

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

1st -31st July 2020



Police obtained a court order and stopped the Protest organized by relatives of enforced disappearances in Batticaloa. Photo Courtesy: Tamil Guardian

INFORM

Human Rights Documentation Centre

www.inform.lk

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka in July 2020.

Published in September 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	6
3. Context	7
4. Major incidents and trends related to dissent.....	10
4.1. Repression of Freedom of Expression	10
4.2. Repression of Freedom of Assembly	11
4.3. Repression of civil society	12
4.4. Reprisals against state officials.....	13
4.5. Other incidents.....	15
5. Statistical Analysis	16
6. Updates on previous cases related to dissent.....	18
7. List of incidents July	20
List of Acronyms and Key Terms.....	33

1. Executive Summary

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 July. 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.

The report is based on 34 incidents related to repression of dissent in Sri Lanka. Section 1 includes the Executive summary which provides an overall summary of the report. Section 2 describes the methodology. Section 3 describes the socio-political context and some trends relating to human rights situation in Sri Lanka during the month. Section 4 provides a thematic summaries of the incidents described in the report. This month's report is organized under 5 themes repression of freedom of expression, repression of freedom of assembly, repression of civil society, reprisals against state officials and other incidents. Section 5 provides updates on previous cases relating to dissent with a focus on legal updates reported in media. Section 6 provides a statistical analysis of the incident included in the report looking at geographical location, ethnicity and gender of the victims, types of violation, category of victims, and perpetrators.

Context: Sri Lankan Parliamentary General Election was scheduled to be held on 5th August 2020. According to CMEV, there were 835 election related violations were reported by 30th July 2020. They included 21 incidents of assaults, and 14 incidents of threats. Politicians made speeches that are hateful towards ethnic and sexual/gender minorities. Though health regulations were ignored by the politicians during election rallies, such regulations were discriminatively used against civilians especially the communities in the North and East. A convicted murderer was allowed to contest in the election, despite constitution recognizes it to be a disqualification to be appointed as a member of parliament. Meanwhile, court of appeal issued an interim order suspending the trial against Nissanka Senadhipathi – one of the key corruption case during the previous Rajapakse (2006-2014).

Case updates: Former MP Shivajilingam was arrested and bailed on the same day for his failure to present at the court regarding a legal case relevant to a protest he has participated against an alleged land grabbing attempt by military in 2018. The case regarding attack to Journalist Upali Tennakoon in 2009 was taken at the Gampaha High Court. The case was postponed until October, and court will consider to relax bail conditions of suspects in the forthcoming court hearing. Both arrested social media writer Ramzy Razeek and human rights lawyer Hizbullah have now spent more than 100 days behind bars. Attorney General concluded oral submissions on contempt of court case regarding MP Ranjan Ramanyake.

Statistical analysis: 26% incidents were reported from Colombo District – where the country's main capital is located at. 21% cases were reported from North and East provinces: former

war zones, predominantly occupied by Tamil ethnic minority. When types of violations are considered, there were 21% of physical attacks, 18% of verbal and written threats, and 18% of legal, institutional, and policy actions that negatively impact on dissent. While 32% of the victims were state officials, 18% each were journalists and civil society activists. Military and police were allegedly responsible in 26% of the incidents. In 15% of incidents state officials and government were allegedly responsible. Threats and physical attacks by drug related suspects and underworld (12%) and malicious content published by newspapers (12%) were also significant trends.

Trends related to dissent and incidents: Two journalists of a Sinhala language newspaper was threatened not to publish information about underworld. A journalist Kilinochchi was threatened by a politician and a supporter in front of Kilinochchi magistrate court premises. A journalist was threatened and manhandled by a former Police officer, and a key suspect of a 2012 prison massacre. Journalists were prevented entry and one journalist was manhandled by Police while attending a speech made by Attorney General to the Police, despite of having prior invitations from AG department. Police summoned a journalist for reporting an incident that officials have allegedly assaulted civilians. Disciplinary actions were taken against a staff member of a Pradeshiya Sabha for questioning the educational qualifications of the council members in facebook.

Navaly church bombing remembrance event was organized in Jaffna amidst many intimidation and harassment and heavy military and Police presence during the event. In Batticaloa a protest organized by the families of the disappeared was stopped by Police based on a court order. Angulana Police arrested and legal actions were taken against a group of women who voluntarily handed them over to Police for pelting stones at Angulana Police station for alleged prejudice of the Police regarding a case of killing of a civilian in the area by a Police officer. Sri Lankan migrant workers were attacked by the Jordanian police during a protest allegedly at the request of the Sri Lankan embassy.

Several newspapers published malicious and false content regarding civil society organizations. A state owned newspaper published an article proposing that NGOs should be banned from doing work except providing welfare related services. Divaina newspaper proposed that investigations should be launched into two major NGOs in Sri Lanka, and accused that Amnesty international has appointed a researcher to support Islamic extremists. Another article published by the same newspaper named list of civil society organizations as pro-LTTE and attempted to make derogatory remarks at those who organized side events at UNHRC session on Sri Lanka in Geneva. PM Mahinda Rajapaksha speaking at a politically rally stated that under the new government special attention will be paid on NGOs and their finances.

A legal academic was forced to resign from his job at the University as the university administration prevented him from appearing in private legal cases. The university administration has taken the decision under the influence of Sri Lanka army, as the academic

was appearing for victim's families in a case of enforced disappearances, where army is implicated. A key investigator on crimes during previous regime was arrested. There were several cases that police officers and others have been assaulted during their duty.

A business person who complained to the Police regarding demanding money from him by a political candidate was threatened again. A politician who went to observe a development project was assaulted by the staff of a private business who have undertaken the project. Houses belonging to a group of estate workers were pelted with stones for refusing to attend a political meeting. President issued the gazette calling for armed forces same as the previous months. Continued militarization and additional powers offered to military could create fear among those who have dissenting views.

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 July. Cases on election violations were not included in this report, expecting that more comprehensive reports on election violations will be published by the Election monitoring organizations.

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

Sri Lankan Parliamentary General Election was scheduled to be held on 5th August 2020. According to CMEV, there were 835 election related violations including 21 incidents of assaults, 14 incidents of threats, and 8 incidents of hate speech reported by 30th July 2020¹. Poor compliance with health guidelines², and police bias in violation handling was among several other key issues highlighted by CMEV³. Police inaction on election violations publicly committed by some politicians was a grave concern. Health instructions on having meetings due to COVID-19 such as wearing facemasks, maintaining social distance were not followed by the majority of political candidates. It was also reported that 3 politicians engaged in campaigns despite being ordered to self-quarantine⁴.

Election-Related Violations (By Type) General Election 2020 UPDATE 5: Mar 2–Jul 30	
Violation Type	Number
Illegal Campaigning	298
Illegal Posters/Cutouts	186
Health Guidelines Violations	132
Offering Goods	56
Misuse of State Resources	36
Pub Officers Campaigning	21
Illegal Offices	16
Assaults	21
Threats	14
Hate Speech	8
Others	47
TOTAL	835



CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE
 මැතිවරණ ප්‍රවණවිතියා නිරීක්ෂණ මධ්‍යස්ථානය
 தேர்தல் வன்முறைகளைக் கண்காணிப்பதற்கான நிலையம்

Table 1: Election violations: update by CMEV on 30th July 2020

Increased hate speech and divisive language during the election was also a concern for having a free and fair election and made a negative impact on ethnic minorities⁵. Athuraliye Rathana Thero : a candidate of Ape Jana Bala Pakshaya (AJBP) led by extremist monk Gnanasara stated

¹ [Election Violations Update #5 \(July 30, 2020\)](#). Centre for Monitoring Election Violence. Published 31st July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

² Sunanda Deshapriya. [Tweet](#). Dated 11th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

³ [CMEV Field Visit Report II – Election Situation Analysis as of 2nd August 2020](#). Centre for Monitoring Election Violence. Published 3rd August 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

⁴ [3 politicians engage in campaigns despite being ordered to self-quarantine for attending Rajanganaya funeral](#). Newswire. Published 20th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

⁵ [Hate Speech and Divisive Language During the Parliamentary General Election 2020](#). Centre for Monitoring Election Violence. Published 27th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

that “[government] should ban all madrasa schools, Quazi courts and burka” otherwise they will start a boycotting campaign against “Muslim goods.”⁶ This was in response to an incident when a video went viral that a Muslim woman refused to remove her head scarf (of a hijab) while entering into premises of a leading Bank⁷. This incident led to number of racist comments in social media as well. Meanwhile a prominent pro-government businessman tweeted that the relevant bank was formed to serve for the Sinhala-Buddhist ethnic group. The bank issued a statement clarifying and expressing regret over the incident. However, while some called for boycotting the Bank, Sinhala nationalists called for defending Sampath Bank by creating facebook groups. These facebook groups published number of hate speech comments and posts against Muslim minority in Sri Lanka. A list of notable incidents relating to hate speech and divisive language comments made by candidates was published by CMEV⁸.

