

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

1st -30th September 2020



Tamil Journalist Shanmugam Thavaseelan speaking to a senior police officer requested Police to intervene to stop the intelligence officers who were openly recording when participants of an event were speaking to media at the 'Thanthondreeswarar Kovil' in Oddusuddan. JDS Lanka. [Click here to see Video and further details.](#)

INFORM

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Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka in September 2020.

Published in November 2020.

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Colombo, Sri Lanka

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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.

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Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

September 2020

1. 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 September. An incident that happened on 31st August is also included as it is a serious incident and we had missed including it in our August report.

This report was prepared mainly based on the information reported in mainstream and social media. 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.

The report is based on 38 incidents related to repression of dissent in Sri Lanka. Section 1 describes the methodology. Section 2 describes the socio-political context and some trends relating to human rights situation in Sri Lanka during the month. Section 3 provides updates about ongoing legal cases related to dissent. Section 4 provides a thematic summaries of the incidents described in the report. This month’s report is organized under 6 themes: (4.1) free expression, (4.2) Repression of memorialization for war time events (4.3) Repression of civil society, (4.4) Repression of State officials, (4.5) Legal, Policy, institutional actions, and (4.6) Other incidents.

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.

2. Context:

75th UN General Assembly session was held from 15th to 30th of September. President Rajapaksha addressing the UN General Assembly called for “non-interference in their domestic affairs” of the states^{1 2}. On 14th September, Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in her global human rights update presented negative human rights trends concerning Sri Lanka highlighting GoSL’s decision to withdraw its support from [resolution 30/1](#) on Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka, proposed 20th amendment that could negatively impact on key institutions, Presidential pardon given to convicted army sergeant responsible for unlawful killings, appointments to key civilian roles of senior military officials allegedly involved in war crimes and crimes against humanity and moves within the police and judiciary to thwart the investigation of such crimes, and surveillance and intimidation of victims, their families, human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers³. Acting Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Dayani Mendis denied all these allegations, and stated that UN commissioner’s comments on 20th amendment were “unwarranted and pre-judgmental, [and] based on presumption”. She also stated that presidential pardon was granted in terms of the powers and provisions of the constitution of Sri Lanka, and rejected war crimes allegations against appointed military officials as false and unsubstantiated allegations. She also reused allegations of surveillance and intimidation of victims, and HRDs, also highlighted GoSL’s commitment to protect and promote freedom of expression and civil society space⁴. GoSL also rejected all the allegations of human right violations contained in another UN report submitted to the UN Human Rights Council by the UN Secretary General (UNSG). With regard to alleged “intimidating visits”, “surveillance”, complaints of harassment” and “reprisals” referred to in the UNSG’s Report, the government invited to the parties concerned to make formal complaints to law enforcement authorities or to independent national institutions such as the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka or the National Police Commission, so that action can be taken to investigate the alleged incidents⁵.

Controversial 20th Amendment to the constitution that strengthened the powers of the executive president, undermining the powers of Parliament and other independent state institutions was gazetted. Meanwhile, an Experts committee was appointed to draft new constitution⁶.

¹ [Sri Lanka - President Addresses General Debate, 75th Session](#). UN Web TV. Published 21st September 2020.

² [President expects UN not to interfere in domestic affairs of other states](#). [full transcription of the speech] Newsfirst. Published 22nd September 2020.

³ [Global Human Rights Update: Statement by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#). Office of Human Rights. 14th September 2020.

⁴ [UN human rights chief’s remarks on 20A unwarranted, Sri Lanka tells UNHRC session](#). Economy Next. Published 16th September 2020.

⁵ [Sri Lanka rejects allegations in UNSG’s report to the Human Rights Council](#). Colombo page. Published 1st October 2020.

⁶ [Experts committee appointed to draft new constitution](#). Daily News. Published 3rd September 2020.

Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) on Easter Sunday Bombings summoned former President Maithreepala Sirisena and three auxiliary bishops who issued statements refuting the statements given by the witnesses: former Minister Harin Fernando, and former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando before the PCoI. They were cautioned to refrain from issuing controversial press releases regarding statements made by witnesses at the Commission^{7 8}. In last July, a different PCoI on Political victimization also issued an order disallowing media from obtaining statements from witnesses outside the PCoI⁹.

PCoI on Political victimization recommended to reinstate Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police (SDIG) Lalith Jayasinghe currently suspended from his position as he has been named as an accused of two ongoing legal cases pertaining to concealing evidence of a murder, and assisting a suspect of a rape case to escape from the arrest¹⁰.

On 15th September, giving statement before the PCoI, Navy Commander R. K. Sumith Ranasinghe: a key suspect of the abduction and enforced disappearance of 11 youth and men during 2008-2009 also stated that Former CID Director Shani Abeysekera, IP Nishantha De Silva, and several other officers presented fabricated evidence to the Attorney General's Department during the period of the Government of Good Governance¹¹. Last year, Colombo Telegraph accused Ranasinghe and another suspect of the case for Campaigning for SLPP in the Eastern Province¹².

PCoI on Political victimization decided to name former Director of Anti-Corruption committee Ananda Wijepala as an accused based on a complaint made by W. Wimalasena a former accountant in the Ministry of Economic Development. He alleged that service was not extended based on political reasons.¹³ Former Additional Director General Bandula Thilakasiri giving a statement before the PCoI on political victimization, alleged that he had to be in remand prison for 52 days as he refused to provide a statement against Basil Rajapaksha¹⁴. In 2015, He was arrested as a suspect for alleged misappropriation of public funds, along with current President's brother and former Minister of Economic Development Basil Rajapaksha. The pertaining legal case is still ongoing¹⁵.

A deputy editor of the Island newspaper Zacky Jabbar's dead body was found at his home in Colombo after few days of his death. He has worked for some 37 years as a journalist, concentrating largely on

⁷ [PCoI cautions former President, his personal secretary, auxiliary bishops over media releases](#). Daily News. 25th September 2020.

⁸ [පාස්කු කොමිෂමේ සාක්ෂි ගැන මින් පසු මාධ්‍ය නිවේදන බැහැ... සභායක රඳගුරු මණ්ඩලයට හා මෙමතීගේ ලේකම්ට කොමිෂම නියෝග කරයි](#). Divaina. Published 25th September 2020.

⁹ [Media disallowed to obtain statements from witnesses outside PCoI on political victimization](#). Ada Derana. 29th July 2020.

¹⁰ [නඩු විභාග දෙකක වූදින නියෝජ්‍ය පොලිස්පතිවරයකු සේවයේ පිහිටුවන ලෙස "පළිගැනීම් විමසන කොමිෂම" නිර්දේශ කරයි](#). Sri Lanka Brief. Published 8th September 2020.

¹¹ [Ex- CID officers presented fabricated evidence to AGs Dept; claims Navy Officer](#). Newsfirst. Published 15th September 2020.

¹² [Suspects In Navy Abduction Ring Commodore Dassanayake And Commander Ranasinghe Campaigning For SLPP In The East](#). Colombo Telegraph. 23rd October 2019.

¹³ [සේවය දීර්ඝ නොකර දේශපාලනිකව පලිගන්නා... දූෂණ මර්දන කමිටු කාර්යාලයේ අධ්‍යක්ෂ විජේපාල වගරත්නරකරුවකු කරන්න](#). Divaina. Published 26th September 2020.

¹⁴ [බැසිල්ට එරෙහිව පරීක්ෂායක් නොදන්නාට දින 52 ක් බන්ධනාගාරගත වීමට සිදුවුණා... දිවිනැගුම හිටපු අතිරේක අධ්‍යක්ෂ ජනරාල්](#). Divaina.

¹⁵ [Basil's Divi Neguma case postponed for August](#). Daily News. 27th of February 2020.

Court reporting. While family members said they have no suspicions over his death¹⁶, a magisterial inquiry has later ruled that he had died of a massive heart attack¹⁷. Also a newspaper distributor named Balachandran Madanakaran (aged 41) has been attacked with a sword and subsequently hospitalized in Kantharodai area in Jaffna, while he was travelling in Kalwedi- Kantharodai road in early morning on 18th September. The assaulters have also attempted to take him with them. However motive of the attack have not been indicated in media reports¹⁸.

Members of Divulapitiya Pradeshiya Sabha of Gampaha District also protested that two of their members have been assaulted by thugs recently. PS members Nimal Karunathilka has been assaulted 14th August in Bellapana area, while Anuradha Senanayake has been assaulted on 14th September in front of Pradeshiya Sabha premises. Media reports do not indicate the motive of the attack¹⁹.

Militarization of civilian life is an ongoing trend in Sri Lanka for years. On 14th September, Sri Lanka Army (SLA) commenced training 50,000 graduates recently recruited to the public sector, in its 51 countrywide Army Training Centres. SLA in a media statement said that the programme is coordinated and supervised by Security Forces Headquarters and closely monitored by the Defence Ministry²⁰. Police in Anuradhapura arrested nearly 100 under-aged couples who have 'skipped tuition classes' for allegedly behaving indecently in public places in Anuradhapura Town. Police said that they are going to hand over the couples to their parents after warning them.²¹ The incident seemed as an act of moral policing of young people.

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) leader R. Sampanthan has written to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa alleging that a Buddhist monk, who is a member of the Presidential Task Force for Archaeological Heritage Management in the Eastern Province, had threatened a group of farmers in the Thiriyai area in the Kuchchaveli Divisional Secretary's Division in the Trincomalee District and prohibited them from farming on their private lands and other lands, for which they hold a Government permit for several generations. Based on monk's complaint, few farmers have been arrested and remanded on 20th August. On 23rd of August the monk accompanied by Police had warned farmers against going to the fields, and threatened them with arrest²². The Chief Prelate for the Northern and Eastern Provinces, Chief Senanayake of Thamankaduwa Direction, and Chief Incumbent of Arisimalai Aranya Ven. Panamure Thilakawansha Thera was appointed as a member of the said Presidential Task Force in June 2020²³.

¹⁶ Zacky's death: Family sets the record straight. The island. Published 12th September 2020.

¹⁷ [Snr Journalist Zacky Jabbar passes away](#). Ceylon Today. 11th September 2020.

¹⁸ [යාපනයේ පුවත්පත් බෙදාහරින්නෙකුට කඩු පරීරහරයක්](#). Divaina.

¹⁹ [මාරු පිරිහාර ගැන දිවුලපිටිය ප්රා. සභාවේ විරෝධතා](#). Lankadeepa. 15th September 2020.

