbishop Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith for engaging in politics and was forced to apologize^{12 13 14}. Venerable Narampanawe Ananda Thero of the Asgiriya Chapter stated that “those who do not love country, nation (jatiya) and religion shall be removed from Politics¹⁵.”



Tweet issued by UN Human Rights office on Karuna Amman

A controversial statement made by EC member Prof. Ratnajeewan Hoole on the conduct of political party SLPP was subjected to strong criticism on the impartiality of EC. In an interview with Dan TV, Prof. Hoole has allegedly said that the journalists supporting the Sri Lanka Podu Jana Peramuna (SLPP) were publishing false information about him and duping the public and people should not vote for those who deceive the public¹⁶. The statement was made in the context that SLPP supportive nationalist media continuously published hateful and false accusations against commissioner Hoole. Details about some of these reports are published in Repression of Dissent May and June reports.

Another controversial statement was made by former LTTE leader Karuna Amman alias Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan in an election campaign meeting in Ampara. He has allegedly stated that he is more dangerous than COVID-19 since he has killed 2000 to 3000 Sri Lankan

⁹ පල්ලම්දි එජාප ආධාරකරුවන් දෙදෙනෙකුට පහර දෙයි. Wayamba Today. Published 1st July 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹⁰ කාවනගේ හා නිසුනගේ ආධාරකරුවන් දෙකියාගේ දී ගැටෙති: තුනක් රෝහලේ. The leader. Published 21st June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹¹ [Archaeology Department promotes only one religion says Sampanthan](#). Tamil Guardian. Published 25th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹² [Harin accuses Archbishop of engaging in politics](#). Daily Mirror. published 22nd June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹³ [Mangala ‘impressed’ by Harin’s courage](#). Ada Derana. Published 24th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹⁴ [Harin issues apology to Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith](#) UTV. Published 24th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹⁵ රට ජාතිය ආගමට නැති අය දේශපාලනයෙන් අතුලා දමන්න.අස්ගිරි නි. ලේඛකාධිකාරී හිමියෝ කියති. Published 26th June 2020. Lankadeepa. p1

¹⁶ [NEC member Prof. Hoole clarifies his controversial remarks](#). Colombopage. Published 8th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

soldiers in one night at Elephant Pass when he was in the LTTE, as opposed to the number of lives claimed by COVID-19 in Sri Lanka¹⁷. Due to increased pressure from southern politicians, he was questioned and a statement was noted down by the CID on 25th June. Amidst this controversy, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) tweeted that “we note that Karuna, former LTTE commander & Government minister, is being questioned for alleged past crimes. He should also be investigated for wholesale recruitment of child soldiers, a crime under int'l law. Accountability should apply to everyone in Sri Lanka.”¹⁸ Colombo Additional Magistrate Priyantha Liyanage has ordered the CID to obtain unedited video footage and hold extensive investigations regarding Karuna’s statement¹⁹. Ven. Andaulpatha Buddhadasa Thera – a monk who survived Aranthalawa massacre allegedly led by Karuna²⁰ and an individual civil society activist filed fundamental rights petitions seeking legal action against Karuna Amman²¹.

On 25th June, the Court of Appeal issued an interim injunction order preventing the Permanent High Court Trial- at- Bar from hearing the case against Former Navy Commander Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda and 13 other navy personnel for allegedly abducting 11 youth. The case will not be taken up until the writ petition filed by Karannagoda, challenging indictments served against him, is heard²². In the previous month, the lawyer appearing for the victimized party was threatened with death in Social media and made a complaint to the CID²³.

Several incidents were reported regarding repression of civilians in the North and East. TNPF tweeted that Sri Lanka's military continues to prevent worshippers proceeding from Mulliyavalai Kaattu Vinayagar temple to Vatraappalai Kannaki Amman Temple in Mullivaikkal during ongoing festival, but allowed Sri Lanka's Chief of Defence Staff Shavendra Silva into the temple²⁴. Also reports published that the civilians have been assaulted by the Police during previous month (May) and complaints have been made to HRCSL.^{25 26}

¹⁷ [Karuna Amman says he killed more soldiers at Elephant Pass than lives claimed by COVID in SL](#). Published 19th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹⁸ The United Nations Human Rights office. [Tweet](#). Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

¹⁹ [Court orders to obtain unedited footage of Karuna's statement](#). Sri Lanka mirror. Published 25th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²⁰ [Monk who survived Aranthalawa massacre seeks legal action](#). Sri Lanka Mirror. Published 30th June. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²¹ [Petition filed seeking order to arrest Karuna](#). Daily News. Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²² [Court issues interim injunction on 11 youth abduction case notwithstanding AGs arguments](#). Sri Lanka Brief. Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²³ [Disappearance of 11 Youths: Lawyer in Defence of Aggrieved Party threatened with Life](#). Lankanewsweb. Published 23rd May 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²⁴ [Tweet issued by TNPF](#). 8th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020. [Tweet issued by Ravi Shangaran](#). 9th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020. [குவிக்கப்பட்டுள்ள இராணுவம்! ஆரம்பமானது வற்றாப்பளை கண்ணகை அம்மன் ஆலய உற்சவம்](#). IBC Tamil. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020. [வற்றாப்பளை ஆலய உற்சவத்திற்கு வருகை தந்த இராணுவ தளபதி: உலங்குவானூர்தியில் மலர் தூவி வரவேற்ற இராணுவத்தினர்!](#) IBC Tamil. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020. [வற்றாப்பளை கண்ணகை அம்மன் ஆலயத்திற்கு உலங்குவானூர்தியில் மலர் தூவிய ஸ்ரீலங்கா விமானப்படையினர்](#) IBC Tamil. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020

²⁵ [Sri Lankan police assault on Tamils under investigation by Human Rights Commission](#). Tamil Guardian. Published 17th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²⁶ [Falsely arrested and tortured disabled Tamil man submits complaint at Human Rights Commission](#). Tamil Guardian. Published 3rd June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

4. Major incidents and trends related to dissent

4.1 Repression of freedom assembly

“As a democratic country, I do not think that government or anybody is banning protests. Under limited conditions, adhering to health guidelines under quarantine act, protests can be held. If there is lack of guidelines on that, we are prepared to make them.”

*Anil Jasinghe Director-General of Health Services
[Swarnawahini. Jun 11, 2020 Minutes 3:50 – 7:31](#)*



“Even today, it was reported that people attempted to organize protests in several places. However, Director General of Health services clearly advised that protests should not be allowed due to COVID-19 risks in the country. If a meeting or gathering needs to be held, that should be informed to the Police OIC at least 6 hours before. Nobody would be allowed to have meetings and gatherings except for an essential thing.”

*Jaliya Senarathne, Police Media Spokesperson
[News 1st: Prime Time Sinhala News - 7 PM | \(10-06-2020\) Minutes: 17:06: 19:23](#)*



At least two court orders were issued banning the protests. Attendees to a memorial event in the North were obstructed by the Police. 53 protesters who participated in the “Black lives matter” protest in front of the US embassy Colombo were assaulted and arrested. A lawyer who questioned the arrest of protestors were also arrested. Health Minister Wanniarachchi, Police media spokesperson and Defense Secretary made statements that allowing protests could be problematic due to COVID-19 health concerns, while Director General of Health Services Dr. Anil Jasinghe refuted such claims and said that protests could be carried out adhering to health guidelines issued.



A female activist was assaulted and then thrown into the jeep by the Police during the arrest of persons who were allegedly going to participate in the “Black Lives matter” protest in Colomobo. Photo courtesy: Sri Lanka Brief.

