

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

1st July -31st September 2021



31 protestors including trade unionists, and education activists were arrested during the protest held against the draft Kotelawala Defense University Bill on 8th of July, 2021. Arrested protestors were dragged into Police vehicles, and later they were forcibly quarantined despite the court granting them bail. Photo Courtesy: Lalith Perera

INFORM

Human Rights Documentation Centre

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Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka in July-September 2021.

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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.

Contents

1. Methodology	4
2. Context	5
3. Case updates	8
4. Statistical Analysis	10
5. Summary of incidents	14
5.1 Repression of journalists, Mass Media and Social Media	14
5.2 Repression of Whistleblowers, activists, and civil society	17
5.3 Repression of Freedom of Assembly	19
5.4 Repression of State officials	23
5.5 Other incidents	25
6. List of incidents	26
Repression of journalists, Mass Media and Social Media	26
Repression of Whistleblowers, activists, and civil society	35
Repression of Freedom of Assembly	40
Repression of other State officials	50
Other incidents	53

Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka

July - September 2021

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 months of July to September 2021.

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 83 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 the human rights situation in Sri Lanka during the month. Section 3 provides updates about ongoing legal cases related to dissent. Section 4 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. Section 5 provides a thematic summaries of the incidents described in the report. This month’s report is organized under 5 themes: (5.1) Repression of journalists, Mass Media and Social Media, (5.2) Repression of Whistleblowers, activists, and civil society, (5.3) Repression of Freedom of Assembly (5.4) Repression of other State officials and (5.5) Other incidents. Section 6 includes the list of incidents presented in a table, with a brief description about each incident.

2. Context

Legal and policy changes: Sri Lanka relaxed two months long travel restrictions on 10th July, while inter-provincial travel restrictions continued throughout the period.¹ On 20th August Sri Lanka announced another nationwide lockdown due to the increasing number of covid-19 cases. The lockdown was lifted on 1st October. On 30th August, Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency under the pretext of Covid19 and need to control rising food prices. Declaration of state of emergency provides wide powers to the President with limited checks and balances. Freedom of dissent could be easily at stake in the context of a state of emergency.

In June, the Kotelawala Defence University Bill was presented to the parliament² and it was approved by the parliamentary Consultative Committee on Defence in July³. It was subjected to much criticism as opposition political parties and activists alleged it as an attempt to militarize education, and end the free education system. Number of protests were organized against the bill. The protests were organized against the bill.

In July Sri Lankan teachers launched an online strike and withdrew themselves from online teaching demanding to solve their salary anomalies in addition to physical protests they organized country wide. Online communications became more important in the covid19 context. Sri Lanka also said that they are introducing the Cybersecurity Bill and the Cyber Defence Command Bill soon.⁴

Changes in party politics: On 6th July, Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) MP Jayantha Ketagoda resigned from his position as a national list MP allowing the fourth member of the Rajapaksa family to enter into Parliament⁵. Basil Rajapaksa was disqualified to compete in the previous parliamentary election as he was a dual citizen. However, the 20th amendment passed in Parliament in October 2020 now allows dual citizens to become members of parliament. On 8th of July, Basil Rajapaksa was sworn in both as a MP and the Finance Minister of the Country.

Acquittal of suspects: Accused in several high profile corruption cases were acquitted as the Attorney General decided to withdraw the cases. On 2nd July, all the remaining six suspects including ex-Chairman of the Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation (SLLDC), Prasad Harshan de Silva, Badra Kamaladasa, Sudammika Atigalla, Saman Galappaththi, M. Mahinda Saliya and Srimathi Senadeera were acquitted from the alleged misappropriation of public funds in the D.A. Rajapaksa Museum case. The case was filed against Gotabaya Rajapaksa and several others over an allegation that the D.A.Rajapaksa Museum and Memorial in Medamulana was built using public funds amounting to Rs.33.9 million. In November 2019, President Rajapaksa was released due to Presidential immunity. As the Deputy Solicitor General Dileepa Pieris appearing on behalf of the Attorney General informed court that he would not be conducting evidence on the charges filed against the accused under the

¹ [Travel restrictions further relaxed, inter-provincial travel restrictions extended](#). Colombo Page. Published 10th July 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

² [Kotelawala Defence University Bill](#). Sri Lanka Parliament. Published 8th June 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

³ [Consultative Committee on Defence approves General Sir John Kotelawala National Defence University Bill](#). Sri Lanka Parliament. Published 6th July 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

⁴ [SL nears enacting Cybersecurity Bill as country gets more digitally connected](#). Daily Mirror. Published 30th Sep 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

⁵ [Sri Lanka ruling party national list MP vacates seat to make way for Basil Rajapaksa](#). Economy Next. Published 6th July 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

powers vested in the Attorney General under Section 194 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code, the bench ordered suspects to be released⁶. On 27th July, The Colombo High Court released Avant-Garde Chairman Nissanka Yapa Senadhipathi and former Chairman of Rakna Lanka, Major General (Retired) Palitha Fernando from the Avant-Garde bribery case. Bribery Commission's Assistant Director General Thushari Jayaratne appearing for the Bribery Commission informed the court that the Bribery Commission had decided to withdraw the case due to technical weaknesses in the case⁷. On 30th July 2021, former Petroleum Industries Deputy Minister and former Chairman of Development Lotteries Board (DLB) Sarana Gunawardena was released from eight cases filed by the Bribery Commission as the Assistant Director of the Bribery Commission Asitha Anthony told the court that the cases were filed against the Ex-Deputy Minister without the written approval from the three commissioners and therefore an issue had arisen with regard to proceeding with the case. The case was filed against him for causing losses to the state by leasing vehicles to the Development Lotteries Board while he was the Chairman in 2007 without following the proper tender procedure.⁸ Similarly Former Laksala chairman Anil Koswatte and four others were also acquitted from a bribery case⁹.