²⁰ [graduate trainings in military training schools](#). Ministry of Defence. Published 14th of September 2020.

²¹ [Sri Lanka arrest nearly 100 underage couples for misbehaving in public](#). Newswire. Published 6th Sep 2020.

²² [TNA leader alleges Presidential Task Force for EP Archaeology member threatened Kuchchaveli area farmers](#). Daily Ft. published 8th September 2020.

²³ [President appoints Task Force for Archaeological Heritage Management in East](#). Daily Ft. published 4th June 2020.

3. Case updates:



Posters quoting Ramzy Razeek's social media writings. Razeek was unjustly detained under the alleged charges of hate speech and released on bail after more than 5 months.

Social media commentator Ramzy Razeek was granted bail by the Colombo High Court, after he spent over five months in prison amid deteriorating health conditions²⁴. He was arrested on 9th April this year and charged under section 3 of No 56 of 2007: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Act for publishing a statement in facebook claiming that Muslims in Sri Lanka should start an “ideological war” against racism they face, using “pen and key board as weapons.”²⁵ His arrest was condemned by many local and international human rights groups. Colombo High Court judge A.K.M. Patabandige issuing the order to release Razeek on bail, stated that his arrest is questionable in terms of freedom of expression which includes freedom to dissent and the right to hold an opinion as guaranteed by the Sri Lanka constitution. The order also said that one cannot be arrested for the mere fact of using terminology such as “ideological struggle/ war” and thus cannot be decided per se, whether it leads to hatred among ethnic, religious groups. The order also said when primary objective of ICCPR act described in the preamble of the Covenant are considered, this arrest could not be justified²⁶.

On 30th September, Desmond Chathuranga De Alwis the journalist arrested by the cyber-crimes division of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) was released on bail²⁷. He was

²⁴ [Tweet](#). Amnesty South Asia. Published 17th September 2020.

²⁵ An English translation of the post that led to his arrest is [available at this link](#).

²⁶ Sri Lanka Brief. රමසි රසිකේට ඇපදීමේ නඩු තීන්දුව: අන් අඩංගුවට ගැනීමට පොලීසිය දැක්වූ කරුණු ගැටළු සහගතයි: විරෝධතා දැක්වීම අයිතියක් – විනිසුරු. Published 20th October 2020.

²⁷ [Web journalist Desmond Chathuranga De Alwis released](#). Colombo Gazette. Published 30th September 2020.

arrested in the previous month for publishing news articles on his website that negatively impact the judiciary and the judicial hierarchy²⁸.

On 2nd of September, Sandya Ekneligoda: wife of the disappeared journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda was summoned to the court as the first witness. She tweeted that it “was the most satisfying day of the 3873 days without Prageeth”.²⁹ However, it seemed that undue influences were made to the case, since Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) on Political Victimization³⁰ started questioning one of the key witnesses, based on complaints by two accused of the case for alleged political victimization.



“Shani Threatened to say that Gotabaya ordered to assassinate Ekneligoda. Also promised to provide various privileges” Army Intelligence officer, Aiyasami Lankadeepa 19th September, page 9



“I lied to the Court because of Shani’s influences” Retired Intelligence officers tells Presidential Commission” Divaina newspaper. 19th September. Page 1

On 17th September, the three member permanent special High Court in Colombo hearing the case of abduction of journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda ordered Retired intelligence officer J.M. Ranbanda - one of the key witnesses of the case not provide any statement regarding the ongoing case at the Presidential Commission of Inquiry or a lower court. On 18th September, in violation of the court order, Ranbanda provided statement before the Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) on Political Victimization. In his statement before PCoI, he alleged that he was threatened by the CID to provide a false statement before Homagama magistrate. He also said that he was given a written statement by the CID, which he was asked to remember and repeat before the magistrate³¹. On the same day, giving evidence before

²⁸ [Sri Lanka Media Associations say that they are paying attention to the arrest of web editor Chathuranga de Silva](#). Sri Lanka Brief. Published 5th September 2020.

²⁹ [Tweet](#). Sandya Ekneligoda. Published 3rd September 2020.

³⁰ Commission of Inquiry (CoI) by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to probe alleged political victimisation of public officials and Tri-Forces personnel under the previous administration.

³¹ [ශානිලාගේ බලපෑම් නිසා උසාවියට බොරු කිව්වා... යුද හමුදා විශ්‍රාමික මුද්ධි නිලධාරියා ජනපති කොමිෂමේදී කියයි](#). Divaina. 19th September 2020.

the PCol Aiyasami Balasubramaniam³² and S.M. Ravindra Rupasinghe³³ - two accused³⁴ of the abduction case of Ekneligoda have said that they had been threatened by then director of Criminal Investigation Department Shani Abesekera who has also promised to provide benefits if they provide (false) statement against current President Gotabaya Rajapaksha.

On 11th of September, the legal case on Rathupaswala shooting against civilians by military on 1st August 2013 was heard at the Gampaha High court before a panel of three judges. Sri Lanka Army Brigadier Aruna Deshapriya Gunawardena and the Staff Sergeant D.A. Sirisena, Sergeant Lalith Grey, and Corporal J.M. Tilakaratne appeared before the court as accused. A witness Wimal Chandrasoma Wickramaarachchi (aged 64) gave a verbal statement before the court. In response to a question asked by the defence lawyer, he stated that he was unaware of any plan to blast, burn and destroy any places in Weliveriya town. The case was postponed to 23rd of October in the following month.

The case between University Grant Commission vs legal academic of University of Jaffna K. Guruparan was heard on 9th September 2020. Dr Kanagisvaran PC appeared on behalf of Guruparan argued about the mandate about the University Act and stated that 'the Government, Army or University Grant Commission cannot run Universities.' Arguments will be continued on the next court date on Nov 16."³⁵

Government of Sri Lanka responded to the joint letter dated 13th July 2020 sent by the five special rapporteurs on human rights raising grave concerns of continued harassments on journalist Darisha Bastians.³⁶ ³⁷ GoSL responded claiming that investigations have been conducted in terms and accordance with the law.³⁸

³² ගෝඨාඨ විරුද්ධව සාක්ෂි දෙනවානම් වරප්පසද දෙන න් ආනි පොරොන්දු වුණා. Lankadeepa. 18th September 2020.

³³ ජර්මන් එක්තුලිගොඩ පැහැර ගෙන යාමේ සිද්ධිය ගැන සිද්ධිබිඹ් රේ හිටපු නිලධාරීන් මෙන්ම නොමග යවලා දේශපාලන පලිගැනීම් කොමිසමේදී හෙළිවේ-වීඩියෝ. Hiru News. 18th September 2020.

³⁴ In August 2019, the Attorney General has made indictments against nine army personnel including Aiyasami Balasubramaniam and S.M. Ravindra Rupasinghe on charges of kidnapping and conspiring to murder journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda. [See more details.](#)

³⁵ [Tweet](#). K. Guruparan. Published 9th September 2020.

³⁶ (1) David Kaye – Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, (2) Agnes Callamard – Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, (3) Clement Nyaletsossi Voule – Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, (4) Mary Lawlor – Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, (5) Joseph Cannataci – Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy

³⁷ [Harassment Of Journalist Dharisha Bastians May Be Aimed At Stopping Her Reporting On Sri Lanka: 5 UN Special Rapporteurs Write To Govt.](#) Colombo Telegraph. Published 15th September 2020.

³⁸ [Sri Lanka responds to UN SPs : Investigations on journalist Dharisha Bastians have been conducted in terms of & accordance with the law.](#) Sri Lanka Brief. 16th September 2020.

4. Major incidents and trends related to dissent

4.1. Repression of Free expression

Sri Lanka Press Council operating under the Ministry of Mass media, established under the Press Council Act No 5 of 1973 published an advertisement asking to register the newspapers which are unregistered under them, while the advertisement also mentioned that legal action will be taken against the unregistered newspapers and magazines in the future. The Press Council has been long defunct. It had given authorities a great deal of control over the media in the past, was subjected to strong criticisms of media activists and journalists. The independence of the institution and its political alliance to the ruling government has been historically critiqued by media activists. Though the former government attempted to revive press council in 2015, the action was withdrawn due to strong opposition from the civil society and media activists³⁹.



Press advertisement published by the Sri Lanka Press Council on 23rd of September 2020. Lankadeepa newspaper (print)

Lakmal Baduge: a journalist in Uppuveli in Trincomalee district has been threatened with death and his mother has been assaulted and hospitalized after he complained about an illegal construction. Since the attackers are also allegedly connected with drug trafficking, the journalist claims that the articles he wrote about drug trafficking in the area might have also offended them. Two journalists of Mawbima newspaper made a complaint to the Borella Police station regarding an attempted assault on them at a Media briefing organized by an NGO.

³⁹ [Sri Lanka: Press Council Revival Controversial](#). Global Legal Monitor. Published 16th July 2015. Last accessed 25th October 2020.



Journalists waiting outside the meeting premises in Wanathawilluwa. Photo courtesy: Lankadeepa

Three incidents were reported from three different districts in which journalists have not been allowed to attend meetings of public interest, which they were allowed in the past. In Wanathawilluwa in Puttalam district, journalists were not allowed to attend a meeting in which Minister of Wildlife & Forest Conservation attended and had a discussion with government officers concerning an incident of deforestation in the area. However, in the recent past, government failed to provide an adequate response to a wave of incidents relating deforestation reported around the country. When inquired about the reasons of not allowing media coverage, the Minister has responded saying that certain things discussed in the meeting were confidential. The Chief Government Whip, Johnston Fernando announced that the proceedings of the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) will not be open to the media in order to protect government officials and former officials since “video footage could be edited to promote certain political agendas.” Journalists were not allowed to attend Kurunegala district coordinating committee meeting despite of prior written and verbal invitations sent by the District Secretary. The journalists were invited and allowed to provide media coverage in previous meetings. It was also attended by several MPs including two state ministers.

During remembrance events held in North and East, intelligence personnel in civil clothes standing behind journalists have recorded individual statements given to media by people, causing intimidation to people and obstruction to journalists and civilians who spoke to media. Police have allegedly supported intimidation by allowing this to happen despite of opposition expressed by the journalists.

A farmer who spoke to media exposing information about an illegal stone quarry located in irrigation tank's reserve area in Tissamaharama in Hambantota district has been threatened with death by the owner of the quarry.