On 28th July UNP parliamentary candidate Kavinda Jayawardane speaking to a youtube channel made a controversial homophobic statement. He told that same-sex sexualities were unseen in the past, were a product of modern world. He also suggested that LGBTIQ persons in Sri Lanka may leave the country and do their things in elsewhere⁹. On the next day, Jayawardane issued a tweet apologizing for his insensitive comment from his LGBT friends¹⁰, while many rights activists criticized his homophobic statement.¹¹ SLPP parliamentary candidate Wijedasa Rajapaksha also distributed leaflets claiming that he prevented “immoral laws such as homosexual act” (decriminalize homosexuality) by previous government. On 24th of July, SJB and women activists protested in front of Prime Minister’s office regarding an insulting comment made by the Prime Minister regarding the opposition leader for not having children.

Party	No of all candidates	No of female candidates	Percentage of female candidates
SLPP	252	14	5.56%
SJB	262	10	3.82%
UNP	262	15	5.73%
NPP	262	16	6.11%
TNA	262	4	1.53%
Total	1300	59	4.54%

Number of female candidates contested in the election excluding national list candidates.

Source: [Newswire.lk](https://www.newswire.lk)

⁶ සත්‍යයේ ඇතුළත මදුරසා පාසල් කෘති උසාවි හා බුර්කාව තහනම් කරන්න.... නැතිනම් මුස්ලිම් භාණ්ඩ වර්ජනයට රටම පෙළ ගස්වනවා. Athuraliye Rathana. Divaina. Published 8th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020.

⁷ A Muslim women has been asked to remove the head scarf at Sampath Bank Dehiwala Sri Lanka (Video). People Rights Group (Youtube Channel). Published 2nd July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020.

⁸ Hate Speech and Divisive Language During the Parliamentary General Election 2020. Centre for Monitoring Election Violence. Published 27th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

⁹ හරින් ගැන මම කොහොම කපා කරන්නද? අපි කොහොමත් UNP ට යනවා - දොස්තර කාවින්ද ජයවර්ධන. SL Vlog (Youtube Channel). Published 28th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁰ Kavinda Jayawardana apologises to LGBT community. Newswire. . Published 30th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹¹ Sri Lankan poll candidate under fire for homophobic remarks. UCA News. Published 1st August 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

Also less women candidates were nominated for the election same as the previous elections giving lack of opportunity for women to represent the parliament.

SLPP Ratnapura District candidate Premalal Jayasekara and two others were sentenced to death after Ratnapura High Court Judge Rohan Jayasuriya convicted them over the fatal shooting incident in Kahawatta during the lead-up to the Presidential Election in 2015. However, Jayasekara allowed to contest in the election despite of serving a prison sentence more than 6 months is a disqualification either to become a voter or to be elected to the Parliament according to the article 89 and 91 of the constitution.¹²

Court of Appeal issued an interim order suspending the trial against Nissanka Sendhipathi – the chairman of Avant Garde company on alleged bribery case related to floating armoury¹³. Avant-Garde Maritime Services Chairman Nissanka Senadhipathi and Maj.Gen. Palitha Fernando who headed the state-owned Rakna Lanka Company have been accused of offering and accepting a bribe of Rs.35.5 million regarding the Avant-Garde floating armory transaction¹⁴. In February 2020, Ministry of Justice, Human Rights & Legal Reforms hired Avant-Garde to provide rehabilitation and vocational training for prisoners to integrate them back into society.¹⁵ Hiring a key suspect of an ongoing case for a project by Ministry of justice was problematic and bringing doubts on possible political interference to the case. Meanwhile JVP leader Anura Kumara Disanayake and former Director of the CID Shani Abeysekera were summoned before the Presidential Commission to Investigate Political Victimization based on a complaint filed by Senadhipathi. After Disanayake and Abeysekera went to court of appeal claiming that investigation on them as illegal, PCoI promised to suspend the summoning until the petition filed before the Court of Appeal is heard.

¹² [Premalal Jayasekara, two others sentenced to death](#). Ceylon Today. Published 1st August 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹³ [Interim order issued suspending trial against Nissanka](#). Colombo Gazette. Published 31st July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁴ [Avant Garde Rs 35 million bribery case suspended by Court of Appeal](#). Newswire. Published 31st July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁵ Namal Rajapaksha [Tweet](#) dated 18th February, 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

4. Major incidents and trends related to dissent

4.1. Repression of Freedom of Expression

Two journalists of a Sinhala language newspaper in Colombo were threatened with death through a telephone call made to their office demanding not to publish information on underworld. An independent journalist in Kilinochchi has been threatened with death and photographed against his will by two persons including a member of a political party in front of Kilinochchi Magistrate.



Former Police officer and a key suspect of Welikada massacre case manhandled a journalist and handed over the journalist to the Police. Photo Courtesy: Ada Derana

Another photo journalist's duty was obstructed, threatened and manhandled by a former Police officer and a key suspect of a criminal case. In another incident, journalists were not allowed to cover a speech conducted by Attorney General (AG) addressing the Police officers despite of the invitation from AG. The Police manhandled a journalist when he went to inform that they were leaving.

Police summoned a journalist in the East for reporting an incident of alleged assault on civilians by forest officials. The editor of Eethalaya, Srilal Priyantha, was interrogated for over four hours by the CID regarding his sources of an article on the murder of the Sunday Leader Editor Lasantha Wickrematunge.

A disciplinary investigation was launched against a staff member of Wellawaya Pradeshiya Sabha for making a facebook post questioning the educational qualifications of the council members. YouTube temporarily censored Tamil-language posts of World Socialist Website.

4.2. Repression of Freedom of Assembly

Uniformed Sri Lankan police officers have pushed back Tamil mourners as they attempted to light candles to mark 25 years since the Navaly Church bombings in Jaffna. Crowds gathered at a memorial constructed for victims of the bombing were met with a heavy security presence that included several armed and uniformed Sri Lankan army soldiers. Former NPC member, M K Sivajilingam was summoned to court over three charges, including the commemoration of the Navaly church massacre.

The families of the disappeared in Vavuniya were issued a court order that prevented them from staging their scheduled protest on 5th of July. A protest organized in Batticaloa by the relatives of enforced disappeared was also stopped following a court order obtained by Police.



Angered women protestors pelting stones at Angulana Police station. Photo Courtesy: Hiru News

The Police attacked the protestors with teargas who pelted stones at the Police station in Angulana. The situation escalated due to Police's lack of impartiality and sensitivity in handling a case where a civilian was shot dead by a Police officer. Fourteen persons who voluntarily handed themselves over to the Police for pelting stones were charged with unruly behavior and injuring public property at the Angulana Police Station.

Jordanian security forces, at the request of the Sri Lankan embassy, have used tear gas on a group of Sri Lankan migrant workers in the city of Al-Karak in the Capital of Amman on 28th July. The migrant workers who are unemployed and stranded in Jordan due to economic crisis and COVID-19 situation have demanded embassy to repatriate them immediately to Sri Lanka.