4.2 Repression of freedom of expression

Access to a Tamil media website has been blocked since 28th May. CID checked the house of an exiled journalist and seized the laptop she used with a court warrant. The CID had also visited her house at least two times without a warrant previously. Due to suspicious whatsapp messages, Groundviews - a popular citizen journalism website shut down its whatsapp chat groups which have been in operation for several years. During a progress review meeting of a state television held in PM's official residence, the President asked them to promote President's manifesto presented during the last election, implying the channel should not promote views that would be critical of different. Buddhist monks made a complaint to the CID asking to take action against a social media commentator for allegedly insulting Buddhism and hurting the feelings of Buddhists as he had published facebook posts claiming Buddhism is a development of Jainism.

බෞද්ධ තොරතුරු කේන්ද්‍රය
අංක 529/19A, ජය මාවත, කඩුවෙල පාර, තලාහේන, බත්තරමුල්ල.
BUDDHIST INFORMATION CENTRE
NO.529/19A, Jayamawatha, Kaduwela Road, Talahena, Battaramulla.
E-mail : buddhistinfo.ctr@gmail.com
Tel./Fax : 011-2 788 231 Hotline : +94 71 1 150 160

2020/06/08

බෞද්ධ තොරතුරු කේන්ද්‍රය,
අංක 529/19A, ජය මාවත,
කඩුවෙල පාර, තලාහේන,
බත්තරමුල්ල.

භාර අනුශාසකවරු
අයිබීටී මහා විභාගාලාපී කාර්ය මණ්ඩල සහ සහිත
පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි
කැලණිය විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ සංස්කෘත
අධ්‍යයනයේ අධ්‍යක්ෂ ජනරාල්වරයා
පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි

සුදන්ද්‍රාලේට මහා විවිචාරණ විරුද්ධව,
ශ්‍රී ජයවර්ධනපුර විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ පාලි හා
බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යයනයේ මහාචාර්ය
පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි
වත්මනාකාරී ධර්මානන්දවරයාගේ අධ්‍යක්ෂ
පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි

නිලධාරී මණ්ඩලය

විධායක අධ්‍යක්ෂ :
පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි

මහලේකම් :
දිශානි සංචිත ජයසිංහ මහා

නායකවරයා :
ආර්යආචාර්ය වික්‍රමසිංහ මහා

මධ්‍ය ලේකම් :
සමිතී රජසිංහ මහා

අධ්‍යක්ෂක තුමා,
අපරාධ පරීක්ෂණ දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව,
කොළඹ .
අධ්‍යක්ෂක තුමනි, .

**ඉන්දික රත්නායක නාමැති සුද්ගලයක Face Book සමාජ
ජාලා භාවිතය කරමින් සිදු දහම් අපේක්ෂා දැනමින් යයි
පවසමින් මිත්‍යා මත පැතිරවීමේ, සිදු දහම්වල අපහාස
කිරීම, බෞද්ධයන්ගේ සිත් විදවීමට එරෙහිව පවසන
අන්තර්ජාල අපරාධය සම්බන්ධව විමර්ශනයක් කිරීම.**

ඉහත නම් සඳහන් ඉන්දික රත්නායක යන කැනැස්තරවරයා විසින් FACE
BOOK සමාජ ජාලය භාවිතා කරමින් බෞද්ධ පුස්තක මධ්‍යස්ථාන ධර්මානන්ද හිමි
දහම් සහ සුද්ගලයන් වහන්සේගේ මිත්‍යා මත පවතින බව බොහෝ කරුණු
තහවුල් කරමින් අතර මෙවරයා ඇතිවන පරිදි කටයුතු කරමින් සිටී. මොහු
ඇතුළු සිටිය "කළු කුහරය" නමින් "නේතු වරුන්" නමින් සහ කරවන
නම් වලින් එකතු (Group) හදමින් සවස් සුද්ගල කණ්ඩායමක් එකතු
කොට සමාජ ජාලා භරණ සිදු කරන මෙම ක්‍රියාව ජාලා රට තුළ
බෞද්ධ භාවිතා සිටින අතර මොහුගේ කාර්යයක් ඇති වීමට
පවතින අතර කළු කුහරය පරිසරය තහනම් කිරීමට සිටින බැවින් මොහු
සිදු කරන මෙම අපරාධය පිළිබඳ විමර්ශනයක් කොට අත්අඩංගුවට
ගෙන අධිකරණයට ඉදිරිපත් කරන ලෙස පැමිණිලි කරන අතර
දේශීය නීති සංග්‍රහයේ 291 ආ වගන්ති ප්‍රකාරව 2007 අංක 56 දරණ
සිවිල් හා දේශපාලන අයිතීන් පිළිබඳ ජාත්‍යන්තර සම්මුති සහ
(ICCPR) ප්‍රකාරවද මොහුට එරෙහිව අධිකරණයට කැරුණු මොහු
කරන ලෙසද ඉල්ලා සිටිමි. කවද මේ සම්බන්ධව මොහු පිළිබඳ අදාළ
කරුණු මේ සම්බන්ධ අමුණා ඇත.

මග තුමන්ට දැනට සම්පූර්ණ වශයෙන්ම,
මේ සම්බන්ධ කරුණු සහ විමර්ශන කිරීමට
අදාළවලේ සිටි විධායක ධර්මානන්ද හිමි සහ අධ්‍යක්ෂ
විධායක අධ්‍යක්ෂ - බෞද්ධ මධ්‍යස්ථාන, කඩුවෙල පාර, තලාහේන,
බත්තරමුල්ල. දුරකථන : 0771823233
විවෘත - බෞද්ධ කටයුතු කොමසාරිස් තුමා,

සුගතාරක පෙරදැක්මක්...

Image of the Letter of complaint made to CID by Buddhist monks against a social media commentator. Facebook post. Anupa Premaratne. Published 8th June 2020.

4.3 Repression of civil society and trade union activists

A trade unionist of trishaw drivers was brutally assaulted and killed in the premises of a leasing company, after he advocated to get COVID-19 concessions for one of their trade union members. Another civil society activist reported that he received death threats in social media when he shared a video criticizing murder of the trade unionist. He also said that the complaint he made regarding threatening phone calls in last month has not yet been investigated by the Police. A newspaper published a report that former UN High commissioner Pillai has attended a LTTE commemoration in South Africa dressed in a saree representing the colors of LTTE flag, implying she is a LTTE supporter. Director of State Intelligence services Suresh Sallay sent a letter of demand to Yasmin Sooka- director of ITJP (an organization that has been making critical reports about successive governments) for allegedly making defamatory remarks about him. The twitter handle advocating justice for an arrested lawyer was temporarily restricted.



Aseel Sampath speaking to media about the death threats he faced. <https://youtu.be/RCzE3BfIQrs>

4.4 Reprisals faced by state officials

Presidential Commission of inquiry (PCoI) on political victimization issued summons to AG department officials regarding an ongoing corruption case at a high court, based on a complaint made by one of the key accused.

One minister and a former minister of the ruling government made problematic public statements regarding the election commission. The minister called public to surround the election commission's premises as the chairman of the commission acts according to the wishes of the opposition, by not allowing all candidates to display their numbers and images at party offices. The former minister accused the Election commissioner Hoole for acting according to the agenda of the diaspora. The nationalist newspapers also made similar accusations. An unnamed correspondent writing to an English language newspaper accused Election Commissioner Hoole for engaging in fundraising for LTTE in the past. Another Sinhala language newspaper accused Hoole of working against the government with the support of

NGOs as the state intelligence have found. These accusations seemed to have ignored common knowledge and media reports about Hoole having faced threats from the LTTE and seem to have been fabricated with the expectation of undermining the work of EC.