4.2. Repression of memorialization of war time events



Former Northern Provincial Councillor, M.K. Sivajilingam was arrested for commemorating Thileepan in violation of a court order, and granted bail on the next day. Photo courtesy: [Hiru News](http://www.hirunews.lk)

Several magistrate courts banned commemorative events organized by Tamil civilians, organizations and political parties in the North and East in memory of Thiyagi Thileepan, former LTTE leader who died during a hunger strike in September 1987.

In Jaffna district, Jaffna magistrate court banned a commemorative event remembering Thileepan. Police initially informed the court that event should be banned due to the COVID-19 spread. However, when the decision was challenged on the next day, then Police has argued that the event cannot be allowed since the commemoration was to glorify the LTTE. In Ampara District, the Sammanthurai Magistrate issued an injunction order prohibiting Memorial Day meeting and procession for Thileepan based on petition filed by Sammanthurai Police. The Point Pedro Magistrate Court also issued a court order against attempts to conduct a token fast in view of commemorating Thileepan. Police has obtained a 14-day court order banning all protests, hartals in North and Eastern Provinces in commemoration of any LTTE member according to Daily News government news website.

A hartal was launched in the North- East by several political parties and civil society groups on 28th condemning the Government's actions preventing the commemoration of those killed during the war. However, military and Police have intimidated shop owners in an attempt to

break the hartal organized across North and East. In Achuveli area in Jaffna, military and Police have threatened shop owners demanding to reopen the shops according to Nirosh, a member of the Vali East Pradeshiya Sabha. He further told the media that he has been also threatened by the military, when he spoke to the shop owners.



Police seen entering Vavuniya's Bazar and ordering for stores to be reopened using loudspeakers. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian

Former Northern Provincial Councillor, M.K. Sivajilingam was arrested by the Jaffna Kopay Police for holding a memorial service for Thileepan in violation of the court order issued by Jaffna magistrate. He was charged with contempt of court and later granted bail.

In Vavuniya, Police had denied permission for commemoration march to remember Thileepan. Police have summoned the Batticaloa Organiser of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPf) over attempts to commemorate Thileepan's fast unto death. Police have blocked the entrance of university students into the University of Jaffna, when a group of students clad in black dresses visited the University in attempt to commemorate Thileepan inside university premises.

4.3. Repression of civil society

Director of National Secretariat of NGOs Raja Gunaratne has told Sunday Observer, and Silumina government owned newspapers that "some NGOs pose a serious threat to national security, spreading extremist ideologies. And discussions are underway to draft a new Act to overcome these drawbacks." The news also mentioned that "it has been reported that of Rs. 50,000 million received by local NGOs, a large amount has been spent on anti-national activities and disseminating extremism in the country. The largest slice of foreign largesse has been channelled into the country via 280 NGOs." Raja Gunaratne also alleged that only 20% of funding has been spent by NGOs on project activities, while 80% has been spent on their personal budgets.



Head of the Mullaitivu Missing Persons' Association, Mariyasuresh Easwary during a protest. Photo Courtesy : Tamil Guardian

On 30th September, two military officials have allegedly threatened the Head of the Mullaitivu Missing Persons' Association, Mariyasuresh Easwary at her house and demanded information about a protest scheduled to be conducted on the following day in commemoration of Children's Day. She has been previously subjected to various threats and intimidation including an assault by unknown persons in 2017⁴⁰.

⁴⁰ [Sri Lanka police continue harassment of Tamil woman activist](#). JDS Lanka. 22nd August 2020.

On 19th September, Divaina newspaper publishing a news article alleged that Global Tamil Forum (GTF); British Tamil Forum (BTF); National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT); Tamil Youth Organization (TYO); World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC); Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC); Australian Tamil Congress (ATC); Tamil National Council (TNC) have been raising funds from Tamil diaspora in order to revive LTTE. The news article also said that this occurred as a result of the former government's decision to delist these organizations from the list of individuals and organizations linked to terrorism by previous government.



In 2018, current Opposition leader and then ministers of Sri Lankan government, Qatar's Ambassador to Colombo, Rashid bin Shafi Al Marri, and other officials took part at the opening event of Qatar Charity office in Sri Lanka. Photo Courtesy: [The Peninsula. Qatar Newspaper](#)

During the court hearing in Fort magistrate court against Human Rights activist Hejaaz hizbullah who is currently under the arrest, CID accused that well known charity organization Qatar Charity is a "terrorist funding entity" and had been listed as a terror network. Deepani Menike, appearing on behalf of the CID said that offences related to receiving funding from terror organisations and the Money Laundering Act are being investigated. The counsel representing Mr. Hizbullah told court that a simple search on Google would have cleared any ambiguity as to what "Qatar Charity" was. He said the Charity works closely with the Sri Lankan government, the United Nations and UNICEF and many other international organisations.

4.4. Repression of State officials



Newspaper reports on an attack to a Police officer by a drunken driver, and transfer of Police officers for checking a bag belonging to a VIP person at the parliamentary premises. Courtesy: Lankadeepa newspaper

On 9th of September, in Atalugama area in Kalutara district, four individuals including three females have been arrested over alleged assault on several police officers in Atalugama, Bandaragama. This has occurred when a team of officers from Bandaragama Police had carried out a raid at a house regarding a cannabis racket. Two Sub-Inspectors, a Woman Police Sergeant and a Woman Police Constable were reportedly injured in the attack. Later more suspects were also arrested. On 20th September, a person connected with the same incident who attempted to escape from Police arrest, while trying to attack with a knife was arrested by Bandaragama Police. A drunken driver has assaulted a Police officer on traffic duty when the officer has attempted to arrest the person. The incident occurred in Padukka divisional secretariat area in Colombo District. Assistant Police Superintendent Anura Ranasinghe, Parliament Police OIC K.L. Liyanage and two other Police officers worked at Parliament premises have been transferred for allegedly causing inconvenience to a VIP by checking their baggage, while entering into the parliament premises.



A monk in Batticaloa threatened at the archeology officials and detained them in a hut. Photo courtesy: Newsfirst

In Batticaloa, controversial monk Venerable Ampitiye Sumanarathana Thero has threatened officials of the Department of Archaeology in the presence of the media saying their delay to demarcate an archeological land has resulted in part of the land being acquired for cultivation. He also physically assaulted the officials, and forcefully kept them inside a hut threatening them with death demanding not to leave until they bring their senior. A legal case has been filed against the monk.

On 25th of September, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa asked the state officials to treat all his verbal orders as circulars to be implemented. “Those who neglect this will face stern action” President also said. He made this statement during a discussion with Villagers at Velanwita village in Haldummulla, Badulla. Later he also issued the same statement through the official President's website. Asking to consider a verbal order as a circular could have detrimental effects on freedom of dissent. A verbal order could be unrecorded, and sometimes could contravene with the existing laws, policies and other measures.

Retired intelligence officer Ranbanda – a key witness of journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda abduction case, Aiyasami Balasubramaniam and S.M. Ravindra Rupasinghe two accused of the same case made statements before the PCoI on Political Victimization, that they had been threatened by CID officials to provide false statements. While the PCoI hearing and the legal case pertaining to the alleged abduction of journalist Ekneligoda are still ongoing, the overall trend might discourage investigation officials from undertaking controversial legal cases in which politicians and military personnel have been involved.

4.5. Legal, Policy, institutional actions



Sri Lanka opposition parliamentarians and supporters shout slogans during a protest against the proposed constitutional amendment, outside the parliamentary complex in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 08 September 2020. Photo courtesy: [EFE/EPA/CHAMILA KARUNARATHNE](#)

The 20th Amendment to the Constitution Bill (“proposed Amendment”) proposed in this month⁴¹ removes many positive changes introduced to constitution in 2015, and reintroduces much of what was in place under the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, in 2010. 19th Amendment sought to reduce the powers of the Executive President, and make him/her more accountable to Parliament and the Courts, and also improved the independence of several commissions, by, among other things, depoliticizing the process of appointing members. Under 20th Amendment, members to the independent commissions, and other key positions will be appointed by the President, leading to more politicization. It will also affect the law making process by reducing the time period during which the public has access to Bills before they are passed, and reintroduces the urgent Bill process. Current constitution does not allow to challenge existing laws after they were passed by the Parliament. Hence introduction of twentieth amendment could have number of negative impact on the freedom of dissent. Government and opposition politicians, civil society, media organizations, clergy, academics and many others have expressed their disagreement with the proposed amendment and also

⁴¹ It was passed in the following month with few amendments.

some have filed fundamental rights petitions against the 20th amendment. It also weakens the transparency of audit, procurement, and anti-bribery functions in Sri Lanka.

On 7th September 2020, speaking at a public event, Minister of Justice Ali Sabry denigrated the function of independent commissions and asked "can we eat commissions? What's the use of them if they cannot reduce the number of crimes?" In a context, where government attempting to introduce 20th amendment that has clear negative impact on independent commissions, this statement by the Minister of justice seemed as a further warning that the government might reduce resources, or take other actions to weaken the functions of independent commissions.

On 28th September, Presidential Secretariat issued a statement saying "A fake news campaign that alleges unprecedented environmental destruction is taking place since the present government came into power has now been identified. The government has decided to take stern legal action against the parties or individuals who intentionally feed misinformation and mislead the public abusing various forms of media." The statement also said "Fake news about environmental destruction being disseminated especially on social media platforms and in some print, television and radio media. The statement highlighted a single incident of fake news, and attempted to generalize other incidents of deforestation reported by environmentalists and public and to intimidate them with a threat of legal action.

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.

Defence Secretary Kamal Gunaratne has told that the Ministry of Defence had assured the University Grants Commission (UCG) that the SIS and "other state Intelligence agencies" would be provided to help end ragging in the universities. Under the arrangement security marshals would coordinate with the intelligence services by sharing information and arrest offenders with the help of the police. However, INFORM believes that Universities are required to take other actions and strategies in order to mitigate ragging in Universities without bringing military intelligence into the University Premises. This action could have strong negative impact on the freedom of dissent inside university premises, could weaken both activism of students and university teachers, and academic freedom.

4.6. Other incidents

On 24th September, Speaker of the Parliament denied the opportunity of raising a question about Thileepan commemoration at the parliament by the leader of AITC, MP G.G. Ponnambalam claiming that is a matter which under adjudication by a Court of Law. Even though MP Ponnambalam raised a point of order saying that the question is not about an ongoing legal case, but about a concluded case, Speaker still denied the opportunity.

On 8th September, Vice President of Ukuwela Pradeshiya Sabha in Matale District, Abdul Nizar (UNP) has been assaulted when a resident in the area has been informing him of a sand mining incident and then a party involved with sand mining has assaulted him.