4.3. Repression of civil society

Divaina newspaper proposed that investigations should be launched against two leading Sri Lankan NGOs regarding grants they have received from Canadian and Norwegian governments respectively, alleging that these grants have been provided to make undue political interference during the election period and called Canada an "enemy government" of Sri Lankan government. During a political rally, the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has allegedly stated that a special attention will be paid regarding NGOs under the new government formed after the General Election especially on how monies and grants are received to the NGOs from foreign countries and international organizations.



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse speaking at a political rally in Tangalle criticized NGOs and said their government will investigate into how monies received by NGOs. Video: Aithiya.lk

On 21st July, state owned Sinhala language newspaper Dinamina published an article titled "NGOs that should tamed immediately" in Sinhala language. The article said NGOs in Sri Lanka should be only operated to provide welfare services under Voluntary Social Service Organizations Act and they should not work on other right-based areas. It also said that NGOs should be banned from addressing "problems" in the country by bringing new legislature. Further it proposed to strengthen surveillance on NGOs under defence Ministry. On 25th July, another article published by Divaina newspaper in Sinhala titled "TNA manifesto which paves way to the Ealam" accused that Amnesty international has appointed an "NGO activist" as a "researcher" to support releasing the "Islamic extremists linked to Easter Sunday bomb attack."

Another article published by Divaina newspaper titled "Geneva proposal against Sri Lanka continues" accused that side events of the Geneva Human Rights Council session on Sri Lanka were organized by "French LTTE Diaspora" and named two Sri Lankan NGOs: CPA and CHRD and 16 individual activists as enemies of Sri Lanka who work against the country in Geneva Human Rights council sessions. The government is considering to re-list a number of diaspora groups as banned LTTE front groups under the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. Learning from a similar policy action implemented in March 2014, there is fear among activists that government may misuse this action to impose a ban on Tamil diaspora groups and activists who are critical of Sri Lankan government.

4.4. Reprisals against state officials

Well known lawyer and Senior lecturer of Department of Law in the University of Jaffna K.Guruparan resigned from his position as he was banned from engaging in private legal practice by the Council of University of Jaffna. It seems the decision of the University Council against Guruparan was motivated by the pressure made by Sri Lankan Army.



Dr. K. Guruparan was forced to resign from his position as a senior lecturer in the University of Jaffna. Photo courtesy: Colombo Telegraph

Former Director of the Criminal Investigations Department, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shani Abeysekara was arrested by the Colombo Crimes Division (CCD). SSP Abeysekara was arrested for allegedly concealing and fabricating false evidence in the case filed against eight suspects including former DIG Vass Gunawardena and his son over the alleged possession of firearms. Former DIG Vaas Gunawardena, and others were sentenced to death by the Colombo High Court in 2015 for committing the murder of millionaire businessman Mohamed Shyam in 2013. In addition to this, SSP Shani Abeysekara handled investigations on major cases of crimes such as murders, and killings of journalists, HRDs and others which were committed during previous Rajapakse regime. Taken into consideration reprisals faced by SSP Abeysekara after the regime change, there are suspicions that this arrest is politically motivated.

Hakmana Police said a tipper driver had knocked down and killed a Police officer and injured two other officers who were in a road block, since the driver had been issued with a fine for violating traffic laws. Another female Police constable has been knocked down by a motor bike rode by a female drug trafficker who has been transporting heroin a parcel. The incident occurred when the suspect attempted to escape during a raid in Peliyagoda, Colombo.



Newspaper clips on several attacks faced by Police officers during raids. Lankadeepa newspaper. 25th July, 15th and 16th July

A Police officer was attacked with boiling hot water, during a raid of ganja drugs in Leenawatte area in Hikkauduwa. The injured officer has been hospitalized. CID started an investigation regarding alleged death threats made against Senior Prison officials in Boossa Prison by underworld gang leaders. A Police officer of Pallewela Police was attacked with a helmet and got injured, when they attempted to arrest a navy personnel in civil clothes for violating traffic laws. A prison guard who was on duty at the Main Gate of the Welikada prison had been hospitalized after a drunken prison commissioner allegedly assaulted him.

Hospital staff were assaulted and hospital property were damaged by a group angered by a death of 11 months old baby admitted to the hospital. 4 persons were arrested for threatening the hospital staff of Arachchikanda hospital in Hikkaduwa for not allowing these persons to visit a patient at the hospital during night.

4.5. Other incidents

A businessman who complained to the Police claiming that he was threatened with death by a son of the former MP and parliamentary candidate demanding money to spend on election campaign was subjected to further threats for making the complaint. Former state minister and parliamentary candidate of UNP Palitha Thewarapperuma was assaulted when he went to observe a construction site of a pipe water project in Kalutara District. He was hospitalized due to injuries following the assault.



Former MP Thewarapperuma was hospitalized with injuries due to the assault. Photo courtesy: lankanewsweb.net

Houses belonging to residents in Mahaoya Estate, Dehiowita were pelted with stones for few days as they have not attended a political meeting organized by a Politicians in the area.

President issued the gazette calling for armed forces same as in the previous months. The involvement of armed forces in civilian activities is considered with fear by those who have dissenting views and engaged in dissenting actions with the government and critical of militarization.

5. Statistical Analysis

Location	Number	Percentage
Colombo district (Western Province)	9	26%
Gampaha and Kalutara (Western Province)	2	6%
North and East Provinces	7	21%
Other areas	8	24%
Not Applicable	7	21%
Abroad	1	3%
Total	34	100%

Table 1: Geographical location of the incident

There were 34 incidents reported this month. 26% of them were from Colombo district in Western Province. Another 6% of incidents were reported from the other districts in Western Province. 21% were reported from North and East provinces. 24% of the cases were reported from other districts. 1 case (3%) was reported from abroad. In 21% of cases, geographical location was considered not applicable as they usually applied more than one geographical district.

Ethnicity of the victim	Number	Percentage	Gender of the victim	Number	Percentage
Sinhala	16	64%	Female	1	6%
Tamil	9	36%	Male	17	94%
Total	25	100%	Total	18	100%

Table 2: Ethnicity and gender of the victims

When ethnicity and gender was looked at, only in 25 cases and 18 cases ethnicity and the gender could be applied respectively. 64% of the Sinhala persons and 36% of Tamil persons were victims. There was only one female victim when individual cases were considered. While groups were generally considered as incidents that gender is not applicable as both men and women participated, on the other hand more women included in these groups. Especially in another 4 cases covered under the theme freedom of assembly women were the major group of persons who were affected.

Type of violation	Number	Percentage
Killings and suspicious deaths	1	3%
Physical attacks	7	21%
Arrest	2	6%
Verbal or written threats	6	18%
Censorship / restrictions on media	3	9%
Court order	2	6%
Military/police questioning	3	9%
Intimidation	1	3%
Legal, institutional and policy actions	6	18%
Others	3	9%
Total	34	100%

Table 3: Type of violation

When types of violations were considered 21% highest percentage of incidents were relating to physical attacks. Secondly and thirdly 18% each were verbal and written threats and legal, institutional and policy actions. Censorship/ restrictions on media, and questioning by military and police were 9% of incidents under each category. There were also 6% of arrests, 6% of court orders, one murder (3%) and another one (3%) on intimidation. There were also 9% of other cases.

Type of victims	Number	Percentage
Journalist	6	18%
Civil Society Activists	6	18%
Protestors	3	9%
State officials	11	32%
Politicians	2	6%
Other	6	18%
Total	34	100%

Table 4: Type of victims

When type of victims were analyzed there were 32% of state officials, 18% of journalists, and 18% of civil society activists. In addition, there were 9% of protestors, 6% of politicians and 18% belonging to other categories.

Perpetrator/ Responsible party	Number	Percentage
Military and Police	9	26%
Government and officers	5	15%
Politicians	4	12%
Court	3	9%
Newspapers	4	12%
Drug related suspects and underworld	4	12%
Civilians	3	9%
Others	2	6%
Total	34	100%

Table 5: Type of perpetrator or responsible party

In 26% of cases, military and Police were the responsible party, while in 15% of cases government or related authorities or state officials were responsible. In another 12% of cases politicians were responsible. Drug related suspects and underworld were also responsible in 12% of cases. In 12% of cases newspapers published content that intended to attack civil society undermining space for dissent. In 9% of cases it was the judiciary where mainly court orders and legal actions were used against protestors.