Protesting Prisoners on the roof of Welikada prison demanding to reduce long term sentences under the systematic implementation of the Prisoner review system. Photo Courtesy: Daily Mirror

Rights of Prisoners: In September, death row prison inmates of Welikada Prison started a protest demanding systematic implementation of the prisoner review system once in four years as per the prison ordinance, based on which convicted prisoners can get relief for their sentences, such as conversion of death sentences to life sentences and life sentences to 20 years. A similar protest was previously conducted in June. 48th session of the Human Rights Council from 13th September to 11th of October. Updates on Sri Lanka's human rights situation were discussed at the sessions. On 12th

⁶ [Payment made: Accused in D.A. Rajapaksa Museum case released](#). Daily News. Published 3rd July 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

⁷ [Nissanka Senadhipathi, Palitha Fernando released from Avant-Garde case](#). Daily News. Published 27th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

⁸ [Court orders to release Sarana Gunawardena from 08 cases](#). Newsfirst. Published 30th July 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

⁹ [Former Laksala chairman Anil Koswatte and four others acquitted from the bribery case](#). LankaNewsweb. Published 4th Aug 2021. Last Accessed 15th Nov 2021.

September, the State Minister of Prison Management and Prisoners' Rehabilitation Lohan Ratwatte allegedly threatened the Tamil prisoners in Anuradhapura prison at gunpoint and forced them to kneel down. Amidst huge public outcry and local and international pressure, the state minister was forced to resign from his position of Prisons Minister personally acknowledging his responsibility for the incidents to the President,¹⁰ though he continued as the Minister Of Gem And Jewellery Related Industries. Ratwatte was previously charged for the 2001 murder of 10 Muslim youths in Udathalawinna. Along with his father, a former deputy Defense Minister, Lohan Ratwatte was acquitted of all charges by the Colombo High Court in 2006, while 5 of their security guards were convicted and sentenced to death¹¹. Later eight prisoners filed a Fundamental Rights petition against the Minister and they were granted an interim order to be transferred into another suitable prison in October¹². On 22nd Of September, the Committee for Protecting Rights of Prisoners submitted a letter to the United Nations explaining a number of issues faced by Sri Lankan prisoners.¹³ Meanwhile Sri Lankan Opposition leader also advocated for death penalty for terrorists and drug traffickers¹⁴.

Number of protests and public gatherings were controlled using court orders and other measures. Police also used physical force and covid19 context, health guidelines and quarantine laws were misused to control dissent. In September a court order was issued against a dead politician preventing him from organizing a remembrance event.¹⁵ This shows the extent of how carelessly these court orders were issued against individuals, and civil society activists.

¹⁰ [State Minister Lohan Ratwatte tenders his resignation](#). President of Sri Lanka official Website. Published 15th September 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

¹¹ [Minister accused of holding Tamil prisoners at gunpoint must face investigation](#). Amnesty. Published on 15th Sept 2021. Last accessed 13th November 2021.

¹² [SC allows Anuradhapura prisoners to be transferred](#). Daily News. Published 22nd Oct 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

¹³ [CPRP writes to UN: Situation of prisons in Sri Lanka and matters needed urgent attention](#). Sri Lanka Brief. Published 23rd Sept 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

¹⁴ [Sri Lanka opp. leader wants death penalty for terrorists, drug traffickers](#). EconomyNext. Published 23rd Sep 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.

¹⁵ [Sri Lanka Police serve court order to dead politician](#). Newswire. Published 28th Sep 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

3. Case updates

Disappearance of Journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda: Wife of disappeared journalist and activist Sandya Ekneligoda received a strange letter dated 4th of August from the Office of Missing Persons (OMP) asking her to submit further information regarding the disappearance of her husband as the information available to the OMP is not sufficient to search about the case. The disappearance of her husband journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda is well known both locally and internationally. Sandya Ekneligoda in response to the letter has written to the OMP stating that Upali Abeyratne current chairperson of OMP in the capacity of former chairperson of Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) on Political Victimization had pressured and influenced witnesses, and recommended the accused of the court cases on the disappearance of Prageeth Ekneligoda to be released, and investigating officers to be punished¹⁶.

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கால் மீதம்,
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3rd Floor,
No. 408,
Galle Road,
Colombo 3

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The Office on Missing Persons (OMP) is a permanent institution established under the Office on Missing Persons
(Establishment, Administration and Discharge of Functions) Act, No. 14 of 2016
General Telephone No: 011-2301685 Fax: 011 2301921 E-mail: omp.sri.lanka@gmail.com

Letter sent by OMP addressing to Sandya Ekneligoda. Photo Courtesy: Sri Lanka Brief.

¹⁶ ප්රශ්න අතුරුදහන්වීම ගැන සොයන්න කරුණු මිදිසි - අතුරුදහන් කොමිසමෙන් සන්ධ්‍යාට ලිපියක්. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 6th Sep 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

Arrest of Kokilan Thasan under PTA: Journalist Kokilan Thasan who was arrested in November 2020 still remains in detention. Though Kokilan's mother had made a complaint to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) in December 2020, there has been no response from the Commission for 7 months. In July 2021, the family inquired about the progress of the case from HRCSL through Attorney-at-law and activist Sanjaya Wilson Jayasekara. The letter sent by the lawyer stated "my client had only posted on his facebook wall several photographs of bereaved relatives commemorating their loved ones who lost their lives during the 26 year racist war waged by successive Sri Lankan governments since 1983



against Sri Lanka's Tamil Community in the North and East. The photographs were captioned with poetic texts expressing the grief and sentiments of those relatives who commemorated their loved ones, the victims of war.¹⁷ Following the letter, HRCSL has summoned Valaichenai Police to inquire about the progress of the case on 30th July 2021. At the inquiry conducted by the HRCSL, Valaichenai police have failed to produce any material to substantiate any reasonable grounds for the arrest and detention. Subsequently HRCSL ordered them to submit any proof for their claims of a reasonable arrest within two weeks.¹⁸ Reportedly Kokilan Thasan is still held in detention despite HRCSL's intervention.

Arrest and Detention of poet Ahnaf Jazeem: On September 7, 2021, Freedom Now [filed a petition with the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention](#) on behalf of Sri Lankan poet Ahnaf Jazeem. On 4th of August Supreme Court allowed poet Ahnaf Jazeem to have confidential access to his lawyers¹⁹.