On 25th September a villager who informed Police regarding a group of people involved with cannabis trade was attacked in Kanthoduwawa area in Mandurankiuliya in Puttalam District. The villagers organized a protest against the incident.

Government controlled print media institution, Lakehouse has interdicted four journalists just for simple typographical error (one letter) in writing President Gotabaya's name ගෝඨාභය as ගෝඨාබය. While this seems as a disciplinary action, it could also create fear among journalists to impose a self-censorship in writing content critical of government or President.



Chandraprema presenting his book entitled 'Gota's War' to the Rajapaksa brothers in May 2012.

Photo Courtesy [Business Today](#)

The Committee on High Posts of the Sri Lankan Parliament has approved the appointments of 08 diplomats including former alleged death squad member C. A. Chandraprema as Sri Lanka's permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva. Civil society activists have pointed out forcing human rights activists, survivors, families of victims to deal with a person with such a negative record of human rights abuses could bring fear and intimidation, while it is also questionable in terms of accountability.

5. Statistical analysis:

Total 38 of incidents were reported in this month.

Type of violation	Number	Percentage
legal, institutional and policy	8	21%
physical attacks	6	16%
Court order	4	11%
Restrictions to journalists and media	3	8%
Death threats	2	5%
Intimidation	2	5%
Arrest	1	3%
police questioning	1	3%
Others	11	29%
Total	38	100%

Table 1: Type of violation

21% of these incidents were legal, institutional and policy decisions that could negatively impact on the freedom of dissent. 16% incidents ere relating to physical attacks. 11% were court orders issued against holding memorialization events in the North and East. 8% of incidents were related to restrictions on journalists where they were not allowed to cover state events that they were previously allowed to. There were also 2 incidents of death threats, 2 incidents of intimidation including a visit to a house of an activist by military in the night, an incident of summoning and being questioned by Police, and an arrest.

Geographical area	Number
Colombo	5
Gampaha and Kalutara	2
North and East	13
Other areas	5
Not Applicable	13
Total	38

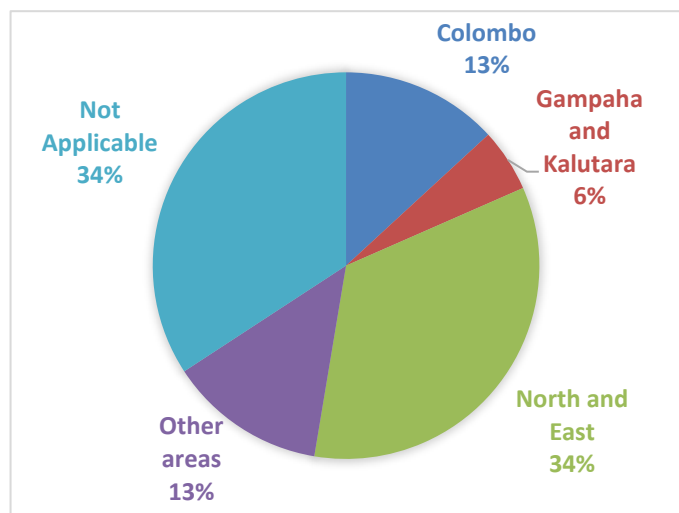


Table 2 and Graph 2: Geographical location of the incident

34% of incidents were reported from Northern and Eastern Provinces. 13% of incidents were reported from Colombo District in Western Province. 6% of incidents were reported from Gamapaha and Kalutara remaining two provinces in Western Province. While 13% of incidents were reported from other areas, in 34% of incidents the geographical areas were not applicable since they were legal, policy actions that could affect multiple geographical areas.

Type of victims	Number	Percentage
Journalists	8	21%
Protestors and participants of memorial events	8	21%
State officials	8	21%
Civil Society Activists and NGOs	4	11%
Politicians	3	8%
Whistleblowers	2	5%
Other	5	13%
Total	38	100%

Table 3: Type of victims

Type of victims included 21% of journalists, 21% of participants of memorials events and 21% of state officials. 11% were civil society activists and NGOs. 8% were politicians, while 5% were whistleblowers who provided information to media and Police. There were 13% of other incidents.

Ethnicity of the victim	Number
Sinhala	9
Tamil	14
Muslim	2
Not Applicable	13
Total	38

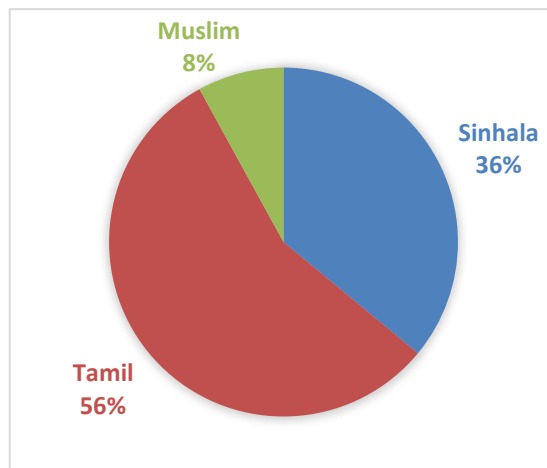


Table 4 and Graph 4: Ethnicity of the victims

Ethnicity was applicable in 25 of the cases. In more than 50% of those incidents, victims were Tamils. In 36% of cases victims were Sinhala, while 8% were Muslim.

Victim's gender	Number
Male	13
Female	1
Not Applicable	24
Total	38

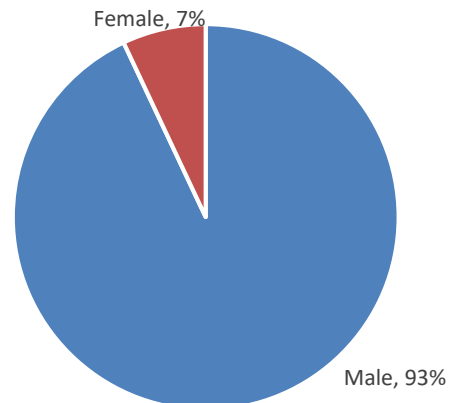


Table 5 and Graph 5: Gender of the victims


Gender was applicable in 14 of the incidents. In 93% of the incidents victims were men, while 7% of the incidents (1 incident out of 14), it was female. Gender was considered not applicable when it affected both men and women.

Alleged Perpetrator/ Responsible party	Number	Percentage
Military or Police	7	18%
State Institutions and officials	5	13%
President or central government	5	13%
Other government Politicians	5	13%
Court	5	13%
Business persons	2	5%
Drug traffickers	4	11%
Others	5	13%
Total	38	100%


Table 6: Alleged Perpetrator or alleged responsible party

Alleged perpetrators were mainly linked to the state. They were mainly state officials related to Police or military, or court orders, other state institutions and officials, President, government or politicians. In 18% of incidents, alleged perpetrators were military or Police, while 13% of incidents they were state institutions and officials. In 26% of the incidents, allegedly responsible party was government or politicians linked to ruling government. In another 13% of the incidents in court was allegedly responsible. Drug traffickers were responsible for 11% of incidents, while persons involved in other illegal business were allegedly responsible for 5% of incidents. There were 13% of other incidents.

6. List of incidents

	Date	District	Repression of Free Expression	Source
1.	31 st August 2020 ⁴²	Trincomalee	<p>A journalist has been threatened with death and his mother has been assaulted, after he complained to the Divisional Secretary and Grama Sevaka officer about an illegal construction that blocks a common road providing access to several houses including his mother's. Since the attackers are also allegedly connected with drug trafficking, the journalist claims that the articles he wrote about drug trafficking in the area might have also offended them. Those involved with the illegal construction have ignored the instructions given by the Beach conservation officers who visited the site to discontinue the construction. There has been delay in taking legal action against the illegal construction, despite beach conservation officers having asked the Police to intervene. Then the journalist has made aware GN and DS officials. A woman who was involved with drug trafficking has made a threatening phone call to the journalist, and then along with a group of others she has visited journalist's house, noticing that he is not there, then they have visited his mother's house. They have physically assaulted mother, dragged her on the street keeping a knife to the neck. However, neighbours who have seen this have intervened and managed to rescue her. Journalist Lakmal Baduge has made a complaint to the Uppuveli Police on the matter under the Police complaint number CIB 2 160/04.</p>  <p><i>Journalist's mother at the hospital. Photo courtesy: Mawbima</i></p>	<p>Mawbima Newspaper.</p> <p>මැර පිරිසකගෙන් පහර කෑ නිර්මලේ මාධ්‍යවේදියාගේ මව රෝහල්ගත කරයි.</p> <p>3rd September 2020. Page 5. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
2.	7 th Sep 2020	Colombo	<p>Two journalists of Mawbima newspaper Nuwan Hettiarachchi and Ruwantha Kithulgaspitiya made a complaint to the Borella Police station regarding an attempted assault on them at a Media briefing by the National Movement for Safeguarding Consumer Rights. The victims accused the organizers of the event: Asela Sampath and Ranjith Vithanage for allegedly attempting to assault them and allegedly stealing the mobile phone belonging to one of the Journalists.</p>	<p>NGO gang berates Mawbima journalists.</p> <p>Ceylon Today. 8th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>


⁴² This incident has happened in August, but since we had not included in the August report, and this seems a serious incident, we have included in this months