PM Mahinda Rajapakse making a special speech undermined the powers of the Office of Missing Persons and advocated for non-investigation of alleged war crimes and cases of disappearances. He also critiqued the parliamentary acts criminalizing enforced disappearances and establishing an office for reparations.

At least in two incidents bank officials in government banks were physically assaulted by the customers. A statement issued by a Bank employees union stated there are many other incidents reported countrywide where bank employees have been threatened by the customers. This occurred in the context that COVID19 financial concessions which the government claimed to have been given failed to make into a reality.

A suspect threatened a high court judge with death. Two navy personnel were allegedly assaulted by fishermen involved in illegal fishing. A hospital worker was assaulted by a person who accompanied a patient for advising to wear a face mask.

4.5 Other incidents

Two candidates of Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Jaffna district including the district leader alleged that they were questioned by military intelligence officers. Tamil National People's Front (TNPF) alleged that its Mullaitivu district organizer was detained by the Police on false grounds.

Lawyer Senaka Perera - the President of the Committee for Protecting the Rights of Prisoners was not allowed to get an affidavit from a prison inmate who was an eyewitness of a murder of another inmate by prison authorities.

Investigations were held against cricketers after a minister accused them of engaging in match fixing 9 years ago, after they recently criticized the government project of building the largest cricket playground in Sri Lanka. Some expressed suspicion on the death of a retired senior official, a writer, and a whistleblower that exposed a large-scale corruption case whose body was found at a public place with no CCTV camera footage. However the close family members, and colleagues expressed no doubts and accepted it as a suicide.

A presidential task force (PTF) was appointed “to build a secure country, disciplined, virtuous and lawful society” providing broad powers, and all the members of the PTF were military, ex-military and police officers. Same as the previous months, President issued the monthly gazette calling armed forces providing them with powers to intervene in civilian matters, which had led to more military personnel on roadside and fears for government critiques.

5. Updates on previous legal cases related to dissent

The Police on the 18th of June filed a motion before Fort Magistrate to present detained attorney Hejaaz Hizbullah for an identification parade. The Magistrate then allowed the motion and fixed 24 June for the ID parade. However, on 24th June, magistrate decided to dismiss the order regarding identification parade since CID had already shown the photographs of Hizbullah as mentioned in the statements provided by the children who were allegedly threatened by Police and filed fundamental rights petitions²⁷.

The arrested social media writer Ramzy Razeek was further remanded. By the end of June, Razeek has been in jail for more than 80 days. He continued to suffer from health complications and one of his lawyer was not allowed to have a consultation with him. In May, his bail application had been postponed for 16th July 2020.

SSP Prasanna Alwis²⁸ was appointed as the new director of CID last May. According to Colombo Telegraph, former army intelligence officer Kandegedara Piyawansa, who was arrested in 2010 by TID for the murder has made a statement in open court in 2016 alleging that Alwis had tried to influence him into making a statement implicating the former Army Commander Sarath Fonseka in Lasantha's assassination, with the promise of being made a state witness and given overseas employment²⁹. Before the regime change, CID considered taking legal action against Prasanna Alwis accusing him of concealing evidence linked to the investigations into the murder of Wickrematunge³⁰. However the decision of taking legal action against Prasanna Alwis changed after the regime change. The Constitutional Council called for the National Police Commission's (NPC) observations on a letter sent to the Commission by the daughter of slain journalist Lasantha Wickrematunge challenging the appointment of the new Director of the Criminal Investigation Department³¹.

Two FR petitions challenging former President's decision to pardon Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) General Secretary Ven. Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara Thera were refixed for support by the Supreme Court. The petitions were filed by wife of Prageeth Ekneligoda and CPA. The case related to threats and interference made by Gnanasara Thero during a court hearing of disappeared journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda in 2016. Gnanasara who was sentenced to spend 6 years in prison in 2018 was pardoned by the President in May 2019³².

²⁷ [Identification parade for Hejaaz case withdrawn; case to be taken up 1 July](#). The morning. Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

²⁸ Adambarage Ruwan Prasanna Jayak De Alwis

²⁹ [Alleged torturer heads Sri Lankan CID: ITJP](#). Colombo Telegraph. Published 26th May 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

³⁰ [Lasantha Wickrematunge murder: CID takes ex-TID officer to court](#). The Morning. Published 6th October 2019. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

³¹ [Ahimsa's objections on CID Director's appointment: Constitutional Council wants NPC's observations](#). EconomyNext. Published 25th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020 and [Ahimsa appeals to Police Commission](#). The Morning. Published 18th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

³² [FRs challenging Gnanasara Thera's pardon fixed for support](#). Daily News. 27th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.

6. Statistical Analysis

Location	Number	Percentage
Colombo	16	42%
Kalutara	2	5%
North and East	5	13%
Other areas	2	5%
Not Applicable	9	24%
Not mentioned	1	3%
online	3	8%
Total	38	100%

Table 1: Geographical area of the incidents

There were 38 incidents relating to dissent included in this report, reporting more than 1 incident per day. The highest number of them (42%) was reported from the Colombo District while 5% of incidents were also reported from Kalutara District. (These are two of the three districts in the Western province). Secondly 13% incidents were reported from North and East provinces. Another 5% were reported from other areas. The geographical location was considered not applicable in 24% of incidents, which were not limited to one specific geographic area. 8% of incidents were online. In one case (3%), the geographic area was not mentioned.

Ethnicity	Number	Percentage	Gender	Number	Percentage
Sinhala	15	56%	Male	19	79%
Tamil	11	41%	Female	5	21%
Muslim	1	4%	Other	0	0%
Total	27	100%	Total	24	100%

Table 2: Gender and Ethnicity of the victims

When ethnicity and gender were considered, only in 27 and 24 incidents respectively ethnicity and gender data were either available or applicable. Where ethnicity is applicable 56% of the victims were Sinhala, 41% were Tamil, and 4% were Muslims. Where gender is applicable, 79% of the incidents were related to male victims, while 21% were related to female victims.

Type of victims	Number	Percentage
Journalists	5	13%
Civil Society Activists	4	11%
Protestors	3	8%
State officials	12	32%
Lawyers	2	5%
Politicians	2	5%
Other	5	13%
Not applicable	5	13%
Total	38	100%

Table 3: Types of victims

Then we looked at the types of the victims. 32% of them were state officials or institutions. 13% were journalists. 11% were civil society activists. In 8% of cases, the protestors were the victims. 5% of incidents were relating to lawyers, another 5% were relating to Politicians. 13% of incidents belong to the other category, while in another 13% of incidents category of victim was considered not applicable as they were mainly legal, policy, institutional actions which could have broad impact on multiple parties.