Arrest and detention of Hejaaz Hisbullah: In June 2021, another two Fundamental Rights petitions filed on behalf of two teachers of the Al- Zuhriya Arabic College said that they were forced by the CID to implicate Hizbullah.²⁰

Threats to Chamuditha Samarawickrama: Around 6th of July, Colombo Crime Division officers questioned model Piumi Hansamali following a complaint on threats to the life of television presenter Chamuditha Samarawickrama. In June, journalist Chamuditha Samarawickrama wrote to the Inspector General of Police claiming that he received death threats after he commented regarding a party organized by a fashion designer and an actress violating the covid19 health guidelines. While no other actions taken regarding the incident were not reported, journalist Chamuditha was questioned regarding alleged 'anti-government' statements he had made (See the section on Freedom of journalists and media workers).

¹⁷ [Tweet](#). Sanjaya Wilson Jayasekera. Published 15th July 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

¹⁸ [Tweet](#). Sanjaya Wilson Jayasekera. Published 30th July 2021. Last accessed 17th Nov 2021.

¹⁹ [SC allows lawyers to access remanded Poet Ahnaf Jazeem](#). Daily Mirror. Published 4 Aug '21. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.

²⁰ [Lawyer says teachers were forced to implicate Hejaaz](#). Daily FT. Published 9th June 2021. Last accessed 14th Nov 2021.

4. Statistical Analysis

Since this report is mainly based on media reports these statistics are impacted by the media trends both in mainstream and social media. An incident sometimes included one individuals, several individuals or large groups, or legal and policy actions that could impact to general public.

Geographical coverage of the incidents

Location	Number	Percentage
Colombo (WP)	36	43%
Gampaha and Kalutara (WP)	3	4%
North and East	11	13%
Other areas	9	11%
online	4	5%
phone calls	5	6%
Not Applicable	14	17%
Not mentioned	1	1%
Total	83	100%

Table 1: Geographical distribution of the incidents

The highest percentage of incidents, 47%, were reported from the Western Province. 13% of incidents were reported from Northern and Eastern Provinces. 11% of incidents were reported from other areas. 5% of incidents were online, while another 6% were phone calls. In 17% of cases geographical location was not applicable as they were incidents such as legal and policy actions that impact more than a single geographical area.

Types of violations

Type of violation	Number	Percentage
Arrests	17	20%
Military/police questioning	14	17%
legal, intuitional and policy	9	11%
verbal threats	12	14%
physical attacks	7	8%
other problematic verbal statements	3	4%
Negative media reporting	3	4%
Surveillance	2	2%
censorship / restrictions on media	2	2%
Court orders	3	4%
Instances that the court rejected issuing orders preventing protests etc.	4	5%
visits, inspection and questioning	3	4%
Attempted abduction	1	1%
other	3	4%
Total	83	100%

Table 2: Types of violations

20% of the incidents were arrests. 17% of incidents were related to questioning and summons by Police and military. 14% were verbal threats, while 8% were physical attacks. There were also 11% of repressive legal, policy and institutional actions that could impact on the freedom to dissent. There were also other incidents relating to problematic statements to restrict freedom to dissent by politicians, negative media reporting and fake news targeting civil society, calls for censorship of media and social media, surveillance, court orders issued and requested to restrict protests, and other events often citing Covid-19 as a reason, visits to houses and offices of journalists and activists, and one incident of alleged abduction.

Confiscation of digital equipment, and online threats

Though it was not specifically mentioned in the above categorization, in 3 incidents digital equipment belonging to journalists were confiscated, while in one case Police demanded login details into social media profiles of a journalist, while interrogating him.

There are four incidents that were reported online. Two of them were related to threats made to journalists by Police and military officers through facebook comments, when they shared news they have written in their personal facebook profile. In another case, an activist was threatened through whatsapp messages after participating in a protest.

Arrests: Though the number of incidents relating to arrests were considered as 17 incidents, the actual number of arrests relating to those incidents constitutes the arrest of 132 individuals. Below is a detailed list.

Incident of the arrest	Number of persons arrested
Arrest of Journalist Keerthi Ratnayake	1
Arrest of trade unionist Ananda Palitha	1
Arrests related to the protest against the proposed KDU Bill and other arrests of student activists Wasantha Mudalige, Chameera Koswatte and Koshila Hansamali, Amila Sandeepa, Heshan Harshana	5
Drivers who transported protestors	3
Arrest of protestors in Batticaloa	18
Teachers who protested in front of Presidential Secretariat	44
Teachers protest held in Kandy	2
Protest against fertilizer import ban and fuel shortage in Akuressa	13
Protest against proposed KDU bill in Hatton	4
Protest against fertilizer import ban in Boralanda	5
Protest against KDU bill – arrest of Joseph Stalin and others	33
Arrest of Southern Provincial Councillor Ranjith Munasinghe in relation to a protest	1
Arrest of MP S. Kajendran for commemoration of Thileepan	1
Arrest of a young man for sharing a photo of Prabhakaran	1
Total number of arrests	132

Table 3: Details of the arrests

Profile of victims: In 25% of the incidents, protestors and participants of memorial events were affected. In 23% of incidents journalists were affected. In 18% of incidents state officials were affected. In 11% of incidents NGOs, civil society and activists were affected. 5% of incidents were related to the repression of student activists, while another 5% of incidents were related to the repression of opposition politicians. 2 incidents were related to trade unionists. However, the number of individuals arrested in one of these two cases was 44 individuals.

Type of victims	Number	Percentage
protestors and participants of memorial events	21	25%
Journalists	19	23%
State officials	15	18%
NGOs and civil society and activists	9	11%
Student Activists	4	5%
Trade Unionists	2	2%
lawyers	1	1%
politicians	4	5%
other	7	8%
Not applicable	1	1%
Total	83	100%

Table 4: Category of victims or activists affected by the incident

Ethnicity of the victims: 36% of incidents were related to sinhala, while 13% were related to Tamils, and 1% were related to Muslims. Sinhala are the ethnic majority in the country, while ethnic Tamils and Muslims are minorities.

Ethnicity of the victim	Number	Percentage
Sinhala	30	36%
Tamil	11	13%
Muslim	1	1%
Not Applicable	32	39%
Not mentioned	9	11%
Total	83	100%

Table 5: Ethnicity of victims or activists affected by the incident

Gender of the victims: Victims were predominantly male. In 54% of incidents, victims were male, while in 6% of incidents females were victims. In 40% of incidents, gender was not applicable as they were related to groups of individuals in which both men and women were included and legal and policy actions that could apply irrespective of gender.