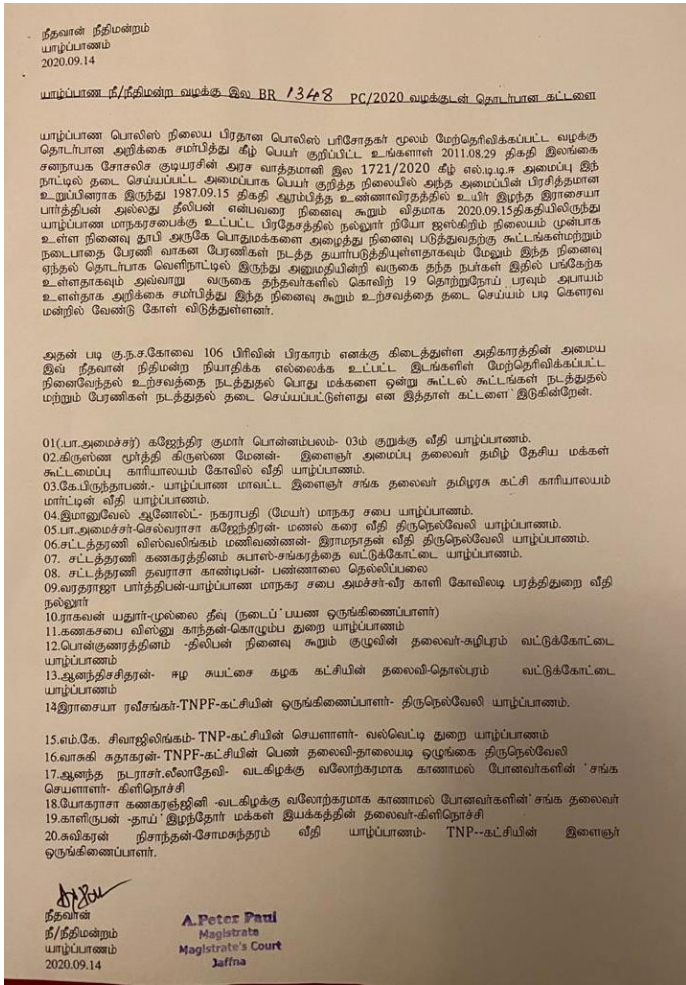
3.	13 th Sep 2020	Puttalam	<p>Journalists were not allowed to attend a meeting in which Minister of Wildlife & Forest Conservation, MP C. B. Rathnayake attended had a discussion with government officers concerning an incident of deforestation in Kuratiyamotta, in Wanathawilluwa. Though the meeting was initially organized at Divisional Secretariat, the venue was suddenly shifted to the premises of Wanathawilluwa Police. Director General of Forest conservation, Director General of Wildlife, officials representing Ministry of Environment, Central Environmental Authority, cement corporation, Divisional Secretary, Puttalam district DIG of Police, Wanathawilluwa Police SP, Wanathawilluwa OIC, and President of Pradeshiya Sabha have participated in the meeting. When inquired about not allowing media coverage, the Minister told that certain things discussed in the meeting are confidential. Recently there was a wave of incidents relating to deforestation, which government failed to provide an adequate response.</p>  <p><i>Journalists waiting outside the meeting premises. Photo courtesy: Lankadeepa</i></p>	<p>වනජීවී ඇමැතිගේ රැස්වීම මාධ්‍යවේදීන්ට තහනම් කරයි.</p> <p>Lankadeepa. Published 14th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>
4.	23 rd Sep 2020	N/A	<p>The Chief Government Whip, Johnston Fernando announced that the proceedings of the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) will not be open to the media. “We noticed that video footage of the COPE meetings was being used by media channels to attack the former President and Prime Minister in the past. Various officials were also brought in using their powers to attain their political agendas. It is beneficial for us to reveal all the malpractices after 2015. But certain media are editing the footage to promote their political agendas,” he said. Fernando also noted that the decision to close the COPE proceedings to the media was to protect government officials and former officials. Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) MP and COPE member Nalin Bandara said the Government announced that the media will be prevented from attending COPE proceedings while COPE Chairman Prof. Charitha Herath announced that a decision in this regard will be taken next week. However, Minister Fernando responded by saying that the decision was taken following a discussion during the party leaders’ meeting in which Bandara was not present.</p>	<p>COPE meetings not open to media in future. The Morning. Published 24th September 2020.</p>

5.	14 th Sep 2020	Kurunegala	Journalists were not allowed to attend Kurunegala district coordinating committee meeting despite of prior written and verbal invitations sent by the District Secretary. The journalists were invited and allowed to provide media coverage in previous meetings. The meeting was headed by the co-Presidents Kurunegala District MP Gunapala Rathanasakara and governor of North Western Province Raja Collure. it was also attended by several MPs including Minister of Highways MP Johnston Fernando and Minister of Batik, Handloom Fabric & Local Apparel Products MP Dayasiri Jayasekara and others. The journalists condemned the action to ban journalists from the first coordinating committee meeting after new government appointed, and also argued that this is a violation of people's right to information.	කුරුණෑගල කමිටු රැස්වීම මාධ්‍යවේදීන්ට තහනම් කරයි. Lankadeepa. Published 14th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020
6.	23 rd of September 2020.	N/A	Sri Lanka Press Council operating under the Ministry of Mass media, established under the Press Council Act No 5 of 1973 published an advertisement asking to register the newspapers which are unregistered under them. The advertisement also mentioned that legal action will be taken against the unregistered newspapers and magazines in the future. The Press Council Act offers a legal mandate to initiate legal action regarding cases of defamation. However the independence of the institution and its political alliance to the ruling government has been historically critiqued by media activists. This advertisement could be considered as an impending threat to the dissent.	Advertisement published by the Sri Lanka Press Council on 23 rd of September 2020. Lankadeepa newspaper (print).




The newspaper advertisement in Sinhala language



7.	September	North-East	<p>During remembrance events held in North and East, intelligence personnel in civil clothes standing behind journalists have recorded individual statements given to media by people, causing intimidation to people and obstruction to journalists. Police have allegedly supported intimidation by allowing this to happen despite of opposition expressed by the journalists. In a video shared by JDS Lanka, the journalists request the Police to instruct the intelligence personnel not to record the scene, while people speak to media. The journalists also told the Police when the intelligence officers record their statements, people are reluctant to speak to the media. However, the Police refused to support the journalists. So the journalists had to record the individual statements outside the venues of the events.</p>  <p><i>Tamil Journalist speaking to a police officer requested Police to intervene. Photo courtesy: JDS Lanka.</i></p>	<p>Police obstruct Tamil journalists carrying out their duty in northern Sri Lanka. JDS Lanka. Published 29th September 2020.</p>
8.	12 th Sep 2020	Hambantota	<p>A farmer who spoke to media exposing information about an illegal stone quarry located in irrigation tank's reserve area of Masakada Ara wewa in Kwantissapura, Tissamaharama has been threatened with death by the owner of the quarry. After news was telecasted, the very next day, the owner of the quarry has come to the house of the person who appeared in the video, has threatened to his wife since he was not at the house. Speaking to media, she told "an unknown person visited around 9am in the morning. I asked him of his whereabouts. So he responded saying 'my name is Sudu Mahattaya. I am the owner of the stone quarry. you've sent petitions, and spoke to media against my quarry' he said. Then he started to blame us in filthy words. 'I will not leave any one of you. I will kill even your families. I will go and find him' he threatened and then kicked into chairs [at my house] and then left ". Later the woman had made a complaint to Tissamaharama Police.</p>  <p><i>Farmer's wife speaking to media about the threats made. Photo courtesy: News First. Sirasa.</i></p>	<p>ගෙවි සංවිධාන නියෝජිතයින්ට මරණ තර්ජන. Newsfirst. Published 13th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>


Date	District	Repression of memorialization	Source
14 th Sep 2020	Jaffna	<p>The Jaffna Magistrate banned commemorative events organised in memory of Thiyagi Thileepan, former LTTE leader who died during a hunger strike in September 1987. On 14th, Police informed the court that there are risks relating to spread of COVID19 as they have received information about certain unnamed foreign citizens who were planning to attend the event. The order was made under Section 106 of the Criminal Procedure Code relating to Public Nuisance provisions. On the next day, when lawyers sought an order rescinding or altering the order pointing out the obvious absurdity in the Police's arguments, then Police has argued since Thileepan was an LTTE leader and that the commemoration was to glorify the LTTE, which could not be allowed. Court then refused to alter the order on the basis that as long as the PTA is there cannot commemorate fallen LTTE cadres.</p>  <p>நீதவான் நீதிமன்றம் யாழ்ப்பாணம் 2020.09.14</p> <p>யாழ்ப்பாண நீதிமன்ற வழக்கு இல BR 1348 PC/2020 வழக்குடன் தொடர்பான கட்டளை</p> <p>யாழ்ப்பாண பொலீஸ் நிலைய பிரதான பொலீஸ் பரிசோதகர் மூலம் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட வழக்கு தொடர்பான அறிக்கை சமர்ப்பித்து கீழ் பெயர் குறிப்பிட்ட உங்களின் 2011.08.29 திகதி இலங்கை சனநாயக சோசலிச குடியரசின் அரசு வாத்தானில் இல 1721/2020 கீழ் எட்டியுள்ள அமைப்பு இந்த நாட்டில் தடை செய்யப்பட்ட அமைப்பாக பெயர் குறித்த நிலையில் அந்த அமைப்பின் பிரசித்தமான உறுப்பினராக இருந்து 1987.09.15 திகதி ஆரம்பித்த உண்ணாவிரதத்தில் உயர் இறந்த இராசையா பார்த்திபன் அல்லது தீலிபன் என்பவரை நினைவு கூறும் விதமாக 2020.09.15 திகதியிலிருந்து யாழ்ப்பாண மாநகரசபைக்கு உட்பட்ட பிரதேசத்தில் நல்லூர் றியோ ஜஸ்கிறம் நிலையம் முன்பாக உள்ள நினைவு தாழி அருகே பொதுமக்களை அழைத்து நினைவு படுத்துவதற்கு கூட்டங்களையும் நடத்தப்போகும் போது போலீஸ்கள் நடத்த தயார்படுத்தியுள்ளதாகவும் மேலும் இந்த நிலை ஏற்கனவே தொடர்பாக வெளிநாட்டில் இருந்து அனுமதியின்றி வருகை தந்த நாங்கள் இந்த நிலை உள்நாடகம் அல்லவா வருகை தந்தவர்களில் கோலிற் 19 தெற்றுதேசம் பரவும் அபாயம் உள்ளதாக அறிக்கை சமர்ப்பித்து இந்த நினைவு கூறும் உற்சவத்தை தடை செய்யப் படி கௌரவ மன்றில் வேண்டி கோள் விடுத்துள்ளனர்.</p> <p>அதன் படி கு.த.ச.கோவை 106 பிரிவின் பிரகாரம் எனக்கு கிடைத்துள்ள அதிகாரத்தின் அடிப்படையில் நீதவான் நீதிமன்ற நிபந்தனைகளை எல்லைக்கு உட்பட்ட இடங்களின் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட நினைவேந்தல் உற்சவத்தை நடத்துதல் போது மக்களை ஒன்று கூட்டல் கூட்டங்கள் நடத்துதல் மற்றும் போனிகள் நடத்துதல் தடை செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளது என இத்தான் கட்டளை இடுகின்றேன்.</p> <p>01.(பா.அமைச்சர்) கஜேந்திர குமார் பொன்னம்பலம்- 03ம் குறுக்கு வீதி யாழ்ப்பாணம். 02.கிருஷ்ண மூர்த்தி கிருஷ்ண மேனன்- இளைஞர் அமைப்பு தலைவர் தமிழ் தேசிய மக்கள் கூட்டமைப்பு காரியாலயம் கோவில் வீதி யாழ்ப்பாணம். 03.கே.பிரகாசம்- யாழ்ப்பாண மாவட்ட இளைஞர் சங்க தலைவர் தமிழக கட்சி காரியாலயம் மார்ட்டின் வீதி யாழ்ப்பாணம். 04.இமாலேஸ் ஆனோல்ட்- நகராபதி (மேயர்) மாநகர சபை யாழ்ப்பாணம். 05.பா.அமைச்சர்-செல்வராசா கஜேந்திரன்- மணல் கரை வீதி திருநெல்வேலி யாழ்ப்பாணம். 06.சட்டத்தரணி விஸ்வலிங்கம் மணிவண்ணன்- இராபர்ட்ஸ் வீதி திருநெல்வேலி யாழ்ப்பாணம். 07. சட்டத்தரணி கணகரத்தினம் கபாலசங்கரத்தை வட்டுக்கோட்டை யாழ்ப்பாணம். 08. சட்டத்தரணி நவராசா கார்த்திகன்- பண்ணைலை டெல்லிப்பலை 09.வரதராஜா பார்த்திபன்-யாழ்ப்பாண மாநகர சபை அமைச்சர்-வீர காளி கோவில்லடி பரத்திதுறை வீதி நல்லூர் 10.ராகவன் யதூர்-மூலலை தீவு (நடைப்) பணை ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் 11.கணகரத்தினம் விஸ்வராஜ் கார்த்திகன்-கொழும்பு துறை யாழ்ப்பாணம் 12.பொன்னுரத்தினம் -தீலிபன் நினைவு கூறும் குழுவின் தலைவர்-கடிபுரம் வட்டுக்கோட்டை யாழ்ப்பாணம் 13.ஆனந்திசசிதரன்- ஈழ சுயட்சை கழக கட்சியின் தலைவி-தொல்புரம் வட்டுக்கோட்டை யாழ்ப்பாணம் 14.இராசையா ரவீசங்கர்-TNPF-கட்சியின் ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர்- திருநெல்வேலி யாழ்ப்பாணம்.</p> <p>15.எம்.கே. சிவாஜிவிங்கம்-TNP-கட்சியின் செயலாளர்- வல்வேட்டி துறை யாழ்ப்பாணம் 16.வாகு கதாசுரன்-TNPF-கட்சியின் பெண் தலைவி-தாலையடி ஒழுங்கை திருநெல்வேலி 17.ஆனந்த் நடராசர்-லீலாதேவி- வடகிழக்கு வலோந்தகரமாக கானாமல் போனவர்களின் சங்க செயலாளர்- கிளிநொச்சி 18.யோகராசா கணகரத்தினம் -வடகிழக்கு வலோந்தகரமாக கானாமல் போனவர்களின் சங்க தலைவர் 19.காளிருபன் -தாய் இழந்தோர் மக்கள் இயக்கத்தின் தலைவி-கிளிநொச்சி 20.கவிதா நிராந்தன்-சோமநாதரம் வீதி யாழ்ப்பாணம்- TNP--கட்சியின் இளைஞர் ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர்.</p> <p>நீதவான் நீதிமன்றம் யாழ்ப்பாணம் 2020.09.14</p> <p>A. Peter Paul Magistrate Magistrate's Court Jaffna</p>	<p>K. Guruparan. Tweet dated 15th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>