Type of violation	Number	Percentage
Killings and suspicious deaths	2	5%
Physical attacks	5	13%
Arrests	3	8%
Verbal or written threats and insulting statements	6	16%
Death threats	2	5%
Online security issues and censorship	3	8%
Court order	2	5%
Investigation	1	3%
Visits, inspection and questioning	3	8%
Intimidation	1	3%
Legal, institutional and policy changes and undue influences on state institutions	8	21%
Others	2	5%
Total	38	100%

Table 4: Type of violations

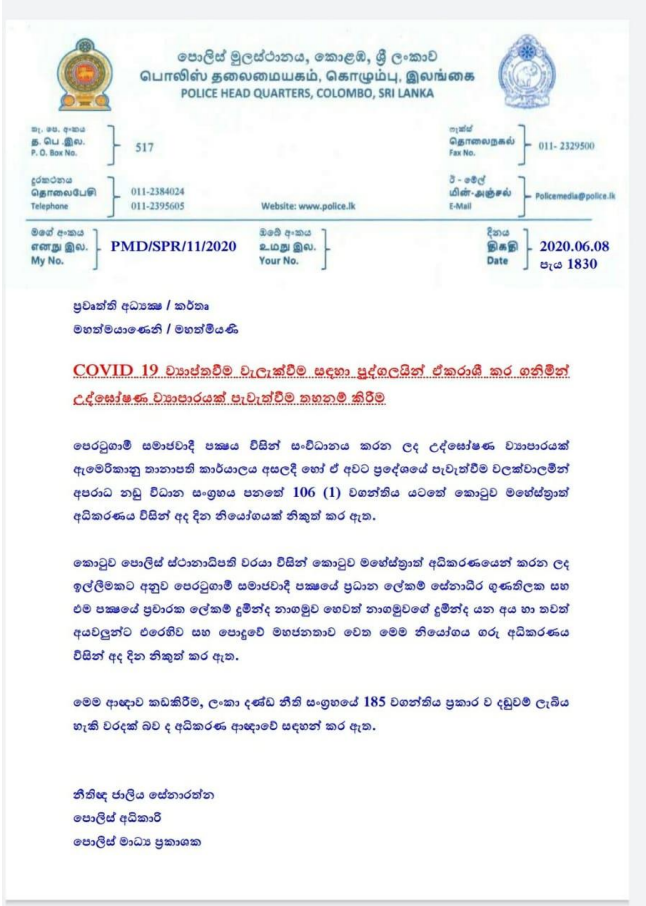
When types of violations were considered the highest percentage 21% was legal, institutional and policy changes and undue influences on state institutions. Secondly there were 16% of incidents about verbal and written threats and insulting statements. Thirdly there were physical attacks in 13% of incidents and another 8% of incidents were related to visits, inspection and questioning. Another 8% were related to online security issues and censorship. Another 8% were arrests. 5% of the incidents (two incidents) were relating to court orders that banned protests. Another 5% were related to death threats. Another 5% were related to killings and suspicious deaths.

Alleged Perpetrator/ Responsible party	Number	Percentage
Military and Police	11	29%
Government and officers	6	16%
Politicians	6	16%
Business persons	1	3%
Court	2	5%
Unknown	1	3%
Others	11	29%
Total	38	100%


Table 5: Type of alleged perpetrator or responsible party

When the alleged perpetrator or responsible party was considered 29% of incidents were related to military and police. 16% were related to politicians. Another 16% were related to government authorities or officers. In few incidents, business persons and courts were responsible. Various other parties were involved in 29% of the incidents.


7. List of incidents:



No.	Date	District	Description [1st May - 30 May]	Source
			Repression of Freedom of Assembly	
1.	8th June 2020	Colombo	<p>A court order was issued banning the 'Black lives matter' protest organized by Frontline Socialist Party (FSP) in front of US embassy in Colombo on the request of Police as a measure to control spread of COVID-19. The court order was issued against FSP's secretary Senadheera Gunathilaka and Propaganda Secretary Duminda Nagamuwa and others, considering Section 106 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code.</p>  <p><i>Communique issued to media by Police media spokesperson regarding the court order. Courtesy: newswire</i></p>	<p>Court order foils scheduled protest opposite US embassy. Daily Mirror. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>Police obtain court order against FSPs “I can’t breathe” protest against US. Newswire. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
2.	8th June 2020	Colombo	<p>A court order was issued banning a protest in front of Chinese embassy in Colombo demanding compensation from China for Covid19. The Police had obtained the court order against the National Movement for Consumer Rights Protection from staging the protest on 8, 9, 10 or 11th June in Colombo.</p>	<p>Court order against protest demanding compensation from China for Covid19. Newswire. Published 9th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>


<p>3. 10th June 2020</p>	<p>Mullaitivu</p>	<p>The 22nd memorial day of the Suthandhirapuram massacre was held at the Hindu cemetery at Vellappallam Puthukkudiyiruppu, Mullaitivu. The Puthukkudiyiruppu police stopped the people who were going to the event and told them that they cannot commemorate it. Former MP Sivappahasam Sivamohan and other politicians were present in this event. The memorial event took place despite the police attempt to restrict the people participating. Dan TV report states that there were many police officers and the police checked the driving license of the attendees.</p>  <p><i>Suthandhirapuram massacre memorial event. Photo courtesy-athavannews</i></p>	<p>(முல்லைத்தீவு – சுதந்திரபுரம் படுகொலை நினைவேந்தல் தடைகளையும் மீறி அனுஷ்டிப்பு! Dan TV. Published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>(முல்லைத்தீவு – சுதந்திரபுரம் படுகொலை நினைவேந்தலை தடுத்த பொலிசார்! Dan TV. Published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>தடைகளையும் மீறி சுதந்திரபுரம் படுகொலை நினைவேந்தல் நிகழ்வு அனுஷ்டிப்பு Athavan News. Published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
<p>4. 9th June 2020</p>	<p>Colombo</p>	<p>53 Protestors of Frontline Socialist Party (FSP) were arrested for allegedly taking part at protests condemning the murder of George Floyd at Colpetty junction and near Lipton circle in Colombo. In Colpetty protestors were arrested before the protest began. In Lipton Circle, the peaceful protestors who did the protest respecting social distancing, wearing face masks and adhering to health guidelines issued by the health authorities were assaulted and arrested by the Police. Arrested protestors were carried in crowded vehicles risking the health of protestors. They were released on bail the same day after being produced before a magistrate.</p>  <p><i>Protest in Lipton circle was held respecting social distancing and wearing face masks. Colpetty arrest occurred before the protest began. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian</i></p>	<p>WATCH VIDEO: Police crack whip against anti US protesters in Sri Lanka. Newsfirst. Published 9th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>

			 <p><i>Protestors being taken to the Police in crowded jeeps after the arrest violating COVID-19 health guidelines and subjecting the protestors into COVID-19 health risks. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian</i></p>	
5.	9th June 2020	Colombo	<p>Attorney-at-Law Swasthinka Arulingam was arrested after they have questioned the Police about the reasons for arresting the protestors mentioned above. Arulingam is a well-known human rights activist and a lawyer based in Colombo.</p>	<p>Sri Lanka: Liberation Movement condemns violence and violation of human rights by the Police!. Liberation Movement. published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
6.	10th June 2020	N/A	<p>Health Minister Pavithra Wanniarachchi said protests which gather large numbers of persons cannot be allowed due to covid19 situation. She further told that medical experts have adviced that COVID-19 could spread if the public gathers.</p>	<p>(1) Statement of Minister [video]. Hiru TV NEWS 6:55 PM published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020. (2) විරෝධතා නිසා කොරෝනා වියාජන වීමේ අවදානමක් (Sinhala). Newsradio. published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
7.	10th June 2020	N/A	<p>Police media spokesperson Jaliya Senarathna said that Director General of Health services Dr. Anil Jasinghe has clearly stated that protest should not be allowed due to COVID19 situation. He also said that they have doubts whether there is a conspiracy to spread COVID19 in the country, referring to recently held protests. On 11th June speaking to programme on Swarnavahni TV channel, Director General of Health Services Dr. Jasinghe rejected claims that he had advised to ban the protests. He explicitly said that protests could be conducted while following the health guidelines which were issued.</p>	<p>Statement of Jaliya Senarathna Hiru TV NEWS 6:55 PM. published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020. (2) News 1st: Prime Time Sinhala News - 7 PM [video- . Minutes: 17:06: 19:23]. published 10th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
8.	10th June 2020	N/A	<p>Defense Secretary Kamal Gunarathna also issued a statement condemning organizing protests soon after ending COVID19 lockdown.</p>	<p>Statement of Defence Secretary Hiru TV NEWS. published 11th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>