Gender of the victim	Number	Percentage
Male	45	54%
Female	5	6%
Not Applicable	33	40%
Total	83	100%

Table 6: Gender of victims or activists affected by the incident

Alleged perpetrators or alleged responsible parties were mainly related to the state. In 55% of incidents, military or Police were allegedly responsible for the incident. In 10% of the cases, the President or central government was allegedly responsible. In 6% of incidents, other politicians were responsible. Drug traffickers, illegal sand miners, courts, newspapers that published disparaging articles, and others were responsible for around 30% of other incidents.

Alleged Perpetrator/ Responsible party	Number	Percentage
Military or Police	46	55%
President or central government	8	10%
Other Politicians	5	6%
Illegal Business persons	3	4%
court	3	4%
newspapers/website	3	4%
unknown	7	8%
other	8	10%
Total	83	100%

Table 7: Alleged responsible party

5. Summary of incidents

5.1 Repression of journalists, Mass Media and Social Media

Arrests: On 14th August, Keerthi Ratnayake, a journalist affiliated with Lanka e News, was arrested for allegedly providing intelligence information to the Indian embassy in Sri Lanka and currently being held in detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). His house was searched, his computer, mobile phones and USB storage disks were also seized by the Police. Ratnayake is a former Air Force Intelligence Officer who currently works for the London based Sri Lankan news website.



Lanka Enews Journalist Keerthi Rathnayake was arrested by Sri Lankan authorities after he warned the Indian High Commission about the risk of an Extremist terror attack. Photo courtesy: Taz

Summoning and questioning by Police: On 17th August, social media journalist Thushara Wanniarachchi was summoned to the CID to record a statement in connection with her alleged links to Keerthi Ratnayake. On the previous day, the Police searched her house and seized old laptops, and mobile phones that she had used. She claimed that the police officers had indicated that she was in possession of a computer and telephone belonging to Ratnayake.

On 28th September, Criminal Investigations Department (CID) summoned six journalists including several editors who had reported on alleged corruption in Sathosa- the government retail network based on statements made by the former Executive Director of the Consumer Affairs Authority. With regards to the same incident, a team of CID Police officers arrived at the office of Lankadeepa newspaper expecting to interrogate the journalists. As strong criticism mounted towards the government, the Media Minister informed that summoning journalists was a mistake that was corrected with the intervention of the Prime Minister.

On 12th July, officers with the Batticaloa district's Terrorism Investigation Division, a branch of the Sri Lankan police, interrogated Nilanthan, a freelance Tamil journalist and the secretary of the Batticaloa District Tamil Journalists Association, a local press freedom group, for about three hours. Officers

questioned Nilanthan about his income sources, and demanded the login details of his Facebook, WhatsApp, email, and bank accounts and also asked whether he supported the LTTE. In August and September, the treasurer of the Batticaloa District Tamil Journalists Association Union and journalist Punniyamoorthy Sasikaran was interrogated for several hours by Special Crime Prevention Unit attached to Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) office in Batticaloa for his alleged involvement in organizing a memorial event in January to pay tribute to Indian fishermen who died at sea in 2020, which he said he merely covered as a journalist.

In early July, journalist Chamuditha Samarawickrema was summoned to Colombo Crime Division (CCD) and asked to provide a statement clarifying over disparaging comments on the government based on a complaint made by the Inspector General of Police (IGP). Samarawickrema had made several comments in a youtube video criticizing the few statements made by government politicians that were accessible to the public. Also in the same month, Editor of VoiceTube news website and youtube channel, Thushara Sewwandi Witharana was summoned to the CID for publishing a statement made by an activist criticizing Sinovac vaccine based on a complaint by the State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals Channa Jayasumana.

Freelance journalist Nandana Weeraratna was also summoned by the CID on 30th July and interrogated about an article he had published about Killings in Welikada prison during Black July in 1983 for naming several alleged perpetrators.

Intimidation, surveillance and other threats: In mid-August, two men claiming to be officers of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) had attempted to enter the house of the Editor of a Tamil newspaper, R. Sivarajah and visited his apartment at around 2.30 am demanding to search the premises. However, the security guards at the gate had refused to allow the 'CID officers' inside. The editor has made a Police complaint regarding the incident while Police were unaware of such a search. Later in August, Journalist Tharindu Uduwaragedara also made a complaint to the Inspector General of Police regarding an attempt to obtain his personal information by a person who claimed to be a Police officer. He said that a female who introduced herself as a police officer attached to the Medical Officer of Health office of Kolonnawa called him and asked for personal information. When he inquired from the office, he was informed that no such information gathering was conducted.

On 1st July, Deputy Inspector General Deshabandu Thennakoon made several comments in a threatening tone in response to a news article shared by Journalist Tharindu Jayawardane in his facebook wall. During a series of facebook comments, Thennakoon repeatedly said that Jayawardane has published false news and also said that 'nature will punish Jayawardane and he will face the destiny similar to Prabhakaran and others' and also equated journalist Jayawardane with Velupillai Prabhakaran the leader of the LTTE tamil rebels who was killed in the year 2009 at the end of civil war. In Mid-August another Journalist Vimukthi Dushantha was threatened by an Army Captain named Chaminda Liyanage regarding a facebook post he had published criticizing a news article published in Army Website. Vimukthi Dushantha is the editorial director of infosrilanka.lk website. He is also an executive committee member of the Professional Web Journalists' Association.

Around 25th September, a video showing Jaffna Police seizing the mobile phone belonging to a female journalist was published in several websites. As shown in the video, when a lawyer intervened and requested for a court order for such an action, the Police officer argued that they have the authority

to seize a person's mobile phone without a court order. As reported by JDSLanka the mobile phone has been confiscated when the journalists filmed the arrest of MP Selvarajah Kajendren during a memorial event. In another incident, a convener of a collective of artists in Anuradhapura has threatened a journalist working for Mawbima newspaper after they have inquired about collecting money from people with the promise of providing lands to Artists without a legal authority to do so.

Physical attacks: In August, Derana Journalist Sumedha Sanjeewa who went to cover gas shortage in Pelawatte area was assaulted by a civilian. This incident may have occurred in the context that the specific media institution has been pro-government and people are angered about the rising cost of living in the country.