Copy of the court order. Photo courtesy: K. Guruparan

10. .	15 th Sep 2020	Jaffna	<p>Former Northern Provincial Councillor, M.K. Sivajilingam was arrested by the Jaffna Kopay Police for holding a memorial service for LTTE leader, Thyaga Theepan who died in a hunger strike in 1987. On previous day, Jaffna Magistrate's Court had issued an order banning any sort of memorial events in connection to Thileepan. 15th September marks the 33rd death anniversary of Thileepan, a former LTTE leader who died fasting in front of the Nallur Kovil in Jaffna, opposing the settlement of Sinhalese in the North and demanding the Indian Government initiate negotiations with the LTTE. He was charged with contempt of court. He was granted bail on the next day.</p>  <p><i>Sivajilingam was granted bail on the next day. Photo courtesy: Hiru News</i></p>	<p>M.K. Sivajilingam arrested by Kopay Police for holding memorial service for LTTE leader.</p> <p>Ceylon Today. Published 15th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
11. .	16 th Sep 2020	Vavuniya	<p>Police had denied permission for commemoration march to remember a former LTTE leader Thileepan who died in a hunger strike in 1987. An organizer of the event: Prabhakaran Janujan, a Tamil National People's Front (TNPf) member of the Vavuniya Municipal Council said that Vavuniya Police have denied permission for an event that was to be held in Vavuniya. He has further stated that several arrangements had been made for the commemoration including a march to take place from Vavuniya to Nallur, when the Senior Superintendent of Police reaffirmed that permission could not be granted for the event and presented a ban against the event issued by the Jaffna district court.</p>	<p>Sri Lankan police crackdown on remembrance of Thileepan.</p> <p>Tamil Guardian. Published 16th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
12. .	17 th Sep 2020	Batticaloa	<p>Police have summoned the Batticaloa Organiser of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPf) over attempts to commemorate the anniversary of Thileepan's fast unto death, as the security forces continue their crackdown across the North and East. A tweet issued by TNPf said that Dharmaratnam Suresh has been summoned by police for questioning.</p>	<p>Tamil National People's Front @TnpfOrg Tweet published 17th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p>

13. .	23 rd Sep 2020	Ampara	The Sammanthurai Magistrate issued an injunction prohibiting the holding of the Memorial Day meeting and procession for Thileepan, a late leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who died in a hunger strike. The Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the Sammanthurai Police, K.D.S. Jayalath had submitted a petition to the Sammanthurai Magistrate's Court seeking an injunction on Karaitivu Pradeshiya Sabha Chairman K. Jeyacyril, who had allegedly taken steps to hold the commemorative event for "a leader of a banned terrorist movement". The OIC had indicated, in his petition, the inconvenience that could be caused to the general public in the event the meeting and procession was held and the damages that could be caused to property too. Subsequently the Sammanthurai Magistrate has issued an injunction holding that this proposed memorial meeting and procession is illegal.	Court bars Thileepan Memorial. Ceylon Today. published 23 rd September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.
14. .	25 th Sep 2020	Jaffna	The Point Pedro Magistrate Court issued a court order against attempts by Tamil political parties and civil society groups to conduct a token fast in view of commemorating Thileepan, a LTTE leader who passed away in 1987 following a fast-unto death campaign. Complaint has been made by the Valvettithurai Police station. Citing the Penal Code Provisions No 106, the Court issued an order not to conduct any such events within the areas of Vadamarachchi North, Valvettithurai and Thondamanaru for next fourteen days. Earlier, Tamil political parties and civil society groups had decided to hold the token fast at the Chelvasannity Murugan Kovil, Thondamanaaru to commemorate late Thileepan after Jaffna Magistrate Court issued a similar order against any commemoration events in Jaffna.	Point Pedro Magistrate Courts issue order against token fast to commemorate Thileepan. Sunday Times. Published 25 th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.
15. .	28 th Sep 2020	North East	Police has obtained a 14-day court order banning all protests, hartals in North and Eastern Provinces in commemoration of any LTTE member according to Daily News government news website. A hartal was launched in the North- East on 28th condemning the Government's actions preventing the commemoration of those killed during the war. Tamil National Alliance member Selvam Adaikalanadan has told the Colombo Gazette that the hartal was initiated by five key political parties, including the Tamil National Alliance, Tamil People's National Alliance, All Ceylon Tamil Congress, and Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, and several other organizations to protest against the Government's various attempts to prohibit the rights of Tamils.	Police obtain 14-day court order banning all protests, hartals. Daily News. Published 29 th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.

16. .	28 th Sep 2020	North East	<p>Military and Police have intimidated shop owners in an attempt to break the hartal organized across North and East. In Achuveli area in Jaffna, military and Police have threatened shop owners demanding to reopen the shops according to Nirosh, a member of the Vali East Pradeshiya Sabha. He further told the media that he has been also threatened by the military, when he spoke to the shop owners. "When the deputy governor and I went and talked to the shop owners, they said they had been threatened by the police and military investigators to open the shops themselves. Army dignitaries who arrived in a Pajero-type vehicle disrupted the front and rear of my vehicle several times and took videos in front of Achuveli Central College" Nirosh has told to Tamil Guardian.</p>   <p><i>Police seen entering Vavuniya's Bazar and ordering for stores to be reopened using loudspeakers. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian</i></p>	<p>Sri Lankan police attempt to break hartal by forcing shops to open.</p> <p>Tamil Guardian. Published 28th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
17. .	25 th Sep 2020	Jaffna	<p>Police has blocked the entrance of university students into the university of Jaffna, when a group of students clad in black dresses visited the University in attempt to commemorate Thileepan inside university premises. Police had informed the concerned students to adhere to the restrictions imposed as per the court order. In reply, the students have argued that they have the right to wear any coloured dress to visit the site and have continued to hold the commemoration event near the memorial built in the University grounds in honour of those who died during the war.</p>	<p>යාපනය සරසවි සිසුන් හා පොලිසිය අතර ගැටුමක්.</p> <p>Lankadeepa. Published 25th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>


	Date	District	Repression of civil society	Source
18.	26 th Sep 2020	N/A	<p>Director of National Secretariat of NGOs Raja Gunaratne has told Sunday Observer, and Silumina government owned newspapers that "some NGOs pose a serious threat to national security, spreading extremist ideologies. And discussions are underway to draft a new Act to overcome these drawbacks." The news also mentioned that "it has been reported that of Rs. 50,000 million received by local NGOs, a large amount has been spent on anti-national activities and disseminating extremism in the country. The largest slice of foreign largesse has been channelled into the country via 280 NGOs." Raja Gunaratne also alleged that only 20% of funding has been spent by NGOs on project activities, while 80% has been spent on their personal budgets.</p>  <p><i>Raja Gunaratne was appointed as the Director of NGO Secretariat in April, 2020.</i></p>	<p>New laws for NGOs on the cards. Sunday Observer. Published 27th September 2020.</p>
19.	19 th Sep 2020	N/A	<p>Divaina newspaper publishing a news article alleged that Global Tamil Forum (GTF); British Tamil Forum (BTF); National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT); Tamil Youth Organization (TYO); World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC); Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC); Australian Tamil Congress (ATC); Tamil National Council (TNC) have been raising funds from Tamil diaspora in order to revive LTTE. The news article also said that this occurred as a result of the former government's decision to delist these organizations from the list of individuals and organizations linked to terrorism by previous government.</p>	<p>යහපාලනයෙන් තහනම් ඉවත්වූ කොටි හිතවාදී සංවිධාන 8 ක් අරමුදල් එකතු කරයි. Divaina. Published 19th September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
20.	23 rd Sep 2020	Colombo	<p>During the court hearing in Fort magistrate court against Human Rights activist Hejaaz hizbullah who is currently under the arrest, CID accused that well known charity organization Qatar Charity is a "terrorist funding entity" and had been listed as a terror network. Deepani Menike, appearing on behalf of the CID said that offences related to receiving funding from terror organizations and the Money</p>	<p>Hejaaz Hizbullah arrest: "Qatar Charity" accounts frozen. FT. Published 24th</p>