6. Updates on previous cases related to dissent

On 5th July, 2020 former MP Shvajilingam was arrested and bailed on the same day by the Valvettithurai Police on a warrant issued by the Jaffna Magistrate for failing to appear before the court over a case filed in 2018 against him and others^{16 17}. His arrest was related to the case filed by Mullaitivu police for his involvement in a land-grab protest held on 22nd February 2018. It was organized by Mullaitivu residents that resulted in the surveyors having to turn back from the area, unable to survey the more than 600 acres which protestors claimed as an attempt to grab their lands by military¹⁸.



A decade ago in 2009, this protest was held against the assault on Upali Tennakoon in Colombo immediately after the incident. Soon after, Tennakoon fled the country. [Giving an interview to a website in January 2018](#), Tennakoon said "'I have no wish to return since the individuals who I believe to be responsible are still in positions of power.'" Still the case continues in the courts. Photo courtesy- [Sri Lanka Brief](#)

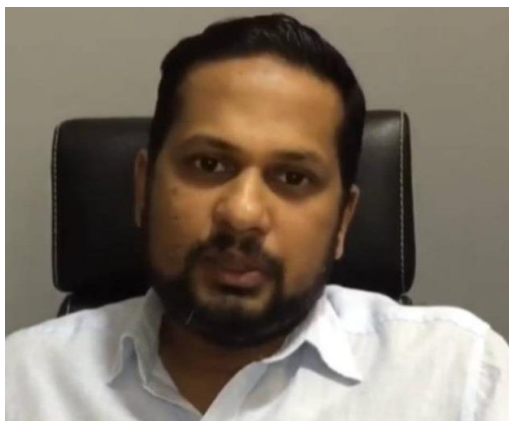
The case on assault on Divaina and Rivira newspaper editor Upali Tennakoon and his wife in January 2009 was taken for hearing at the Gampaha High Court on 7th July. Attorney General has currently filed indictments against former military personnel Prem Ananda Udulagama and Lalith Rajapaksha and they appeared at the court on the day. The case was postponed until 15th of October to consider relaxed bail conditions on that day¹⁹.

¹⁶ [Former NPC member Sivajilingam arrested over case on Mullaitivu protest](#). Newswire. Published 5th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁷ [Sivajilingam released on bail](#). Ceylon Toda. Published 6th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁸ [Another NPC member arrested for part in Mullaitivu land-grab protest](#). Tamil Guardian. Published 15th March 2018. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.

¹⁹ [ත්‍රිවිජය පුවත්පත් කතෘ උපාලි තෙන්නකෝන්ට පහරදීමේ නඩුව යළි ඔක්තෝබර් 15 වැනිදා](#). Mawbima. Published 8th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September, 2020.



Both Human Rights lawyer Hejaaz Hizbullah (left) and Social media writer Ramzy Razeek (right) are behind bars for more than 100 days by end of July. Photo courtesy- OMLanka and Sri Lanka brief.

The arrested social media writer Ramzy Razeek continued to be remanded. During a bail hearing held on 16th July at the High Court, the AG's representative said they need more time to file objections and they were given till 29th July. On 29th July, the AG's representative had requested more time till 20th August, despite his deteriorating health conditions. By the end of July, Razeek has been in jail for 114 days.

The FR petition on the arbitrary detention of Hejaaz Hizbullah was taken before the Sri Lankan Supreme Court on 22nd July. Fundamental Rights petition submissions regarding the arrest of lawyer Hejaaz Hizbullah are to resume on 16th & 23rd September 2020.^{20 21} By the end of the month of July, he has been in detention for 109 days.

Case against former State minister Ranjan Ramanayake regarding contempt of court was heard at the Supreme Court on 16th of July 2020. On the day AG concluded his oral submissions before the Supreme Court regarding Ramanayake for allegedly casting insulting remarks on the reputation of the judiciary and lawyers. Contempt of court case is related to several statements made by MP Ramanayake allegedly claiming that 95 per cent of the judges are corrupt, which he continued to reiterate in the Supreme Court. Supreme Court three-judge-bench fixed further hearing for August 24. President's Counsel M.A. Sumanthiran appearing for Ranjan Ramanayake is to make his oral submissions on the next hearing date²².

An unnamed Lieutenant Colonel who requested his name not be published has provided a verbal statement before the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Political Victimization that former CID officer Nishantha De Silva (now in exile) has told him to mention that the killings of journalists were done under the instructions of current President and then Defense Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksha. He further told that he faced further reprisals for not doing so. However, it was not clear whether his statement referred to specific persons or cases²³.

²⁰ Justice For Hejaaz @Justice4Hejaaz. [Tweet](#) dated 22nd July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020.



²¹ Amnesty International South Asia @amnestysasia [Tweet](#) dated 21st July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020

²² [Contempt of court case against Ranjan: AG concludes oral submissions](#). Daily News. Published 16th July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020

²³ මාධ්‍යවේදීන්ට පහර දුන්නේ ශෝකාභයගේ උපදෙස් අනුව බව කීමට නියෝග ද සිල්වා බලපෑම් කළා. Dinamina (online). Published 21st July 2020. Last accessed 7th September 2020

7. List of incidents July

	Date	District	Description [1st July - 31 July]	Source
			Freedom of Expression	
1	2 nd July	N/A	Amid Sri Lankan elections, YouTube temporarily censored Tamil-language posts of World Socialist Website. YouTube has censored several podcasts of Tamil-language WSWS articles uploaded to the Tamil WSWS Facebook page via YouTube for violating community standards. However the videos were made available after administrators have communicated to youtube, providing clarifications. The censored podcasts warned of the dangers of a US-led war against China in the region, of mounting police violence or of military rule in the United States or in Sri Lanka. YouTube blocked Tamil versions of these articles for several days after they were flagged by unnamed users: June 16: Would-be führer Trump steps up coup plotting; June 17: The protests against police murder: The way forward; June 22: Police violence and class rule ; June 25: India and China remain on knife edge as war tensions continue; July 2: Hands off the Sri Lankan Trotskyists—SEP demands military stops harassing its election candidates in Jaffna.	World Socialist Website. Amid Sri Lanka Elections Youtube censors Tamil Language WSWS posts. Published 16th July. Last accessed 6th September 2020.
2	2 nd July	Colombo	<p>Two journalists- Tissa Ravindra Perera, and Hemantha Liyanapathirana of Aruna Newspaper were threatened with death through a telephone call made to their office and were asked not to report on underworld. The person threatened self-identified as Chamara Withanage from Dubai. After one of the journalists made a complaint to the Police regarding the threats, Police have started an investigation and they have reported the incident to the Colombo Chief magistrate on the matter. On 9th July, Colombo Chief Magistrate Lanka Jayaratna has ordered the Director of the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) to furnish details of a phone call to the Police.</p> <p>In 2018, Tissa Ravindra Perera (then associate editor of Rivira Newspaper) was questioned by the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) of Sri Lanka Police regarding an article he has written about resurgence of LTTE.</p>	<p>සංවිධානාත්මක කළේලි අරුණට තර්ජනය කරයි. Aruna Newspaper. Published 5th July. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p> <p>TRC Director ordered to furnish phone details. Ceylon Today. 10th July. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p> <p>TID records statement from 'Rivira' Associate Editor. Published 20th July 2018. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>