Legal and Policy concerns affecting media and journalists: Daily Mirror published that journalists are finding it difficult to ask critical questions or follow up questions with government ministers and officials during press briefings and cabinet briefings held online as they are given limited time and sometimes no opportunity given at all to raise if they represent a media institution usually critical of the government. It was also alleged that “media secretaries and speechwriters” attend the meeting with pre-prepared questions.

In early July, the Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa alleged that a high profile group related to the government along with a group of lawyers are making attempts to revoke the broadcasting license of the Sirasa Media network. Sirasa Media Network has been much critical of the government in the recent past. Later Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella told the media he has recently sought legal advice regarding the conduct of Sirasa TV and spoke justifying his actions.

On 17th July the Minister of Mass media participating at a television talk show stated that the duty of (investigative) journalists is not limited to publishing in the newspaper, but also to provide such information to legal authorities. He also noted that Code of Criminal Procedure recognizes that concealing evidence is a criminal offence. Media rights organizations pointed out such a policy could risk the safety of journalists and their sources.

Repression of Social Media: Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella speaking at a Press Briefing stated that the government is contemplating legislation that will target websites whose posts it deems “defamatory” and have no visible ownership and they are developing a mechanism to control such websites. On 4th August, Labour Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva speaking at the Parliament said that social media networks should be controlled as they are responsible for the child abuse, and proposed to adopt measures similar to China. In September, Police Spokesman SSP Nihal Thaldewa told DailyMirror that police are monitoring all suspicious groups on social media which could be a threat to national security. Though the statement was made in relation to a suspicious group linked to terrorism, INFORM believes this may extend to monitoring civil society groups and others using national security as an excuse.

On 2nd July, Trincomalee Police arrested a young Tamil man from Trincomalee under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) after he shared a photo of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leader Velupillai Prabhakaran on Facebook. On 13th August, a court order was issued banning a Rap song on underworld for containing abusive language and bad influence to children based on a complaint made by a group of parents. The song was made by the group named Rasthiyadu Padanama.

5.2 Repression of Whistleblowers, activists, and civil society



Trade Unionist Ananda Palitha was arrested by the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) for making a statement about fuel shortage in Sri Lanka. Photo courtesy: Sri Lanka Brief.

Repression of Whistleblowers: In late September, former Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) Executive Director Thushan Gunawardena who exposed the Sathosa (government retail network) corruption incident relating to Garlic purchase stated that he received a number of threatening whatsapp messages. On 21st August, Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya (JSS) Secretary Ananda Palitha was arrested by the CID for exposing details about fuel shortage in the country. He was granted bail on the next day as the court held the view that Freedom of expression could not be limited in such a manner. In both months of August and October, former Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara was summoned to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) over several comments he made during a YouTube Interview with senior Journalist Chamuditha Samarawickrama about alleged corruption involving State Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Corporation and National Medicines Regulatory Authority. In mid October, a medical doctor working in the Avissawella government hospital was visited by the state intelligence officials to obtain a statement regarding facebook posts he had published on the covid-19 situation and difficulties faced by the health sector.

Repression of NGOs: On 9th August, during a cabinet meeting the President in the capacity of Defence Minister instructed the Legal Draftsman to prepare a new bill to amend the Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration & Supervision) Act, No. 31 of 1980 to suit the present day needs. INFORM believes any new laws on NGOs could further restrict the activities of NGOs and might lead to increased surveillance and monitoring of NGOs by state bodies such as NGO secretariat functioning under the Ministry of Defence and could pose new challenges to the freedom of civil society.

Divaina newspaper published several disparaging articles targeting NGOs without any factual basis. Articles seem to have attempted to create a moral panic and hostile attitudes towards western funded NGOs. For example, on 11th September Divaina published an article claiming that an unregistered NGO run by a person who has strong connections with foreign embassies has prepared and shared a

report internationally claiming 66.4% of Sri Lankan citizens are anti-government. Similarly on 9th September Divaina also published another article titled "a fake NGO earned Dollars found." The article said that state intelligence have found information regarding an NGO that acquired 1-5 million USD funds without government registration. It also said the NGO was run by a person who has strong connections with the US embassy. In both articles, no individuals and organizations were named.

Threats to activists and civil society members: In August, Ratkerewwe Jinarathana Thero, former Convener of Inter-University Student Federation said that he has been threatened with abduction following recent student protests: In the same month, a leading activist of Federation of University Teachers' Association (FUTA), Dr. Mahim Mendis of Open University was also threatened over the phone multiple times for speaking at the FUTA protest on 3rd August.

In August 2021, Shehan Malaka Gamage a young activist representing victims of Easter Sunday Bomb attack was questioned for over 70 hours during 8 consecutive days after he made a statement at a press conference alleging that political actors related to current ruling government might have played a major role in the Easter Sunday bombings. Soon after his statement, Gamage was summoned and interrogated at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Sri Lanka Police for 8 consecutive days daily. Gamage was interrogated about his personal life, his friends, and connections he had with other people, in addition to the statement he made. He noted that he experienced psychological distress by being questioned for such a long time daily, and also noted that it could be largely an intimidation of victims of Easter Sunday Bombing, rather than an investigation into the matter.



Prisoners rights activist Sudesh Nandimal De Silva. Photo Courtesy: Sri Lanka Brief

In July, unidentified persons visited the apartment complex where activist Sudesh Nandimal De Silva is living and also visited a relative's house where he had previously lived. He is a leading prisoners' rights activist and an eye witness in the Welikada Prison massacre in 2012. On 25th of August, Sabaratnam Sivayoganathan of Batticaloa Civil Society Forum was again questioned on 25th August by Counter Terrorism Investigation Division at Saravana Road, in Kallady, Batticaloa. He was initially visited by CTID officers on May 23rd to obtain a statement on his involvement in the P2P protest march.

5.3 Repression of Freedom of Assembly

Arrests of protestors:

On 7th July, Batticaloa Police arrested 18 people who protested demanding justice about the death of Mahalingam Balasundaram who was shot dead by a Ministerial Security Division (MSD) officer attached to parliamentarian Sathasivam Viyalendiran. The protest was held at the Gandhi Park in Batticaloa. Parents of the deceased were among those who were arrested.