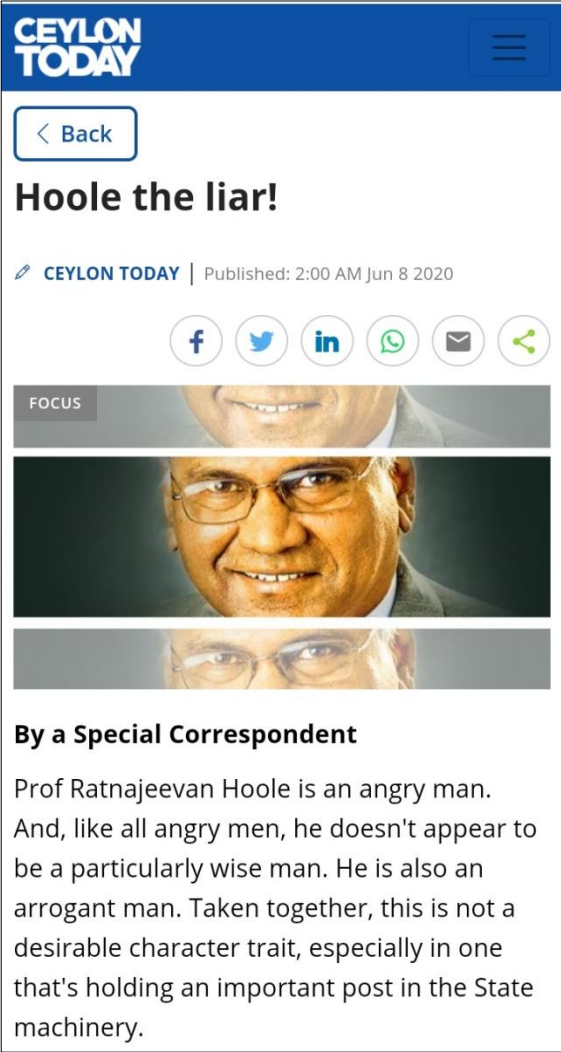
			Repression of Freedom of expression	
9.	6th June 2020	online	GoSL has blocked access to the Tamil media website sankathi24.com since 28th May in the last month. No reasons have been provided why the website was blocked.	Sri Lanka blocks Sankathi24 Tamil news website as press crackdown continues. Tamil Guardian. Published 6 th June 2020. Last accessed 17 th July 2020.
10	9th June 2020	Colombo	CID seized the laptop used by the exiled journalist Darisha Bastians on 9th June 2020. In a statement released 15th June, Bastians said the CID had arrived at her residence in Colombo twice and made efforts to seize her laptop without a warrant. The family had obtained legal advice and informed the CID officials that the computer could not be handed over without a court order, the statement noted. On 9th June, Bastians said the CID had arrived at her home with a warrant. "The officers searched the entire house including bedrooms, my desk and my work space. Photographs were taken during the visit. My computer was found, seized and sealed. A receipt was provided for the laptop, the power adapter and the laptop bag. Statements were recorded from family members residing at my home," the statement from the journalist said. On 16th June, the Colombo Chief Magistrate Lanka Jayaratne directed the CID to obtain a report from the Government Analyst on journalist's laptop.	CID seizes Journalist's laptop. Newswire. Published 15 th June 2020. Last accessed 17 th July 2020. Journalist's Laptop - Court directs CID to obtain report from Govt Analyst. Daily Mirror. Published 16 th June 2020. Last accessed 17 th July 2020.
11	15th June 2020	online	Due to suspicious Whatsapp messages Groundviews has decided to shut down their group chats. Groundviews is a citizen journalism website which usually publishes human rights related content. These whatsapp chat groups were started in 2016, and after constitutional crisis in 2018, postings in these groups were restricted only to admins due to digital security concerns. Despite of restrictions, suspicious messages have been sent to subscribers by using its editor's whatsapp mobile number. In an article published in Groundviews, the editor Hattotuwa said "unprecedented recent events, which I consider to be a harbinger of risks pegged to malevolent intrusion and surveillance in Sri Lanka that will increase in sophistication, speed and scale at pace, require shutting these groups down".	WhatsApp & Groundviews: The end of updates. Sanjana Hattotuwa. Groundviews. Published 16 th June 2020. Last accessed 15 th July 2020.

12	23rd June 2020	Colombo	<p>During a progress review meeting of state television ITN held at the PM's official residence Temple Trees, the President Gotabaya said that ITN (and state media) should promote his manifesto "Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour" presented during the last election. The President's official website identified the manifesto as the "National Policy Framework" "accepted by the Majority of the people." This indirectly discourages the channel to give coverage to views that would be different or critical to the manifesto of the President.</p>  <p><i>Photo of the meeting held. Photo courtesy - Presidentsoffice.gov.lk</i></p>	<p>ITN news 9.30 pm [Video: minutes 11.00 - 12.12] Published 23rd June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p> <p>President's official statement. Presidential website. Published 23rd June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
13	8 th June 2020	Colombo	<p>According to information shared in social media, on 8th June 2020, Angulugalle Jinananda Thero- the executive Director of Buddhist information centre made a complaint to the CID of Police against Indika Rathnayake for allegedly claiming "Buddhism is a development of Jainism and spreading misinformation about Buddha and Buddhism" and for hurting the feelings of Buddhists. The complaint further said that Ratnayake has used facebook groups "Kalu Kuharaya" (Black hole) and "Hethuwadaya" (Rationalism) to spread these ideas. The complaint letter also proposed CID to take legal action under section 291 of the penal code, and ICCPR Act for the offence of uttering words with deliberate intention of wounding religious feelings and hate speech. Previously writer Shakthika Sathkumara was arrested and other writers were subjected to harassment and legal action following similar complaints made by the same group. Indika Rathnayake has been a rationalist and an atheist. The same complaint against Indika Rathnayake was earlier made on 6th May 2019.</p>	<p>Clarification provided by the General Secretary of Buddhist Information Centre. Facebook Post. Published 9th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p> <p>Image of the Letter of complaint shared online. Facebook post. Anupa Premarathne. Published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p> <p>Image of the previous complaint made to CID last year. Buddhist Information Centre. Facebook post. Published 6th May 2019. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>


			Repression of civil society and trade union activists	
14	10th June 2020	Colombo	<p>The Chairman of the Lanka Self-Employed Professionals’ National Three-Wheeler Federation Sunil Jayawardena was beaten and killed in a brutal manner at the premises of a leasing company located in Mirihana. Sunil Jayawardena – 53 years old at the time of his death – had visited the leasing company to discuss matters related to a leasing issue of a three-wheeler owned by a member of their trade union. Sri Lanka Police arrested 08 people in connection to the assault and murder.</p>  <p><i>Trade unionist Sunil Jayawardane (left) and where he was beaten to death on a roadside (right). Photo courtesy- Newswire</i></p>	<p>Sunil Jayawardena murder suspects remanded: Investigations continue. Newsfirst. Published 11th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
15	17th June 2020	online	<p>Foundation for People’s Right Protection (FPRP) National Organizer Asela Sampath said that he has recently received death threats in social media when he shared a video condemning the murder of trade unionist Sunil Jayawardana. He further said that a previous Police complaint lodged by him regarding threatening calls he received on 22 May from the number 0112414535 has not been investigated. He alleged that threatening phone calls were made by a person named Thushara Perera, who is a henchman of a ruling party local politician. Asela Sampath is also a candidate of Nawa Sihala Urumaya in the ongoing parliamentary election.</p>  <p><i>Asela Sampath speaking to media about the death threats he faced.</i> https://youtu.be/RCzE3BfIQrs</p>	<p>Threatening phone calls : FPRP National Organizer lodges complaint. Ceylon Today. Published 17th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>