			<p>Laundering Act are being investigated. The CID said the organization ‘Qatar Charity’ had funded to construct a building for Save the Pearls, and therefore they were investigating the charity arm. The counsel representing Mr. Hizbullah told court that a simple search on Google would have cleared any ambiguity as to what “Qatar Charity” was. He said the Charity works closely with the Sri Lankan government, the United Nations and UNICEF and many other international organizations. The counsel said that ‘Qatar Charity’ is the main charitable arm of the Emir of Qatar and that even during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Sri Lankan Embassy in Doha worked closely with “Qatar Charity”. In 2018, Qatar Charity declared the opening of its office in Sri Lanka in an event held in Colombo which was attended by several prominent Sri Lankan figures including current Opposition leader and other politicians, Arab diplomats and representatives of national and international organizations.</p>  <p><i>In 2018, current Opposition leader and then ministers of Sri Lankan government, Qatar’s Ambassador to Colombo, Rashid bin Shafi Al Marri, and other officials took part at the opening event of Qatar Charity office in Sri Lanka. Photo Courtesy: The Peninsula. Qatar Newspaper</i></p>	<p>September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>
21.	9/30/2020	Mullaitivu	<p>As preparations were being made for the Children’s day protest the night before (September 30th), two military officials threatened the head of the Mullaitivu Missing Persons' Association, Mariyasuresh Easwary at her house and demanded information about the protest.</p>	<p>More threats from Sri Lankan army to Tamil families of the disappeared. Tamil Guardian. Published 2nd Oct. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020</p>



	Date	District	Repression of State officials	Source
22. .	9 th Sep 2020	Kalutara	Four individuals including three females have been arrested over the assault on several police officers in Atalugama, Bandaragama. This has occurred when a team of officers from Bandaragama Police had carried out a raid at a house in Marawa, Atalugama based on information received that a cannabis racket was operating from the said house. Two Sub-Inspectors, a Woman Police Sergeant and a Woman Police Constable were reportedly injured in the attack.	Four arrested over assault on police officers in Atalugama. Ada Derana. Published 9 th September. Last accessed 25 th October 2020
23. .	20 th Sep 2020	Kalutara	A person attempted to escape from Police arrest, while trying to attack with a knife was arrested by Bandaragama Police.	පොලීස් නිලධාරීන්ට පිහියකින් ඇත පලායාමට නැත් කළ අයෙක් අත්අඩංගුවට. Lankadeepa. Published 20 th Sep. Last accessed 25 th Oct 2020.
24.	23 rd Sep 2020	Colombo	A drunken driver has assaulted a Police officer on traffic duty when the officer has attempted to arrest the person. The incident occurred in Padukka divisional secretariat area in Colombo District. The victim has been hospitalized at Padukka hospital following the assault. The suspect has been arrested and produced before the Homagama magistrate.	සුර්ව යතුරුපැදිකරු නවතන යද්දී ටැඹික් රාළහාමිට පහර දීලා. Lankadeepa (print). Page 1 section 2. City edition. Published 25 th Sep. 2020.



Photo: the newspaper report on the incident.



25.	Around 4 th Sep 2020 and 21 st Sep 2020	Colombo	<p>Assistant Police Superintendent Anura Ranasinghe, Parliament Police OIC K.L. Liyanage and two other Police officers worked at Parliament premises have been transferred for allegedly causing inconvenience to a VIP by checking their baggage, while entering into the parliament premises.</p>  <p><i>Photo: the newspaper report on the incident.</i></p>	<p>වී.අයි.පී. අමුත්තාගේ ගමන් මල්ල සෝදියි කළ පොලිසියේ 3 කට මාරුවීම්. Lankadeepa. Published 4th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p> <p>ප්‍රභූ ගමන් බැගය පිරික්සූ සිද්ධියේ ඒ.එස්.පී. ත්‍රි'බලවේ මාරු කරයි. Lankadeepa (print). Page 1 and page 6. Published 21st Sep 2020.</p>
26.	18 th September	N/A	<p>Retired intelligence officer Ranbanda – a key witness of journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda abduction case, Aiyasami Balasubramaniam⁴³ and S.M. Ravindra Rupasinghe two accused of the same case provided statements before the PCol on Political Victimization, that they had been threatened by then director of Criminal Investigation Department Shani Abesekera and other officers in the CID to provide false statements. While the PCol hearing and the legal case pertaining to the alleged abduction of journalist Ekneligoda are still ongoing, the overall trend might discourage investigation officials from undertaking controversial legal cases in which politicians and military personnel have been involved.</p>	<p>ශානිලාගේ බලපෑම් නිසා උසාවියට බොරු කිව්වා... යුද හමුදා විශේෂාමක බුද්ධි නිලධාරියා ජනපති කොමිසමේදී කියයි. Divaina. 19th September 2020.</p> <p>ගෝඨාඨ විරුද්ධව සාක්ෂි දෙනවානම් වරප්‍රසාද දෙන්න ශානි පොරොන්දු වුණා. Lankadeepa. 18th September 2020.</p>
27. .	21 st Sep 2020	batticaloa	<p>Controversial monk Venerable Ampitiye Sumanarathana Thero has threatened officials of the Department of Archaeology in the presence of the media saying their delay to demarcate an archeological land has resulted in part of the land being acquired for cultivation. He also physically assaulted the officials, and forcefully kept them inside a hut threatening them with death demanding not to leave until they bring their senior. “Tell your superior to come or I will take this pole and kill you,” said Sumanarathana Thero. The Police later arrived at the location but the monk refused to allow officials of the</p>	<p>Batticaloa monk threatens Govt. officials (Video). Sri Lanka Mirror. Published 22nd September 2020. Last accessed 25th October 2020.</p>


⁴³ [ගෝඨාඨ විරුද්ධව සාක්ෂි දෙනවානම් වරප්‍රසාද දෙන්න ශානි පොරොන්දු වුණා.](#) Lankadeepa. 18th September 2020.

			<p>Department of Archaeology to leave the area. The Police informed the monk that the Department of Archaeology was following the advise of the Attorney General. However, the monk rebuked the Attorney General saying he has no right to give directions on matters related to archaeology. The monk has in the past threatened officials and members of other religions.</p>   <p>The monk threatened at the archelogy officials. Photo courtesy: Newsfirst</p>	
28. .	25 th Sep 2020	N/A	<p>President Gotabaya Rajapaksa asked the state officials to treat all his verbal orders as circulars to be implemented. “Those who neglect this will face stern action” President also said. He made this statement during a discussion with Villagers at Velanwita village in Haldummulla, Badulla. Later he also issued a statement through the official President's website. Asking to consider a verbal order as a circular could have detrimental effects on freedom of dissent. A verbal order could be unrecorded, and sometimes could contravene with the existing laws, policies and other measures. Subsequently, a state official may not be able to criticize, discuss, or review legality of such orders. Also they may have lack of proof whether that was said or not by the President, creating other issues.</p>	<p>Make people living is a battle, I undertake the responsibility of winning it- President says at inaugural "Discussion with Villagers" in Haldummulla. Official website of the President. Published 25th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>

	Date	District	Legal, Policy, institutional actions	Source
29. .	2 nd Sep 2020	N/A	<p>The 20th Amendment to the Constitution Bill (“proposed Amendment”) was published in the Gazette Supplement dated 2nd September 2020. This removes many positive changes introduced to constitution in 2015, and reintroduces much of what was in place under the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, in 2010. 19th Amendment sought to reduce the powers of the Executive President, and make him/her more accountable to Parliament and the Courts, and also improved the independence of several commissions, by, among other things, depoliticizing the process of appointing members. Under 20th Amendment, members to the independent commissions, and other key positions will be appointed by the President, leading to more politicization, since it is not mandatory to consider the proposals by constitutional council. The President will be able to appoint an unlimited number of Ministers and Deputy Ministers, and replace the Prime Minister at his own will which current constitution restricts. It will also affect the law making process by reducing the time period during which the public has access to Bills before they are passed, and reintroduces the urgent Bill process. Current constitution does not allow to challenge existing laws after they were passed by the Parliament. Hence introduction of twentieth amendment could have number of negative impact on the freedom of dissent. Government and opposition politicians, civil society, media organizations, clergy, academics and many others have expressed their disagreement with the proposed amendment and also some have filed fundamental rights petitions against the 20th amendment. It also weakens the transparency of audit, procurement, and anti-bribery functions in Sri Lanka.</p>	<p>20th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution. Gazette supplement. Issued on 2nd Sept. GoSL. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p> <p>Sri Lanka's Media freedom will be threatened by proposed 20th Amendment – FMM. Economy Next. Published 17th Sept. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p> <p>A brief Q and A on the Proposed 20th Amendment to the Constitution. Centre for Policy Alternative. Published 17th Sept. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p> <p>Other links statements from religious leaders 1, 2, lawyers- 3, 4</p>
30. .	7 th Sep 2020	N/A	<p>Speaking at a public event, Minister of Justice Ali Sabry asked "can we eat commissions? What's the use of them if they cannot reduce the number of crimes" referring to independent commissions established under 19th Amendment. In a context, where 20th amendment has been attempting to politicize the way independent commissions are functioning, this statement coming from the Minister of justice could be seen as a possible threat against independent commissions for their possible dissolution or making them inactive. Functioning of independent commissions such as National Human Rights Commission, Police Commission and Right to Information commission are important for the protection of democracy, freedom of dissent and other rights.</p>	<p>කොමිෂන් කන්හද? මොකටද කොමිෂන් ? අලි සබ්බි ජර්ශන කරයි. Swarnawahini. Published 7th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>