3	3 rd July	Colombo	<p>Journalists were not allowed to report a speech given by the Attorney General Dappula De Livera to the staff of Police Narcotic Bureau and other senior police officers. The event was organized in the context that number of Police officers were recently arrested for allegedly reselling drugs seized during the raids. The journalists had been invited to attend by the official coordinator of Attorney General. Despite of these invitations, Police have denied access to the journalists as advised by the Inspector General of Police. As reported by Divaina, when Lankadeepa journalist Manopriya Goonesekara has gone to inform that he and fellow journalists will leave if they are not allowed to report the event, the Police have manhandled him.</p>  <p><i>Police refused entry to the journalists. Photo Courtesy: Divaina</i></p>	<p>මාධ්‍ය ආවේ නීතිපතිගේ ආරාධනයෙන්... පොලීසිය මාධ්‍යවේදියාගේ බේල්ලෙන් අල්ලා එළියට දමයි... වැඩබලන පොලිස්පති ආ ඥාණිත්ම වාගේ පිටවෙයි. Divaina. Published 4th July. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>
4	8 th July	Mullaitivu	<p>Sri Lanka Police has summoned Tamil Guardian's Mullativu correspondent Shanmugam Thavaseelan after he had reported on an incident of alleged assault on civilians by forest officials. The officials have denied the news and accused him of spreading false news. Thavaseelan has faced reprisals in 2019, and 2018 for reporting incidents involving military.</p>  <p><i>Journalist Shanmugam Thavaseelan. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian</i></p>	<p>Sri Lankan police summon Tamil Guardian's Mullaitivu correspondent. Tamil Guardian. Published 8th July. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>

5	10 th July	Colombo	<p>Mawbima and Ceylon Today photo journalist was obstructed and threatened by Neomal Rangajeewa - one of the key suspects of the massacre of Welikada Prison inmates in 2012. When the journalist had attempted to take a photograph of suspect Rangajeewa, he has manhandled the journalist and forcefully taken him to the nearby Police post and handed him over to the Police. After Free Media Movement, others and public condemned the act, Rangajeewa publicly apologized for his act.</p>  <p><i>Former Police officer and criminal suspect Rangjeewa manhandled the journalist. Photo Courtesy- Sri Lanka Brief</i></p>	<p>මව්බිම මාධ්‍යවේදියෙකුගේ රාජකාරියට නියෝමාත්‍ය රංගජීව බාධා කරයි. Mawbima. Published 10th July. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>
6	14 th July	Colombo	<p>The editor of Eethalaya, Srilal Priyantha, has been interrogated for over four hours by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for his 2017 article on the 2009 murder of the Sunday Leader Editor Lasantha Wickrematunge on 13th July at the Criminal Investigation Division of Sri Lanka Police. Colombo Telegraph said that CID officials have repeatedly questioned the journalist about his sources for the information regarding the SIM cards used by Wickrematunge's alleged killers. The Eethalaya article contained information that the five SIM cards used by the suspects in the Journalist's murder were obtained under a Ministry of Defense letterhead, signed by then Chief of National Intelligence Kapila Hendawitharana. CID observations discovered that the address given to the company was fake. Colombo Telegraph further said that the Priyantha's interrogation was linked to the CID's ongoing investigation into its former Director SSP Shani Abeysekera and former CID ASP Tissera who conducted key investigations regarding crimes against journalists and other key human rights violations during previous Rajapakse regime.</p> <p>In March 1999 he was abducted and assaulted and then dropped off on the road. In the year 2000 Priyantha was arrested and detained by the police over his writing while in April this year he was questioned twice by the CID. In April 2013, Priyantha's house was searched by the police and questioned him about some missing documents from the police headquarters.</p>	<p>Journalist Interrogated By CID About 2017 Article On Lasantha Wickrematunge Murder. Published 15th July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p> <p>Eethalaya Editor's house searched. Colombo gazette. Published 24th April 2013. Last accessed 6th September 2020.</p>

7	22 nd July	Kilinochchi	Subramaiaam Baskaran- an independent journalist in Kilinochchi has been threatened with death and photographed against his will by two members of a political party. Baskaran has been at the Kilinochchi Magistrate Court for his duty when the threats were made. According to Tamil Guardian he had been photographed against his consent near the entrance of the Kilinochchi Magistrate's Court by a member of the Karaichi divisional council, and another individual who accompanied him. When the journalist objected to being photographed, the two reportedly verbally threatened him, and also took a photograph of the journalist's motorcycle, stating that the photographic evidence was needed. Later the journalist has made a complaint to the Kilinochchi Police regarding this.	කිලිනොච්චියේ මාධ්‍යවේදියකුට දෙමළ පක්ෂයක සාමාජිකයන් දෙදෙනකුගෙන් මරණීය තර්ජන. Mawbima. Published 24 th July. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.
8	23 rd July	Monaragala	A disciplinary investigation has been launched against a staff member of Wellawaya Pradeshiya Sabha for making a facebook post questioning the educational qualifications of the council members.	වැල්ලවාය පිරා: සභා මන්ත්රීන්ගේ අධ්‍යාපන සුදුසුකම් විමසා මුහුණු පොතේ දාලා. Lankadeepa (print). 24th July 2020. මන්ත්රීන්ගේ අධ්‍යාපන සුදුසුකම් විමසා ටෙස්ට්‍රක් දැමීම නිසා උණසුම් තත්වයක්. 24 th July. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.


			Freedom of Assembly	
9	5 th July	Vavuniya	The families of the disappeared in Vavuniya were issued a court order that prevented them from staging their scheduled protest on 5th of July. They have been demonstrating near the post office in the Vavuniya A9 road for over 1,000 consecutive days of protest. The court order was granted following a request from Vavuniya police officials who alleged that scheduled protest on the day would commemorate and mark the Black Tigers Day on top of their other requests and demands. Black Tigers were wing of LTTE who carried out suicide bombings on military, civilians and politicians and other attacks.	Vavuniya court bans families of the disappeared protest for alleged plans to commemorate Black Tigers Day. Tamil Guardian. 5 th July. Last accessed 6 th September 2020.
10	8 th July	Jaffna	Former NPC member, M K Sivajilingam has been summoned to court over three charges, including the commemoration of the Navaly church massacre in 1995. Manipay police have ordered Sivajilingam to appear at Mallakam court at noon on July 8, claiming that he is trying to regroup the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and is planning a 'protest' on the anniversary of the Navaly church massacre. The police have argued that Sivajilingam would be breaching COVID-19 rules if the 'protest' goes ahead. The summoning occurred in relation to the commemoration event to remember the 147 Tamil civilians killed by the Sri Lankan Air Force in an attack on The Church of St Peter on July 8, 1995.	Former NPC member Sivajilingam summoned to court over Navaly church commemoration. Tamil Guardian. 8 th July. Last accessed 6 th September 2020.
11	9 th July	Jaffna	Participants of remembrance event to mark 25 years since the Navaly Church bombings in Jaffna alleged that uniformed Sri Lankan police officers have pushed back Tamil mourners as they attempted to light candles. Crowds gathered at a memorial constructed for victims of the bombing were met with a heavy security presence that included several armed and uniformed Sri Lankan army soldiers. 	Sri Lankan police push back mourners at Navaly Church bombing remembrance Tamil Guardian. 9 th July. Last accessed 6 th September 2020.


Remembrance event met with heavy security presence.
Photo Courtesy- [@mayurappriyan](#)

12	27 th July	Batticaloa	<p>A protest organized in Chenkalady, Batticaloa by the relatives of enforced disappeared was stopped following a court order obtained by Police. Relatives from 8 districts were to take part in the protest. They allege that they had already informed Health officials & police.</p>  <p><i>Police stopped the Protest organized by relatives of enforced disappearances in Batticaloa. Photo Courtesy- Tamil Guardian</i></p>	<p>Tweet by @Kavinthans. Published 27th July. Last accessed 6th September 2020.</p> <p>Sri Lankan police block Tamil families of disappeared protest in Batticaloa. 27th July. Last accessed 6th September 2020.</p>
13	28 th July	Overseas (Jordan)	<p>Jordanian security forces have used tear gas on a group of Sri Lankan migrant workers in the city of Al-Karak in the Capital of Amman on 28th July. The migrant workers who are unemployed and stranded in Jordan due to economic crisis and COVID-19 situation have demanded the Sri Lankan embassy to repatriate them immediately to Sri Lanka. The discussions held between the embassy and the migrant workers on 27th July have failed. A statement from the Sri Lankan Embassy in Jordan states that labour staff of the embassy who visited the Camel and Wega factory in Karak to look into the welfare Sri Lanka migrant workers were held hostage over five hours by an unemployed migrant workers. However, Nidahasa Udsa Kanthawo Movement alleged that Jordanian Police has attacked the protestors following a request from Sri Lankan embassy which Sri Lankan government refused. Propaganda Secretary of the Frontline Socialist Party Pubudu has stated between 300,000-400,000 Sri Lankan employees in Jordan have lost their jobs, and around 110 Sri Lankan have died due to Covid-19 and other illnesses.</p>  <p><i>Sri Lankan migrant workers in Jordan. Video: https://youtu.be/VXn97mBZ8b4?t=139</i></p>	<p>Jordanian Security Forces Use Tear Gas On Sri Lankan Migrant Workers. Newsfirst. 28th July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p> <p>‘ජෝර්දාන පොලීසිය ලාංකික ශ්රමිකයන්ට පහර දුන්නේ ලංකාවේ නානාපති කාර්යාලයේ ඉල්ලීමකට’. MediaLK. 28th July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020</p> <p>Tweet by Asia Floor Wage Alliance @asia_floorwage published 7th August 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>