16	15th June 2020	Colombo	<p>Justice4hejaaz Twitter handle was reported to be temporarily restricted. The twitter account was started after the arrest of Hejaaz Hizbullah who was a prominent Sri Lankan lawyer, and an activist. He was arrested on 14 April 2020 and has since been detained without charges, and he has not been produced before a magistrate and had no meaningful access to a lawyer. His family and colleagues believe that he has been targeted for his work, including for the rights of Muslim minorities in the country.</p>  <p><i>Restricted Twitter handle. Courtesy Mari De Silva</i></p>	<p>@Mari_deSilva Tweet. Screenshot. Published 15th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
17	12th June 2020	N/A	<p>Divaina newspaper published a news claiming that Navi Pillai (former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) has attended LTTE commemoration event held in South Africa dressed in LTTE flag's colours. This implied she is a LTTE supporter, although she has never been known to have supported or sympathized with the LTTE. Pillai had also been very critical of the Sri Lankan government.</p>	<p>කොටි සමරු උළෙලට පිල්ලේ කොටි කොඩියේ පාවිච්චි සැරසිලා. Keerthi Warnakulasooriya. Divaina. Published 12th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
18	15th June 2020	N/A	<p>Major General Suresh Tuan Sallay, the Incumbent Director of the State Intelligence Services of Sri Lanka has taken steps to send a Letter of Demand to Ms. Yasmin Sooka and the International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP). The said Letter of Demand sent through Major General Sallay's Lawyer: Pasan Weerasinghe, Attorney-at-Law, states that on or about 01st June 2020, Ms. Yasmin Sooka, in her capacity as the Executive Director of the ITJP has issued a press statement making various defamatory remarks against Major General Sallay. The press statement is said to be published via the ITJP Sri Lanka's website.</p>	<p>"Major General Suresh Sallay to institute legal action against Yasmin Sooka and ITJP" Sri Lanka Defence Ministry official Website. Published 15th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>


			Reprisals faced by state officials	
19	22nd June 2020	N/A	Several former MPs and an official in the Attorney General (AG) department were summoned to the Presidential Commission of Inquiry probing incidents of Political Victimization based on a complaint made by Avant Garde Maritime Services Chairman Nissanka Senadhipathi. In response, AG Dappula De Livera has informed that the commission does not have the legal right to summon AG Department officials. Senadhipathi -the complainant to the PCoI is the second suspect in an ongoing case filed against soliciting a bribe of Rs. 35.5 million for operating a floating armory belonging to the Avant-Garde company. The summoning of AG officials to PCoI seems to be an act of undue pressure on the ongoing legal case.	<p>PCoI cannot investigate Attorney General or his officers : AG's Department. Newsfirst. Published 22nd June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p> <p>COI not a judicial tribunal but a fact-finding body; AG (COMPLETE LETTER TO COD). Newsfirst. Published 23rd June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p> <p>Permanent High Court Trial-at-Bar rejects objections by Avant-Garde accused. Published 30th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
20	27 th June 2020	Colombo	Minister Weerawansa accused the Election Commission Chairman Mahinda Deshapriya of playing to the tune of the opposition, by not allowing display the numbers, images of candidates at party offices. Weerawansa said that Deshapriya claims to have made a mistake in the past but will not repeat that mistake at the upcoming election. The Minister accused Deshapriya of attempting to mislead the public and he urged the public to surround the Elections Commission and defeat that attempt. This appear to be an attempt to undermine the independence of the Election Commission and it's Chairperson and also reduce public confidence in the Commission.	<p>Wimal attacks EC Chairman Mahinda Deshapriya. Newswire. Published 28th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
21	9 th June	Colombo	Addressing a press conference held at SLPP party office in Battaramulla, former Minister Wijayadasa Rajapaksha criticized Election Commissioner Ratnajeevan Hoole and stated that "entire country has become anarchist because of one member of the EC." He further accused Hoole as a person acting according the agenda of the diasporas.	<p>මැතිවරණ කොමිසමේ එක් සාමාජිකයෙක් නිසා රටම ආරාජික වෙලා. Divaina newspaper. 10th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>
22	8th June 2020	N/A	An unnamed correspondent writing to the Ceylon Today newspaper accused that Election Commissioner Ratnajeevan Hoole has "attempted to spread the separatist ideology of the Liberation	<p>"Hoole the liar!" Ceylon Today. published 8th June 2020. Last accessed 15th July 2020.</p>

			<p>Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and engaged in fundraising for the LTTE". Newspaper claimed that Prof. Hoole is a dual citizen of both Sri Lanka and the U.S. and asked "What guarantee do we have that he will not work according to the U.S. agenda or the LTTE agenda?." Media reports have indicated that Hoole has been critical of the LTTE and faced threats from the LTTE and that it is unlikely that he promotes agenda of diaspora or anyone sympathizing with the LTTE.</p>  <p><i>headline of the article from Ceylon Today website</i></p>	
23	11th June 2020	N/A	<p>Divaina newspaper published news that government intelligence has found that Election Commissioner Ratnajeewan Hoole works against the government with the support of NGOs. The news further claimed that Hoole being a dual citizen in both Nigeria and Sri Lanka as a disqualification to be appointed as a member of an independent commission.</p>	<p>https://divaina.com/daily/index.php/puwath-2/43947-2020-06-10-12-47-44</p>


24	18th June 2020	Kalutara	A guarantor of a loan has stabbed a female employee of a state bank in Wadduwa area following a heated argument. The suspect has been arrested and produced before a magistrate.	https://www.hirunews.lk/english/243435/a-bank-guarantor-for-a-loan-stabs-a-female-bank-employee-of-a-state-bank-in-wadduwa-after-a-heated-argument
25	20th June 2020	Colombo	An officer working at Gold Centre branch of Bank of Ceylon has been assaulted by a 'woman in a uniform' according to a statement issued by the Employees Union of Bank of Ceylon. The statement also said that they have been informed of many instances of which Bank employees including managers being threatened by various persons.	බැංකු සේවකයින්ට එරෙහි තර්ජන හා පහරදීම් පිටු දකිමු... “ලංකා බැංකු සේවක සංගමයේ” මාධ්‍ය නිවේදනය. Wamehanda. Published 23 rd June 2020.
26	14th June 2020	Matara	An intelligence officer of Sri Lanka Police has been assaulted and tortured by other Police officers for allegedly conducting an investigation on drug trafficking with possible links to Police officers. As reported by Sri Lanka brief, the victim has been first assaulted by Police superintendent Hemal Prashantha and several others, and then he has been handed over to Gandara Police station in Matara district where he has been further tortured. The victim claims that police officers have said that "you have been acting against us, so we act against you" while assaulting him. Police have accused him of stealing a pistol from the Police station.	ඉහළ පොලීස් නිලධාරීන් දෙදෙනෙක් බුද්ධි අංශ නිලධාරියකුට වටකර පහර දුන් බවට පැමිණිල්ලක්. (Sinhala). Sri Lanka Brief. Published 26 th June 2020. Last accessed 14 th July 2020.
27	25th June 2020	Not mentioned	A suspect has threatened a high court judge with death and has allegedly told that he will slit throat of the judge and commit suicide by doing the same. This occurred when the suspect's request to make a special statement to the judge was refused.	විභාග වෙමින් පවතින නඩුවක වූදිනයකුගෙන් මහාධිකරණ විනිසුරුවරයකුට මරණ තර්ජන. Hiru Gossip. Published 26 th June 2020. Last accessed 14 th July 2020.
28	9th June 2020	Jaffna	Two navy personnel were assaulted by an unknown group of persons when they were patrolling in Anlaithivu island area in Jaffna. The two were admitted to the Jaffna teaching hospital with minor injuries. Later a group of 8 fishermen were arrested by the Navy along with 13 prohibited fishing nets. According to Mawbima newspaper, the arrested persons are allegedly linked with the attack.	නාවික නිලධාරීන්ට පහර දී නීති විරෝධීව මසුන් මැරූ පිරිසක් දැලේ. Mawbima. Published 14 th June 2020. Last accessed 14 th July 2020.
29	19th June 2020	Galle	A hospital worker was assaulted and wounded by a person who accompanied a patient over an argument for not wearing a face mask in Karapitiya hospital. The patient has been asked to wear masks and come back to receive treatments by the hospital worker subjected to the assault.	කරාපිටිය රෝහලේ සේවකයකුට පහර දීලා. [Sinhala]. Lankadeepa. 20 th June 2020. Last accessed 14 th July 2020.