The convener of IUSF Wasantha Mudalige who organized a protest was arrested without a court order in the wee hours of 6th August, when he was returning after a political talk show on television. Video: Sirasa Tv <https://youtu.be/xuro1yswfsc>

Convener of the Inter-University Students Federation Wasantha Mudalige, President of the Sri Jayewardenepura University Students' Federation Amila Sandeepa, Administrative Secretary of Frontline Socialist Party (FSP) Chameera Koswatte and student activist and member of FSP Koshila Hansamali were arrested at different locations following a protest held against Kotelawala Defence University Act. Mudalige was arrested in the wee hours of 6th August, when he was returning after participating at a political talk show on Sirasa TV. They were accused of damaging public property and injuring a Police officer during the protest. In addition the Police had also started going to the houses of some of the protestors, using a list of names on 3rd August night. Three drivers who transported protestors to the IUSF protest were also arrested for allegedly violating Covid-19 travel restrictions. On 13th August, Heshan Harshana, another student leader attached to Rajarata University was arrested by the police at his home, 48 hours after Inter University Student Federation (IUSF) activists handed over a detailed report on the recent wave of arrests to 8 diplomatic missions in Colombo. On 6th August, Police officers in civvies allegedly attempted to abduct Aminda Lakmal a university lecturer working in the Sri Jayawardanapura University when he along with other university teachers and students were returning after a protest against the proposed Kotelawala Defence University Bill.

On 1st July, Five including Samantha Vidyaratna and Namal Karunaratne were arrested for allegedly violating quarantine regulations during a protest they organized in Boralanda in Badulla district. In another protest held in Hatton against the Kotalawala Defence University (KDU) Bill, four people including Nuwara Eliya district JVP organiser Manjula Suraweera Arachchi was arrested. Later in the same month, 13 members of the JVP political party including two former provincial councillors were arrested at a protest staged in Akuressa in Matara district, against the fuel price increase and the government's controversial chemical fertilizer ban.

On 8th of August, former Southern Provincial Councillor Ranjith Munasinghe representing Opposition political party Samagi Jana Balawegaya was arrested for not wearing a mask during a protest held on 20th July. He was arrested when he went to the Police to provide a statement after being summoned by the Police.

On 23rd of September, Opposition Member of Parliament (MP) Selvarajah Kajendran was arrested by Police and bundled into a police vehicle for organizing an event for memorializing Thileepan- former Tamil rebel. Video footage shared on social media showed Kajendran resisting arrest and eventually being forced into the police vehicle along with two of his aides at Nallur.

Arrests related to Protests of Teachers and educational activists:



A Buddhist monk being unceremoniously carried away by PPE-clad police officers, during a protest against the Kotalawala Defence University Bill on July 8. Photo courtesy: Dineth Chamalka/ENCL

On 8th of July, thirty-three people including Sri Lanka Teachers' Union General Secretary Joseph Stalin were arrested over a protest held against the proposed Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) bill at the parliament roundabout in Sri Jayawardenapura, Kotte. Police accused them of unlawful assembly, causing road traffic and severe public disturbance. After the Court granted the bail Police requested to send them for quarantine process which the court said it had no jurisdiction to make such an order. However, upon their release Police took them for quarantining forcefully. Subsequently Secretary General of *Sri Lanka Teachers' Union* Joseph Stalin and 15 others were forcibly sent off to a quarantine centre in Mullaitivu. On the following day speaking from the quarantine centre, Stalin made a statement that they were not given proper food or clothing. Due to continuous protests, trade union actions and widespread criticism of the government, they were released from quarantining after one week.

Following these incidents teachers and principals began a protest requesting to solve their long standing salary anomalies. On 4th August, Police arrested a total of 44 people and seized 10 vehicles following a massive protest organized by school teachers and principals that took place opposite the Presidential Secretariat. 44 arrested persons included 22 male teachers, 16 female teachers and 6 other persons. They were accused of unlawful assembly, obstruction of vehicle movement, and violating the Quarantine Rules and Regulations. On the same day, participants of another teachers' protest were arrested in Kandy.

In mid-September, Eastern Province Secretary of Ceylon Teachers Union, Ponnuthurai Udayarupan said that he had received death threats from influential provincial supporters of the ruling SLPP party for his role in the teachers strike.

Banning protests through courts and other measures and undue influences to the judiciary:

On 6th July, Sri Lanka banned protests and public meetings until further notice to prevent large gatherings and further spread of COVID-19, based on a letter written by Director General of Health Services Dr Asela Gunawardena to the Inspector General of Police informing him of the decision. However, Gampaha magistrate Manjula Karunarathna stated that protests could not be banned based on a letter from an official.

On 23rd September, the Jaffna Magistrate Court issued a ban on commemorating the 34th anniversary of Tamil rebel Thileepan's hunger strike unto death based on a request made by the Police on the basis that the event had possible links with the LTTE members and it violated the Covid-19 regulations.

However, several courts rejected requests made by Police to ban protests. On 4th July, Welimada Magistrate Court rejected a request by Bogahakumbura Police to issue notice preventing five people including All Ceylon Farmers' Federation National Organiser Namal Karunaratne and former Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) Provincial Councilor Samantha Vidyarthna for organizing a protest against the fertilizer crisis in violation of quarantine regulations. On 6th of July, Mount Lavinia Additional Magistrate Sanjaya Wijesinghe dismissed the prohibition order requested by the Dehiwala Police preventing a protest that was to be staged on 7th July opposite the Buddhist Center along Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha in Dehiwala, by Venerable Akmeemana Dayarathana Thero and several others. On 2nd August, Colombo Chief Magistrate rejected a request made by Cinnamon Gardens Police to issue an order restraining a protest scheduled to be held in front of University Grants Commission

located in Cinnamon Gardens. On 6th of August Gampaha Chief Magistrate Manjula Karunaratna rejected a request made by Bemmulla Police to ban a protest organized by teachers on their salary anomalies. As the Police submitted the letter issued by the Director-General of Health Services sent to police, the magistrate ruled that protests could not be banned using a letter issued by a state official.

Daily Mirror reported that Judicial Officers and lawyers have expressed dismay over a recent Judicial Service Commission (JSC) meeting where judges have been insisted by the government to use specific sections of Code Criminal Procedure to control protestors and public gatherings taking Covid-19 context into consideration. The meeting titled "Matters relating to judicial proceedings in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic" was held on 13th August with the participation of Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya. A magistrate who spoke to the Daily Mirror has said that the JSC meeting resulted in an impression that the Magistrates should follow those instructions contrary to applying their judicial mind and this can be considered as a subtle pressure on Magistrates when engaged in the performance of their official duties.