14	14 th July	Colombo	<p>On the night of 10th July, Amith Karunaratne - a 39 year old fisherman residing in Lunawa area in Moratuwa was shot dead by Police for allegedly obstructing Police duties and behaving in an unruly manner. Witnesses had claimed that Police officers were drunken when Police shot at the victim. Five days later, on 16th July around 5am in the morning, several police officers arrived in a vehicle and had taken away the two eye witnesses to the Angulana Police station suddenly. While Police later claimed they were taken to record their statements, the time they were taken without prior information led to suspicion. Neither eyewitnesses, nor the alleged suspects were produced before the magistrate court hearing session held on the same day. In this context, the victim's family and the residents of the area felt that Police has been attempting to cover up the crime. Subsequently they started a protest in front of Angulana Police on the same day. The protestors pelted the stones at the Angulana Police station. The Police attacked the protestors with teargas to control the situation. After a senior Police officer spoke to the protestors, some of them voluntarily handed them over to the Police for pelting stones to the Police station. Fourteen persons charged with unruly behavior and injuring public property at the Angulana Police Station were granted bail by the Moratuwa Magistrate's Court on the next day.</p>  <p><i>Women pelting stones at Angulana Police. Photo Courtesy: Hiru News</i></p>	<p>Bail granted to 14 arrested on Angulana property damage charges. Daily FT. 18th July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020</p>
----	-----------------------	---------	--	---


			Repression of Civil Society	
15	4 th July	N/A	Divaina newspaper proposed that investigations should be launched against National Peace Council (NPC) and PAFFREL regarding 7.5 million LKR and 5.6 million LKR grants they have received from Canadian and Norwegian governments respectively. The article accused that these grants have been provided to make undue political interference during the election period and called Canada an "enemy government" of Sri Lankan government. NPC is a well-known civil society organization that works on peace, reconciliation and other issues. PAFFREL is a well-known election monitoring organization in Sri Lanka.	එම්සීසී අර්බුදය මැද රාජ්‍ය නොවන සංවිධාන 2 කට රුපියල් මිලියන 13.1 ක් . Divaina Newspaper (web). Published 4 th July. Last Accessed 6 th September, 2020.
16	25 th July	N/A	Divaina newspaper (sinhala language) in an article titled "TNA manifesto which paves way to the Ealam" accused that Amnesty international has appointed an "NGO activist" as a "researcher" to support releasing the "Islamic extremists linked to Easter Sunday bomb attack".	ඊළමට පාර කපන ටී.එන්.ඒ. මැතිවරණ ප්‍රකාශ . Divaina Newspaper (web). Published 25 th July. Last Accessed 6 th September, 2020.
17	18 th July	N/A	A feature article published by Divaina titled "Geneva proposal (UN Resolution 30/1) against Sri Lanka continues" accused that side events of the Geneva Human Rights Council session on Sri Lanka were organized by "French Tiger (LTTE) Diaspora led by Mariyathas Bosco". They further blamed on previous government for not conducting an investigation into how this "French Tiger Diaspora" receive money. It further said witnesses of war crimes and disappearances from Canada, France and Britain who spoke at the human rights councils have lied and some of them even did not know where Vanni was located at. Further it named Pakyasothi Saravanmuththu of Centre for Policy Alternative (CPA), Nimalka Fernando, Ananda Sasitharan, M.K. Sivajilingam, S. Srivaran, M.K. Sumanthiran, Fr. Emmanuel, Sandya Ekneligoda, Yasmin Sooka. Navi Pillai, Suren Surendra, Garry Ananda, Sangari Manivannan, Paul Newman, Maiyathas Bosco, CHRD, Sunanda Deshapriya as "enemies of Sri Lanka" who work against or betray the country. These were human rights activists and victims (Some from Sri Lanka, some Sri Lankans who have been exiled and others foreign nationals) who criticized Sri Lankan government over the years, including, at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. Naming side events as supportive of LTTE is grossly inaccurate as LTTE was also reported to have been criticized in some of the side events.	ශ්‍රී ලංකාවට එරෙහි ජීනීවා යෝජනාව දිගටම . Divaina Newspaper (web). Published 18 th July. Last Accessed 6 th September, 2020.

18	5 th July	Hambantota	<p>Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has allegedly stated that a special attention will be paid regarding NGOs under the new government formed after the General Election. According to the PM, the new government will observe how monies and grants are received to the NGOs from foreign countries and international organisations. These comments have been made during an election propaganda rally held in Sooriyawewa area.</p>  <p><i>PM Mahinda Rajapakse at the political rally Video: Aithiya.lk</i></p>	<p>NGOs will be taken care of after Election, says Prime Minister at Sooriyawewa. Lankanewsweb (web). Published 6th July. Last Accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>
19	14 th July	N/A	<p>The government is considering to re-list a number of diaspora groups as banned LTTE front groups under the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. In March 2014, the then government of Mahinda Rajapaksa listed the LTTE and 15 organisations and 400 individuals as 'banned LTTE foreign terrorist front organizations' and 'LTTE terrorists'. There is concern that this might lead to witch hunt against diaspora groups and persons critical of the government.</p>	<p>Explosion in Iyakachchi and aborted Black Tiger day plot. Daily Mirror (web). Published 14th July. Last Accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>
20	21 st July	N/A	<p>On 21st July, state owned Lakehouse company's Sinhala language newspaper Dinamina published an article titled "NGOs that should tamed immediately" in Sinhala language. It was written by a journalist named Madara Mudalige, a photograph of former Prof. Ajantha Hapuarachchi was also published suggesting that the article was written based on a discussion with her. The article said NGOs in Sri Lanka should be only operated to provide welfare services under Voluntary Social Service Organizations Act and they should not work on other areas such as advocacy on constitutional changes, working with governmental institutions, going to courts etc. It also said that defending human rights, and working on women's and children's rights by NGOs is unnecessary as the government organizations and constitution protects them. Further it proposed that annual reports, and financial reports of NGOs shall be submitted to the government and a new law shall be made prohibiting NGOs from advocating regarding problems in the country. It further said NGOs have become a group that uses foreign money to make undue influences into local issues, and it is immediately required to control organizations which do unnecessary work, to monitor organization providing services and to ban organizations which harm the country. Currently NGO Secretariat under Defense Ministry overlooks and monitors NGOs that are registered under them, while there are also several other laws which allow groups to register and operate under the supervision of several other state bodies depending on their function.</p>	<p>වහා හීලා කළ යුතු රාජ්‍ය නොවන සංවිධාන. Dinamina (web). Published 21st July. Last Accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>