30	28th June 2020	Colombo	<p>PM Mahinda Rajapakse making a special speech “Let’s defeat local and foreign conspiracies against Sri Lanka” criticized legal cases filed against military personnel and Buddhist monks, 30/1 UN Human Rights Council resolution on Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka, establishment of Office of Missing persons (OMP), adoption of international convention for the protection of all persons from enforced disappearance (ICPPED) Act No 05 of 2018, and Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (Amendment) Act No 24 of 2018. He framed them as conspiracies against the nation and reprisals against “War Heroes.” During his speech, he undermined powers provided to OMP to investigate incidents of disappearances. He viewed ICPPED Act as a mechanism that "hunts members of Sri Lankan Army" and advocated for impunity and non-investigation of alleged war crimes and cases of disappearances.</p>  <p><i>PM Mahida Rajapaksha while making the speech. Youtube: https://youtu.be/DT99U4XYBHU</i></p>	<p>ශ්‍රී ලංකාවට එරෙහි දෙස් විදෙස් කුමන්ත්‍රණ පරාජය කරමු” යන මැයෙන් සිදු කළ ජරකාශය. Swarnawahini. Live at 8. 28th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p> <p>[video]. Transcription [sinhala] of speech available at “කුමන්ත්‍ර අවසන් නෑ. අගමැතිගෙන් ජරකාශයක්” Ada. Published 28th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p> <p>English translation. Defeating domestic and foreign conspiracies against Sri Lanka. Daily News. Published 29th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p>
----	----------------	---------	---	---

			Other incidents	
31	19th June 2020	Mullaitivu	<p>The TNPF Official Twitter handle tweeted that Thilakanathan Kinthujan (TNPF Mullaitivu District organizer) was detained by 4 officers of Mankulam Police on 18th June on the false pretext of executing an arrest warrant for distracted driving. He was released around midnight after intervention of lawyers. He was detained for allegedly using his mobile phone while driving a bus, when he neither possesses a heavy vehicle license nor drives a bus.</p> <p>The TNPF twitter handle tweeted on 14th May 2020 that their Mullaitivu District Organiser Thilakanathan Kinthujanân's house was visited by the TID to question about his involvement on commemorations of the Mullivaikkal Remembrance week.</p>	<p>Tamil National People's Front @TnpfOrg. Tweet. Published 19th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p> <p>Tamil National People's Front @TnpfOrg. Tweet. Published 14th May 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p>
32	16 th June 2020	Jaffna	<p>At about 11 a.m., two military intelligence personnel have visited the house of Paramuthirugnana Sampanthar – the Jaffna district leader of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) contesting in the upcoming general election. His house is located at Karainagar, an island connected to Jaffna Peninsula. One intelligence officer who had introduced himself as Sanjeeva has attempted to question Sampanthar. When he asked clarifications, he has been informed that their senior officer needed to collect information about candidates in the election. In response, Sampanthar has said that it is illegal collect such information during election period, and has refused to answer the questions.</p>	<p>SEP demands military stops harassing its election candidates in Jaffna. Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka). World Socialist Website. Published 30th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p>
33	23 rd June 2020	Jaffna	<p>About 10.30 a.m., two army intelligence officers have arrived at SEP candidate in upcoming general election- Rajaratnam Rajavel's house at Maniyanthottam located within Jaffna Municipality, saying they were from the Chavakachcheri army camp. One officer, who introduced himself as Upul, said they needed Rajavel's details to provide him with security. He claimed that because many parties were contesting the election there was the possibility of clashes. Unable to persuade Rajavel to provide any information, the intelligence officers tried to photograph him, which he opposed. They left only after Sampanthar spoke to them (their senior officials) by telephone, protested their actions and asked them to leave.</p>	<p>SEP demands military stops harassing its election candidates in Jaffna. Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka). World Socialist Website. Published 30th June 2020. Last accessed 14th July 2020</p>
34	20th-24th June	Polonnaruwa	<p>Lawyer Senaka Perera- president of the Committee for Protecting Rights of Prisoners was not allowed to record an affidavit from an eye witness who has seen a prison inmate who died in detention being beaten up by the prison officials.</p>	<p>Sri Lanka: Eyewitness reveals how young detainee was beaten to death by guards. JDS. published 24th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>

35	June- July	Colombo	<p>Several former national cricketers, including former captains Mahela Jayawardane and Kumar Sangakkara were summoned to give statements to the police over alleged match-fixing accusations made by a minister in the beginning of July. On 2nd of July Sangakkara was questioned for over 9 hours on the alleged match fixing charges. Mahela Jayawardane was also summoned the next day, but he was informed that recording his statement was postponed. However, he arrived at the special investigation unit of the Sports Ministry to clarify to the media that it was not his personal request to postpone the inquiry as some media stations have incorrectly reported. On 17th May 2020, Mahela Jayawardane criticized the government's proposed project to build the largest cricket stadium. In a tweet he said “We don’t even play enough international cricket or domestic first class cricket in the existing stadiums we have ... Do we need another one?.” Since this tweet led to criticisms against the government, a few days later PM Mahinda Rajapakse held a discussion with the former cricketers and other stakeholders to discuss the matter. PM requested to hand over him a plan in one month. On 18th June, Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage during a media interview accused that the Cricket World Cup match held between India vs Sri Lanka in 2011 was fixed, however he explicitly said that he was not linking this to the cricketers, but to another party. The 2011 cricket world cup was the last world cup match series that Jayawardane and Sangakkara had participated in, they retired in 2014 and 2015 respectively. Accusations made after 9 years was strange and as many social media users pointed out, this could have been a reprisal against them questioning the government’s proposed project.</p>	<p>(1) Jayawardene questions Sri Lanka's plan to build largest cricket stadium. The Hindu. published 18th May 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>(2) Sangakkara and Mahela Meet Prime Minister. Hiru News. published 22nd May 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>(3) 2011 ලෝක කුසලානය මුදලට පවා දුන් බවට මහින්දානන්දගේ හෙළිදරව්වක්. Newsfirst. published 18th June. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>(4) Sangakkara replies to Mahindananda's 2011 World Cup final fixing claim. Newswire. published 18th June.</p> <p>(5) Sangakkara questioned for nearly 9 hours. The morning. Published 2nd July 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>(6) Match-fixing inquiry: SIU postpones recording of Mahela's statement. Daily Mirror. published 3rd July. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
				