In July and August, the President issued multiple gazettes declaring a long list of services as 'essential services' from time to time. Declaring government services as essential services has been a known tactic to stop protests and trade union actions in the government sector in Sri Lanka.

Summons and interrogations: In late September, the President of Sri Lanka National Association of Principals Mohan Parakrama Wickramasinghe and a female teacher in Dewalapola Vidyalaya in Minuwangoda and Independent Education Workers Union member Ms.Sirini De Silva were summoned to CID and their statements were recorded regarding their involvements in the protests.

Surveillance and attempts to create public hostility towards the protestors: Pro-government parties accused teachers of spreading Covid-19 by organizing protests. On 25th July and 5th August Kalutara Chief Police Inspector of Police Head Office had written a letter to the Divisional Secretaries in Horana, Madurawala, and Millaniya DS Divisions with the heading "getting information about an inquiry conducted by Criminal Investigation Department (CID)." The letter had requested information on protests, marches and other meetings organized on the issue of salary anomalies of teachers, venues, names of the organizers, names of teachers and principals who tested positive for covid-19, and any deaths of teachers and principals due to covid-19. In September Police informed the protestors who participated in a vehicle parade protest in front of Presidential Secretariat on 4th August to be present at the Fort Police on 2nd October. Police had documented the vehicle numbers of people who attended the protest, and acquired the information of the vehicle owners through the Department of Motor Traffic.

Government attempted to use state resources to disparage the protests organized by the teachers. In late August, the state owned newspaper published a fake news headline claiming "Teachers took at the protests got covid-19, leading to 25 deaths and 400 covid-19 positive cases." The teachers trade unions wrote a letter to the media minister Dallas Alhapperuma asking to take action on this, as this fake news seemingly intended to create hate among the public towards teachers who were protesting. This seemed further evident in the statement made by the Cabinet Spokesman and Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella who said that there was a possibility that the public would attack the protestors, if the teacher Trade Unions did not call off the trade union action at public places.

5.4 Repression of State officials

Within a period of 38 days, four Supreme Court judges withdrew from hearing the Fundamental Rights Petition filed by MP Rishad Bathiudeen and his brother Riyad Bathiudeen. Justice Samayawardena is the fourth Supreme Court Judge to refrain from hearing these petitions. Earlier Three judges withdrew from hearing these two petitions. Except Justice Janak de Silva also declined to hear these petitions for the reason he was presiding at the Presidential Commission which made recommendations against the petitioners, others withdrew citing personal reasons. Withdrawal of 4 judges within such a short period brings doubts whether there has been any influences on judges that prevent them acting independently.

In several incidents, Police officers were reported during raids. Around 15th September, two policemen sustained injuries during a raid on a heroin hideout at Dematagoda in Colombo District. Around 19th July, two officers attached to Kekirawa Police in Anuradhapura district were injured after being knocked down by an illegal sand miner transporting sand. Around 22nd September, a Police officer was injured during a drug raid in Obesekerepura, Rajagiriya area in Colombo, when a suspected drug dealer drove a vehicle knocking down a Police officer. Around 19th September, two Police officers in Aluthgama Police were assaulted by a suspect and their relatives while trying to arrest a suspect in Pinhena area in Beruwala.



Cctv footage of drug dealers hitting and dragging away the police officer. Photo courtesy: Adaderana.

Attacks to health workers were reported in several incidents. Around 15th July, two persons who were not wearing facemasks assaulted a railway train guard of Dehiwala railway station when he had asked them to wear facemasks. Around 15th September, a Public Health Inspector (PHI) in Kekirawa

was assaulted by a monk for asking to come on the following day to receive the second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine as the day's vaccine quota had been finished. Around 16th August, the residents of a quarantined house attempted to assault and verbally abuse Public Health Inspectors (PHI) when PHIs had arrived at a household where the quarantined residents had been drinking alcohol with a group of friends violating health guidelines. In mid-August, the Prison Department initiated the investigation against MP Rishad Bathuideen who had allegedly made death threats to a prison doctor. However, the reasons led to such a threat were unclear. At the time, MP Rishad Bathuideen was held in detention under draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act for his alleged connections with Easter Sunday Attacks.

Around 12th August, Matale Chairperson of Central Province Road Passenger Transport Authority (CPRPTA) Hasitha Wijetilake was threatened with death by another officer working in Matale for not approving a promotion for an unqualified internal candidate. Around 28th September, Colombo Municipal Councilor Mohamed Ramsey was arrested by Cinnamon Garden Police for threatening the Colombo Municipal treasurer.

5.5 Other incidents

On 30th August, Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency under the extra-ordinary gazette 2243/1, claiming that emergency regulations are required “to ensure the Public Security and wellbeing and maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community” “in the context of the COVID – 19.” Regardless of the reason, when the state of emergency is declared, it provides a wide range of powers to the President with only limited checks and balances. Emergency regulations have been abused in the past, has led to the shrinking space of dissent, and crimes in the hand of the state and non-state actors.

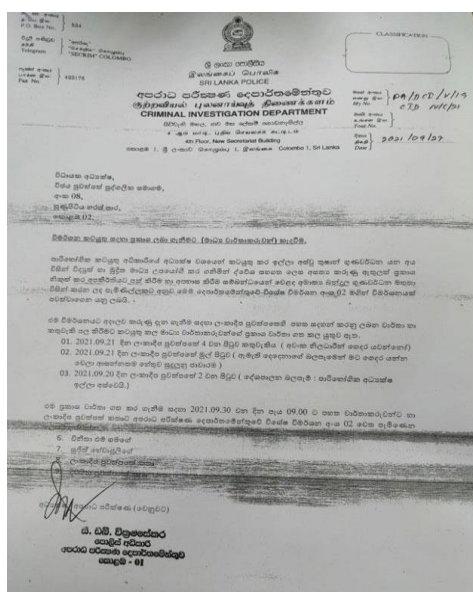
Monthly gazettes calling on the armed forces to maintain public order were reissued in July, August and September, providing the military with additional powers to intervene in civilian affairs. Human rights defenders, families of victims, and survivors of violations fear that this may lead to more intimidation and surveillance of them, and restrictions on activities that may be perceived as dissent.