31.	22nd Sep 2020	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 2194-12 . GoSL. Published 22 nd September. Last accessed 25 th October 2020.
32.	28 th Sep 2020	N/A	Presidential Secretariat issued a statement saying "A fake news campaign that alleges unprecedented environmental destruction is taking place since the present government came into power has now been identified. The government has decided to take stern legal action against the parties or individuals who intentionally feed misinformation and mislead the public abusing various forms of media." The statement also said "Fake news about environmental destruction being disseminated especially on social media platforms and in some print, television and radio media. Once the news published in this manner proved to be untrue, they are removed from social media. Subsequently, yet another false report is created and published. Opposition forces and their supporters are giving a wide publicity for such fake news. Fabricated news is being exaggerated during their meetings, news briefings and interviews". The statement highlighted an incident of alleged deforestation in Ihalathalawa tank in Anuradhapura of the Mahaweli H Zone, where government has obtained necessary approvals before cutting down some trees. However there were number of incidents of deforestation reported from different areas which were verified by environmentalists, along with other evidence. Hence this generalized statement seemed as a threat of legal action against those who criticize widespread deforestation and report incidents of deforestation.	Press Release: Fake news campaign alleging environmental destruction exposed . Presidential Secretariat. Published 28 th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25 th October 2020.
33.	September	N/A	Defence Secretary Kamal Gunaratne has told that the Ministry of Defence had assured the University Grants Commission (UGC) that the SIS and "other state Intelligence agencies" would be provided to help end ragging in the universities. "We need to keep away groups involved in ragging as it is disrupting educational activities," he has further told. UGC Chairman Sampath Amaratunga has told the Sunday Times that state university vice chancellors were also consulted on measures to be taken on eliminating ragging and they agreed on seeking the help of the SIS. "We do not have a network to find those responsible or involved in ragging in universities despite introducing various measures for the victims to inform the authorities about persons involved in ragging," he said. Prof. Amaratunga said that under the arrangement security marshals would coordinate with the intelligence services by sharing information and arrest offenders with the help of the police. "The Anti-Ragging Act is strong and action can be initiated under it," he added. The UGC chairman said these steps were being implemented at a time when the universities were trying to expand their services by increasing the student intake. However, INFORM believes that this action could have strong negative impact on the freedom of dissent inside university premises, could weaken both activism of students and university teachers, and academic freedom.	SIS called in to end ragging in universities . Sunday Times. Published 13 th September 2020. Last accessed 25 th October 2020.

	Date	District	Other incidents	Source
34.	24 th Sep 2020	N/A	<p>Speaker of the Parliament denied the opportunity of raising a question about Thileepan commemoration at the parliament for leader of AITC, MP G.G. Ponnambalam. Explaining about his ruling the speaker said "it has been brought to my notice and also it is self-explanatory in paragraph 3 of the Question intended to be raised by him that it is a matter which is under adjudication by a Court of Law." MP Ponnambalam raised a point of order saying that the question is not about a matter adjudication by a court of law, that the hearing of the case has been already concluded. However, the speaker did not allow the MP to raise the question.</p>  <p><i>Lankadeepa news report on the incident.</i></p>	<p>ගජේන්ද්‍රගේ ප්‍රශ්නයකට කතානායක ඉඩ නොදී මැති කඩේ දැඩි උණුසුමක් Lankadeepa newspaper (print) dated 26th Sep 2020. page 8.</p> <p>Parliament Hanzard. Dated 24th Sep 2020. Last accessed 25th Oct 2020.</p>
35.	25 th Sep 2020	Puttalam	<p>A villager who informed Police regarding a group of people involved with cannabis trade was attacked. The victim was 48 years old man named Sagara Silva living in Kanthoduwawa in Mandurankiuliya. He was hospitalized following the attack. The village organized a protest against the incident.</p>  <p><i>Victim at the hospital. Photo courtesy: Lankadeepa</i></p>	<p>මන්ද්‍රවිය ජාවාරම්කරුවෝ ඔන්‍රකරුට පහර දෙයි. Lankadeepa. Published 25th September. Last accessed 25th October 2020</p>

36.	8 th Sept 2020	Matale	Vice President of Ukuwela Pradeshiya Sabha in Matale District, Abdul Nizar (UNP) has been assaulted. The incident occurred when a resident in the area has been informing him of a sand mining incident in Warakamura, in Ukuwela area. A party involved with sand mining has also arrived there, argued with Nizar, and assaulted him.	ලකදේප්ප් ජර්. සභාවේ උප සභාපතිට පහර දෙයි. Lankadeepa. Published 8 th September 2020.
37.	Sept 2020	Colombo	Government controlled print media institution, Lakehouse has interdicted four journalists just for simple typographical error (one letter) in writing President Gotabaya's name ගෝඨාභය as ගෝඨාබය. Though this incident seems as a disciplinary action taken against the journalists, the action taken against them seems excessive and beyond reasonable extent. Also interdiction of journalists for a typographical error concerning President's name could create fear among journalists to impose a self-censorship in writing content critical of government or President.	Tweet. Sunanda Deshapriya. Published September 2020.
38.	Sept 2020	N/A	<p>The Committee on High Posts of the Sri Lankan Parliament has approved the appointments of 08 diplomats including former alleged death squad member C. A. Chandraprema as Sri Lanka's permanent representative to the United Nations. When his name was proposed in February, the civil society activists publicly campaigned against his appointment. As highlighted in a dossier compiled by ITJP and JDS Lanka, Chandraprema has allegedly been a key member of an armed group that worked with government of Sri Lanka during the late eighties to brutally suppress a left-wing youth uprising. The death squad is believed to have been responsible for the deaths of hundreds of people, including activists, journalists, and children. Chandraprema has been personally involved in the alleged assassination of three human rights lawyers. The civil society activists pointed out forcing human rights activists, survivors, families of victims to deal with a person with such a record of human rights abuses bring fear and intimidation, while it is also questionable in terms of accountability.</p>  <p><i>Chandraprema presenting his book entitled 'Gota's War' to the Rajapaksa brothers Photo Courtesy Business Today</i></p>	<p>High Posts Committee approves appointment of 08 new diplomats. News First. Published 25th Sep 2020.</p> <p>Help stop a former death squad member from becoming Sri Lanka's next ambassador to the UN. Sri Lanka Campaign. Published 5th February 2020.</p>

List of Acronyms and Key Terms

- 20th Amendment: [The 20th Amendment \(20A\)](#) to the Constitution of Sri Lanka was passed on 22 October 2020. The proposed 20th Amendment was [published in the Gazette Supplement](#) dated 2nd September 2020. It sought to revoke some of the progressive changes introduced through the [Nineteenth Amendment](#) to the Constitution in 2015, and to reintroduce much of what was in place under the [Eighteenth Amendment](#) to the Constitution, in 2010. 19th Amendment introduced in 2015 reduced the powers of the Executive President, and made him/her more accountable to Parliament and the Courts, and attempted to improve the independence of several commissions, by, among other things, depoliticizing the process of appointing members. Many human rights activists, journalists, clergy, lawyers and opposition politicians saw passing 20th Amendment as detrimental to democracy and human rights in Sri Lanka.
- 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
- ASP: Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP)
- 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.
- COPE : Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) is a Financial Committee in the Parliament which consists of twelve members examining the accounts of the Public Corporations and of any other institution belonging to the Government. It has the power to summon any officials before them and question any person, call for and examine any paper, book, record or other documents and to have access to stores and property.
- 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.
- DS: Divisional Secretariat. The districts of Sri Lanka are divided into administrative sub-units known as *divisional secretariats*. These were originally based on the feudal counties, the *korales* and *ratas*. They are headed by a Divisional Secretary. The DS areas are further divided into GN areas.
- GoSL: Government of Sri Lanka
- GN: Grama Niladhari also called Grama Sevaka (GS) or village officer is a Sri Lankan public official appointed by the central government to carry out administrative duties in a Grama Niladhari division – the smallest geographical administrative unit in the country. The duties of a Grama Niladhari include the reporting of issuing of permits, gathering statistics, maintaining the voter registry and keeping the peace by settlement of personal disputes, coordination and providing various welfare and other government related services at the village level acting as the primary agent of the government.
- 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.
- ITJP:** The International Truth and Justice Project - Sri Lanka (ITJP) is administered by the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa under the guidance of transitional justice expert Yasmin Sooka. ITJP both collects and stores evidence for any future credible justice process but also intervenes where we can to assist victim communities in Sri Lanka in seeking accountability.
- 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.
- 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
- 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.
- OIC:** Officer-in-Charge of a Police station
- Pradeshiya Sabha:** Pradeshiya Sabhas are a type of legislative bodies under local government system of Sri Lanka. Local government bodies are usually divided into three types as (1) Municipal councils (2) Urban Councils and (3) Pradeshiya Sabhas. Their members are elected in the local government election. Local government is the third and lowest level of government in Sri Lanka – after the central government and provincial councils. They are known as local authorities responsible for providing a variety of local public services including roads, sanitation, drains, housing, libraries, public parks and recreational facilities at local government level.
- PTA:** Prevention of Terrorism Act is a draconian law often used to arbitrarily arrest and detain persons of ethnic minorities, journalists and human rights defenders. It provides the police with broad powers to search, arrest, and detain suspects. PTA was first enacted in 1978.
- SI** : Sub-Inspector of Police
- SJB** : Samagi Jana Balawegaya (English: "Peace — People's Power") is a political alliance that is led by current Opposition leader of Sri Lanka Sajith Premadasa. A fraction of former ruling party United National Party (UNP), Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU), Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and the Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) are the major political parties in the alliance. Though UNP contested as a separate party in the last election, a large fraction of UNP members included in the SJB.
- 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.

- Thileepan: Rasaiah Parthipan (29 November 1963 – 26 September 1987) alias Thileepan was a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a separatist Tamil militant organisation in Sri Lanka. He died during a hunger strike demanding to release of political prisoners, withdrawal of police, military personnel and other demands concerning North and Eastern Provinces. Thileepan's death resulted in large anti-government and anti-Indian protests in northern 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.
- UGC: The University Grants Commission (UGC) is the apex body of the University System in Sri Lanka which was established on 22nd December 1978 under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. The functions of the UGC are; planning and coordination of university education, allocation of funds to Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), maintenance of academic standards, regulation of the administration of HEIs and regulation of admission of students to HEIs.
- 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.
- 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.