			Repression of State officials	
21	2 nd July	Matara	Hospital staff were assaulted and hospital property were damaged by a group angered by a death of 11 months old baby admitted to the hospital with a Rambutan seed stuck in the throat. The medical staff of the hospital said the baby had already died when admitted to the hospital.	Lankadeepa (print). 4th July 2020. p 4. රඹුටන් ඇටයක් හිරවී රෝහලට ගෙනත්: බිළිඳා මියගොස් ඇති බව කීවාම පිරිසක් යකා නටලා
22	13 th July	Matara	Hakmana Police said a tipper driver had knocked down and killed a Police officer and injured two other officers who were in a road block, since the driver had been issued with a fine for violating traffic laws. The driver who fled after the accident was arrested later.  <i>Road block where the incident occurred. Photo courtesy: Daily Mirror (Video)</i>	දඩ කොළයක් දුන්නට කේන්ති ගිහින් ටිපර් රියදුරා රාලහාමි හස්සා මරලා. මාර්ග බාධකයේ සිටි පොලිසියේ තව දෙදෙනෙකුට බරපතළයි. Lankadeepa (print). 15th July 2020. p1, p6.
23	24 th July or earlier	Colombo	A female Police constable has been knocked down by an alleged drug trafficker riding a motor bike, while transporting heroin, in attempt to escape during a raid. The injured police officer has been hospitalized and the suspect has been arrested. Police allege that the suspect attempted to murder the officer.	පොලිස් නිලධාරියා හස්සා පලා ගිය තරුණිය රඳවාගෙන ජරයින් කිරීමට අනුමැතිය. Dinamina (web). Published 25 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.
24	14 th July	Galle	4 persons were arrested for threatening the hospital staff of Arachchikanda hospital in Hikkaduwa. The hospital staff have been threatened for not allowing these persons to visit a patient at the hospital during night. In Sri Lanka, government hospitals only allow visitors to visit patients in selected hours. One of the persons arrested is the father of a patient receiving treatment at the hospital.	ආරවිකන්ද රෝහල් සේවක පිරිසකට බැන තර්ජනය කළ 4ක් දැරේ Mawbima (web). Published 15 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.

25	15 th July	Galle	A Police officer was attacked with boiling hot water, during a raid of ganja drugs in Leenawatte area in Hikkauduwa. The injured officer has been hospitalized.	ගංජා වටලන්න ගිය පොලිස් පරීක්ෂකට කනගෙත් උණුවතුර ප්රහාරයක්. Lankadeepa (print). 16th July 2020. p3.
26	20 th July	Galle	CID started an investigation regarding alleged death threats made against Senior Prison officials in Boossa Prison by underworld gang leaders. As reported in media, these threats have been made Kosgoda Tharaka, Podi Lasi, and Pitigala Kewuma when officials had discussions with inmates on 26th June regarding hunger strike. They have said that their extensive network outside the prison are in operation, and they could kill prison officials and anyone. However the information about the threats were made public after one month's period.	පානාල නායකයින් ඔන්ඩනාරා නිලධාරීන්ට මරණ තර්ජන කිරීම ගැන CID පරීක්ෂණ . Ada derana (web). Published 15 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.
27	27 th July	Gampaha	A Police officer was attacked with a helmet and got injured, when they attempted to arrest a navy personnel in civil clothes for violating traffic laws. The incident occurred when few officers from Pallewela Police station attempted to stop a drunken driver in Hiriwala area in Meerigama-Pasyala Road.	පොලිස් අණ නොතැකූ නාවික නටයා පොලිසිය සමග ගේමකට ඇවිත්. පැදිකරුගේ හෙල්මට් ප්රහාරයෙන් පොලිස් නිලධාරියෙක් රෝහලේ. Lankadeepa (print). 28th July 2020.
28	29 th July	Colombo	A prison guard who was on duty at the Main Gate of the Welikada prison had been hospitalized after a drunken prison commissioner allegedly assaulted him. Prison Guard Nalinda Gayan has a made a complaint to the Borella Police station. An inquiry has been launched into the incident according to Commissioner General of Prisons Thushara Upuldeniya.	කොමසාරිස් පහරදුන්නැයි වැලිකඩ නියාමකයෙක් රෝහලේ. Lankadeepa (print). 30th July 2020. p1, p18
29	16 th July	Jaffna	On 16 th of July, well known lawyer and Senior lecturer of Department of Law in the University of Jaffna K.Guruparan resigned from his position as he was banned from engaging in private legal practice by the Council of University of Jaffna. The University Council has taken this decision in November 2019. Subsequently he filed a Fundamental Rights petition at the Supreme Court. The case is currently pending at the Supreme Court for grant of leave to proceed and interim order. It was later learnt through a copy of a letter obtained through RTI, that Sri Lanka Army has written to the University Grant Commission on a letter dated 21st August 2019 asking information about	Jaffna University lecturer 'compelled' to resign following ban on private practice . Tamil Guardian. Published 18 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.

			<p>Guruparan's private practice as a lawyer as he appeared for several Habeas Corpus legal cases concerning disappearances where accused were high profile army personnel. It seems the decision of the University Council against Guruparan was motivated by the pressure made by Sri Lankan Army.</p>  <p><i>Dr. Guruparan Kumaravadivel, photo Courtesy - Colombo Telegraph</i></p>	
30	31 st July	Colombo	<p>Former Director of the Criminal Investigations Department, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shani Abeysekera was arrested by the Colombo Crimes Division (CCD) at the Elvitigala Flats in Colombo 8 at around 7.05 on 30th July morning. Police Media Spokesperson SSP Jaliya Senaratne speaking at a press conference said that SSP Abeysekera was arrested for allegedly concealing and fabricating false evidence in the case filed against eight suspects including former DIG Vass Gunawardena and his son over the alleged possession of firearms. SSP Shani Abeysekera handled investigations on major cases of crimes such as murders, and killings of journalists, HRDs and others which were committed during previous Rajapakse regime. In the case concerning DIG Gunawardena, in 2013 Abeysekera arrested two rival businessmen, Mohammed Fauzdeen and Krishantha Koralage, who had confessed to contracting DIG Vass to abduct and murder Shiyam leading to arrest of former DIG Vaas. Subsequently, former DIG Vaas Gunawardena, his son Ravindu Vaas Gunawardena and four police officers were sentenced to death by the Colombo High Court in 2015 for committing the murder of millionaire businessman Mohamed Shyam in 2013. Separate cases were filed against Gunewarane for the possession of firearms, assault on a student and threatening Abeysekera during the investigations. In 2018, Former DIG Vass Gunawardena was also sentenced to five years Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) by the Colombo High Court after being found guilty of threatening Shani Abeysekera.</p>	<p>Tweet by sunanda deshapriya @sunandadesh Published on 31st July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020.</p>

			Other incidents	
31	20 th July	Colombo	On 10th July, a businessman complained to the Thalangama Police in Battaramulla that he was threatened with death by Malaka Silva- son of the former MP and parliamentary candidate Mervin Silva demanding money to spend on election. Mawbima newspaper on 20th July reported that the businessman was again threatened by a friend of Malaka Silva for making a complaint to the Police.	මාලක සිල්වාට එරෙහිව පැමිණිලි කළ චියාපාරිකයාට නැවත මරණ තර්ජන . Mawbima (web). Published 20 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.
32	21 st July	N/A	President issued the gazette calling for armed forces same as in the previous months. The involvement of armed forces in civilian activities is considered with fear by those who have dissenting views and engaged in dissenting actions with the government and critical of militarization	Extra Ordinary Gazette 2185/37 . GoSL. Published 21 st July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020
33	22 nd July	Kalutara	Former state minister and parliamentary candidate of UNP Palitha Thewarapperuma had been assaulted when he went to observe a construction site of a pipewater project in Wekandala in Matugama in Kalutara District. He was hospitalized due to injuries following the assault. He had visited the construction site to inspect the quality of a water pipe laying project from Kandana, Bulathsinhala until Kalutara. Reportedly, a conflict arisen between Thewarapperuma and the employees of the contract company and a person who accompanied Thewarapperuma had video recorded the incident. 	පහර කෑමට ලක් වූ පාලිත තේවරප්පෙරුම රෝහලේ . Ada (web). Published 22 nd July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.
34	22 nd July	Kegalle	Houses belonging to residents in Mahaoya Estate, Dehiowita were pelted with stones for past few days as they have not attended a political meeting organized by a Politicians in the area. Over 12 complaints in police but no action taken.	Prime Time Tamil News (Video) . Newsfirst. Published 24th July 2020. Last accessed 6th September, 2020. Tweet by Kavinthan @Kavinthans . Published 25 th July 2020. Last accessed 6 th September, 2020.