<p><i>Kumar Sangakkara Speaking to media after giving a statement to the CID. Video: https://youtu.be/cA2TIEp3eSw</i></p>				

36	12th June 2020	Colombo	<p>Rajeewa Jayaweera: a retired senior official of Sri Lankan Airlines, and Mihin Lanka Airlines, a regular blogger, and a whistleblower who exposed Mihin Lanka Airbus deal fraud was found dead at the Independence square in Colombo on 12th June. He left a computer typed suicide note detailing reasons for his suicide. While close family members and colleagues accepted his death as a suicide, some including former Prime Minister Wickramasinghe, several websites and social media users speculated doubts about the death whether it was a forced suicide. Further doubts were made since the CCTV cameras were off at the time of his death and no traces were available how he arrived at the Independence square.</p>  <p><i>Rajeewa's dead body was found nearby the Independence Square. Photo courtesy Ada Derana.</i></p>	<p>රජීව ජයවීර මියයද්දී ආරක්ෂක කැමරා අක්රීය වෙලා – නාප්පුඩින් පත්තියේ මරණයක්දැයි සැකයක්! . Lankaviews. Published 13th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>අභ්‍යන්තර රහස් හෙළිකළ හිටපු ‘මිහින් ලංකා’ විධායකයා වෙඩි වැදී මිය ගියේ! Lankaviews. Published 12th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>Ranil asks if man died of forced suicide at Independence Square. Newswire. Published 21st June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>Dead Body found in Independence Square revealed as Rajeewa Jayaweera who exposed the Mihin Lanka Airbus fraud. Lankanewsweb. Published 12th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>The dead body found at the independence square is a suicide or a homicide? Published 12th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>Rajeewa Jayaweera death ruled as suicide : police probe continue. Newsfirst. Published 12th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>‘I have no suspicion over my brother’s death’ - Rajeewa Jayaweera’s brother tells Magisterial Inquiry. Published 26th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p> <p>Public Tragedy or a Personal Egress?. Ceylon Today. Published 20th June 2020. Last accessed 17th July 2020.</p>
----	----------------	---------	---	--

37	22nd June 2020	N/A	<p>President issued the Gazette number 2180/33 dated 19th June calling out for members of armed forces from June 22nd onwards under Public Security ordinance same as the previous months. This provides powers to military to intervene in civilian matters, there are visibly presence of military especially in the Northern province, on the roadside as well as at checkpoints. Some HRDs have expressed fears to continue their work in an atmosphere of high militarization.</p>  <p><i>K. Guruparan @rkguruparan tweeted "Notable increase in military and STF presence in Jaffna town over the last week. Heavily armed as if for battle. This is a photo that I took from my car minutes ago in front of Jaffna Teaching Hospital. Intimidating. #militarisation #lka" on 10:25 AM · Jun 11, 2020·Twitter</i></p>	<p>Extra ordinary Gazette 2180/33. Published 19th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.</p>
38	2nd June 2020	N/A	<p>Gazette Extraordinary no. 2178/18 established the "Presidential Task Force to build a Secure Country, Disciplined, Virtuous and Lawful Society" and 13 members were appointed as the members of the committee. 10 of them were current or former military officers, and 3 were Police officers. The task force was given broader powers for taking steps (1) to curb the illegal activities of social groups which violate the law and harmful to the free and peaceful existence of society, (2) to prevent drug menace, drug trafficking, and social illnesses caused by drug abuse, (3) to take legal action against persons responsible for the illegal and antisocial activities conducting in Sri Lanka while locating in other countries, (4) To investigate and prevent any illegal and antisocial activities in and around prisons. The Gazette did not specify what they meant by the term "anti-social activities" other than the drug trafficking and related issues. , Chairman of the Committee for Protecting the Rights of Prisoners, Attorney-at-Law Senaka Perera and an activist and journalist Ruwan Laknatha Jayakodi filed complaints with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka stating that the Task Force was illegal, contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, noting specifically that it does not fall within Article 33. A collective of Civil society organizations and activists also issued a statement expressing their grave concern about three PTFs recently established by the President including this.</p>	<p>Extra ordinary Gazette 2178/18. Published 2nd June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.</p> <p>PTF On Building A Secure Country, Disciplined, Virtuous & Lawful Society: Complaints Lodged With HRCSL. Published 3rd July 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.</p> <p>Civil Society Statement on the Presidential Task Forces. Published 15th June 2020. Last accessed 20th July 2020.</p>

List of Acronyms /Key words

CID: The Criminal Investigation Department is the primary investigative arm of the Sri Lanka Police

Covid19: Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus discovered in 2019 which led to a global pandemic.

Election Commission/ EC: Election Commission of Sri Lanka is an independent statutory body responsible for administering and overseeing elections in Sri Lanka. It has also powers take action against election law violations. The commission constitutes three members who are appointed by the constitutional council which is a multiparty body with some representatives of civil society.

GoSL: Government of Sri Lanka

HRCSL: Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka is an independent statutory body to promote and monitor protection of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution and ensure compliance by the Sri Lankan State of international human rights standards. Its members are appointed by the constitutional council which consists of multiparty body with some representatives of civil society. The Commission has a broad mandate as well as powers to investigate into any complaints of fundamental rights violations or imminent violations and grant suitable redress, including compensation, and of unfettered access to inspect and monitor any place where a person is deprived of liberty.

IGP: Inspector General of Police is the head of Sri Lanka Police.

Mullivaikkal: Mullivaikkal is a small village which predominantly Tamil where the last battle of Sri Lankan civil war occurred; large number of civilians were also killed there. It is located in Mullaitivu District, Northern Province Sri Lanka. Tamils annually remember the deaths of their relatives and community members, while GoSL and Sri Lankan forces remember the war victory.

MoH: Ministry of Health

MP: Member of Parliament

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

OIC: Officer-in-Charge in a Police Station.

OMP: Office of Missing Persons (OMP) is a state institution which is mandated to trace fate and whereabouts of persons who have gone missing or disappeared in Sri Lanka. It also collects information on missing persons, receives complaints, and makes recommendations to the relevant authorities regarding missing persons. OMP was operationalized in February 2018, based on a parliamentary act passed in August 2016.

SLPP: Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (Sri Lanka People's Front) is the ruling political party in Sri Lanka led by the Rajapakses. It was established in year 2016.

TID: Terrorist Investigation Department is a section of Sri Lankan Police that conducts inquiries into terrorism of Sri Lanka. TID has been accused of torture and intimidation of HRDs.

TNPF: Tamil National People's Front (TNPF) is a Tamil nationalist political party, launched by a dissident faction of the TNA in 2010. The founding members of the party included then parliamentarians Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam, S. Kajendran and Pathmini Sithamparanathan. This party does not have a parliamentary representation currently. They were active in organizing Mullivaikkal remembrance events in this month³³.

UN: United Nations

UNP: United National Party (UNP) is a conservative right wing Sri Lankan political Party, favouring a more neo-liberal market-oriented economy. Founded in 1946, it is one of the oldest political parties in Sri Lanka currently in operation. They are perceived as being more liberal towards ethnic and religious minorities, but some of the worst massacres and attacks on ethnic and religious minorities have happened under the past UNP governments.

³³ [Mapping Sri Lanka's Political Parties: Actors and Evolution](#). Verite Research. Published November 2017. Last accessed 16th June 2020.