List of Acronyms and Key Terms

- AG:** The Attorney General is the Chief Legal Advisor to the Government. In that capacity he advises the Government, Government Departments, Statutory Boards and Public Corporations in respect of all legal matters. He conducts prosecutions in criminal cases and appears on behalf of the Government, Government Departments, Statutory Boards and Public Corporations in any Court or Tribunal
- AJB or Ape Jana Bala Pakshaya** contested in parliamentary General election 2020 under the leadership of Galabodaaththe Gnanasara – the leader of Buddhist extremist organization Bodu Bala Sena. They received one candidate appointed to the parliament from the National List.
- ASP:** Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP)
- BBS:** Bodu Bala Sena (literal translation “Buddhist power Force”) is a Sinhala Buddhist ultra-nationalist organisation based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. They are allegedly responsible for number of attacks against Muslims during several communal riots. They organized public campaigns to boycott Muslim owned business places, harassed, and threatened HRDs. After the appointment of current government BBS leader claimed that they will disband the organization after forthcoming general election in 2020²⁴. Its leader Galabodaaththe Gnanasara was convicted on two different cases: one is for threatening a wife of disappeared journalist inside court premises, two for contempt of court. He was subsequently given Presidential pardon which is being contested in courts at the present.
- Black Tigers Day:** Black Tigers were a special wing of the Tamil separatist organization LTTE who fought a civil war with GoSL for thirty years. LTTE was militarily defeated in 2009. Black tigers carried out special operations including suicide bombings, attacks on politicians and civilians. LTTE commemorated Black Tigers Day on 5th of July. The date has been chosen in memory of a LTTE suicide bomber who drove a truck of explosives into an army camp.
- CID:** The Criminal Investigation Department is the primary investigative arm of the Sri Lanka Police
- CMEV:** Centre for Monitoring Election is an independent and non-partisan organisation to monitor the incidence of election related violence and other concerns relating to election. It was formed in 1997 by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), the Free Media Movement (FMM) and the Coalition Against Political Violence. Currently, CMEV is made up of CPA, FMM and INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.
- Covid19:** Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus discovered in 2019 which led to a global pandemic.
- DIG :** Deputy Inspector General is a high ranking Police officer in Sri Lanka. DIGs usually in charge of Provinces, and key institutions under the Sri Lanka Police. DIGs are the third level of ranking in the hierarchy of Sri Lanka Police, while the SDIG (Senior Deputy Inspector General) takes the second level and the Inspector General of Police (IGP) is the head of the Police and highest ranking officer in the Police.
- 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.
- Eelam:** The term is more known for its association with LTTE – Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. However, Sri Lankan Tamils identify North-East Sri Lanka known as Eelam, as their traditional homeland. The term used to refer to Tamil homeland since the 1950s (Jayapalan, 2015)²⁵. The term is also

²⁴ [Bodu Bala Sena to disband after Gen. Election - Ven.Gnanasara](#), Daily News. Published 20th Nov 2019. Last accessed 22nd June 2020.

²⁵ Jayapalan, A. (2015:8-9). [A Transnational Political Engagement: Solidarity, Nationhood and Pan-Tamilness among the Tamils of Tamilnadu](#).

used in the name of the pro-government Tamil political party - Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) and others.

FR/Fundamental Rights: Fundamental Rights are the selected rights guaranteed by Sri Lankan constitution as detailed in the chapter 3 of the constitution. The rights include Freedom of thought, conscience and religion, Freedom from torture, Right to equality, Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and punishment, and prohibition of retroactive penal legislation, Freedom of Speech, assembly, association, movement, and Right to information.

FR Petition: Fundamental Rights Petition is a petition filed at the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka regarding a violation or an imminent violation of fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution.

GoSL: Government of Sri Lanka

Habeas Corpus: Habeas corpus is a recourse in law through which a person can report an unlawful detention or imprisonment to a court and request that the court order the custodian of the person, usually a state official, to bring the prisoner to court. In Sri Lanka, Habeas Corpus cases have been used by families of Disappeared to find out truth about their relatives.

HRD: Human Rights Defender is a term used to describe people who, individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights.

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 and highest ranking officer in the Police.

JVP: Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna is a leftist political party with strongholds in Sinhalese majority areas in Sri Lanka. They waged two armed rebellions against GoSL in 1971 and late 1980s. Since 1994, they have been active participants in electoral politics including local government, parliamentary and presidential elections.

LGBTIQ+: Lesbian, gay, Transgender, Intersex, queer and other persons with non-heteronormative sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expressions or their community.

LTTE: Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam also known as Tamil Tigers is a Tamil militant, separatist organization also considered as a terrorist group for their attacks on Civilians. They fought a war with GoSL for around three decades and they were militarily defeated in 2009.

MP: Member of Parliament

Navaly Church Bombing: The bombing of the Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Navaly in the Jaffna district on 9th July 1995. It is estimated that at least 147 civilians including men, women and children, who had taken refuge from the fighting inside the church, died as a result of this incident. Sri Lankan Air Force has been alleged as responsible for the incident.

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NGO Secretariat: NGO secretariat is an institution currently operating under the Ministry of Defence in Sri Lanka which has been set up to monitor NGOs and their activities including finance. It was established in 1996 in the Ministry of Health, Highways & Social Services.

NPC: [National Peace council](#) is a well-known NGO in Sri Lanka working on peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka by mobilizing the people towards peace and conflict transformation. It was established in 1995.

- 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 March 2018, based on a parliamentary act passed in August 2016.
- PAFFREL: People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) is a well-known election monitoring organization operating in Sri Lanka. It was established in 1987.
- Quazi courts: Quazi Courts are special judicial bodies concerning Muslims on selected laws: Muslim Intestate Succession Ordinance 1931, Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act 1951 and Muslim Mosques and Charitable Trusts and Waqfs Act 1956. They are judicial bodies with personnel appointed by the Judicial Services Commission. Appeals lie with the Board of Quazis and then to the Supreme Court. Quazi courts have been subjected to harsh criticism by human rights activists for their discriminative treatment towards Muslim Women.
- SEP: Socialist Equality Party is a Trotskyist political party in Sri Lanka founded in 1968. It is an alternative political party that has not won Parliamentary seats in the recent past.
- 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.
- SSP : Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) is a senior police officer who usually heads a district (an administrative area) in Sri Lanka. There are 25 districts in Sri Lanka.
- TID: Terrorist Investigation Department is a section of Sri Lankan Police that conducts inquiries into terrorism of Sri Lanka. In recent times, it has also been referred to as the Counter Terrorism Investigation Department (CTID). TID has been accused of torture and intimidation of HRDs.
- TNA: Tamil National Alliance (TNA) is an alliance of major Tamil political parties based in Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. TNA and candidates supported by the TNA have won all recent elections held in Northern and Eastern Provinces.
- UN: United Nations
- UNHRC: United Nations Human Rights Council
- UNHRC Resolution 30/1 : UNHRC Resolution 30/1 on Sri Lanka, adopted by the Human Rights Council on 1st October 2015 promoting resolution, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka. It is expected to strengthen and safeguard the credibility of the processes of truth-seeking, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence in the post war situation of Sri Lanka. GoSL co-sponsored the resolution and at the time of adoption as well as follow up resolutions in 2017 and 2019. But new government announced its withdrawal in February 2020.
- UN Security Council resolution 1373: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 was adopted unanimously on 28 September 2001, is a counter-terrorism measure passed following the 11 September terrorist attacks on the United States. The resolution was adopted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, and is therefore binding on all UN member states. The resolution aimed to hinder terrorist groups in various ways. Under the United Nations Regulations No. 01 of 2012 issued by GoSL, list of persons and organizations linked to terrorism related activities are made public time to time. [Click here to see more details.](#)
- UNP: United National Party (UNP) is a conservative right wing Sri Lankan political Party, favoring 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.