In early July, a lawyer complained to the Bar Association that he had been threatened and faced with an attempted assault inside the Kocchikade Police premises. Attorney-at-law M.N.M. Fazeer has written a letter to the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to look into the incident as the Police have failed take a legal action against the suspect. When Fazeer represented a client arrested by the Police, another person verbally abused Fazeer in the presence of Officer-In-Charge (OIC) of the Police station.



In mid-August, Prof. Vickramabahu Karunaratne, General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) was summoned to the Slave Island Police Station on 16th August 2021. On the previous day, he had been questioned by police why Muslims are allowed to get membership of the NSSP. After the matter drew media attention, Police cancelled the summon claiming that they are too busy without giving another date. In September, Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) Member of Parliament (MP) Manusha Nanayakkara was summoned to CID regarding a media statement he made over the data deletion in the National Medicine Regulatory Authority (NMRA).

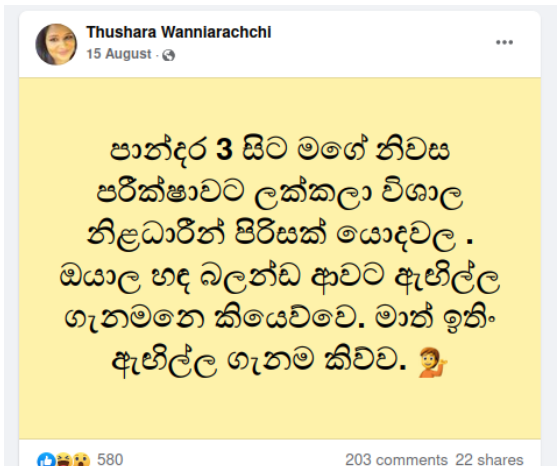
6. List of incidents



	Date	District	Repression of journalists, Mass Media and Social Media	Source
1	28 th Sep 2021	Colombo	The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) summoned six journalists including several editors who had reported on the 'Garlic scam' an incident of corruption involving the purchase of garlic stocks in the Lanka Sathosa, the state owned retail network business. It was later informed that the Prime Minister had instructed the CID not to summon journalists. Editor in Chief of Daily Lankadeepa Siri Ranasinghe and News editor of the Island newspaper Shamindra Ferdinando were among the journalists summoned.	Garlic scam: CID summons six journalists, PM intervenes . Newswire. 28 th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13 th November 2021. Summoning Senior Journalists to CID Dallas expresses regret . Daily Mirror. Published 29 th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13 th November 2021.
2	28 th Sep 2021	Colombo	A team of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Police officers arrived at the office of Lankadeepa newspaper to question the journalists about the statements made by the former Executive Director of Consumer Affairs Authority which Lankadeepa has reported. The CID officers intended to record statements from the chief editor of the newspaper and the journalists who reported on the incident. After the Chief Editor informed the Police officers that they are not prepared to provide the statements at the moment, the Police had left their office stating that they would attend on a different date. Later the Media Minister speaking at a press conference stated this incident had been a mistake, as the Prime Minister had intervened to instruct not to question any journalist on this matter. <i>The letter addressed to Lankadeepa requesting to record</i>	සී.අයි.සී.ඒ. ලංකාදීපයට එයි (වීඩියෝ) . Hiru Tv. Published 28 th September 2021. Last accessed 13 th Nov 2021. සී.අයි.සී.ඒ. ලංකාදීපයට එයි . Lankadeepa. Published 28 th September 2021. Last accessed 13 th Nov 2021.






statements from the journalists. Photo Courtesy: Lankadeepa

3	25 th Sep 2021	Jaffna	<p>A video was shared online in several websites and social media showing that the Police seized a mobile phone belonging to a journalist and also threatened to arrest the journalist. When a lawyer intervened and demanded for a court order, the Police officer argued that they have the authority to seize a person's mobile phone without a court order. As reported by JDSLanka the mobile phone has been confiscated when the journalists filmed the arrest of MP Selvarajah Kajendren during a memorial event. Police Spokesperson SSP Nihal Thalduwa stated that under certain circumstances, the Police does have authority to confiscate a mobile phone. However he did not refer to the details of the incident.</p>  <p><i>Police officers questioning the female journalists and confiscating their mobile phone. Video: Sri Lanka Brief</i></p>	<p>In Jaffna, police takes journalist's mobile phone by force and says they have right to do so. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 25th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13th November 2021.</p> <p>Tweet. Jds Lanka. Published 27th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13th November 2021.</p> <p>Police can confiscate mobile phones: SSP Nihal Thalduwa. Published 26th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13th Nov 2021.</p>
4	23 rd Aug 2021 and 14 th Sep 2021	Batticaloa	<p>The treasurer of the Batticaloa District Tamil Journalists Association Union and journalist Punniyamoorthy Sasikaran was interrogated by the Special Crime Prevention Unit attached to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) office in Batticaloa. The officers have accused Sasikaran of organizing a memorial event in January to pay tribute to Indian fishermen who died at sea in 2020, which he said he merely covered as a journalist, according to CPJ. He was interrogated for 2 hours on 23rd August. Again he was interrogated on the same issue on 14th September in the following month.</p>  <p><i>Journalist Punniyamoorthy Sasikaran. Photo Courtesy: CPJ</i></p>	<p>Tamil journalist questioned again by Sri Lankan police. Tamil Guardian. Published 15th Sep 2021. Last accessed 13th November 2021.</p> <p>Sri Lanka police repeatedly interrogate journalist Punniyamoorthy Sasikaran. CPJ. Published 25th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>
5	14 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Keerthi Ratnayake, a journalist affiliated with Lanka e News, was arrested for allegedly providing intelligence information to the Indian embassy in Sri Lanka and currently being held in detention under the</p>	<p>Detention of Journalist Keerthi Rathnayake extended for 90 days under PTA. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 22nd Aug 2021.</p>

			<p>Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). He had warned the Indian embassy to be vigilant about a possible terrorist attack on them. He was arrested when he was returning after providing a statement to the Colpetti Police with regards to the information he had provided to the Indian embassy. His computer, mobile phones and USB storage disks were also seized by the Police. He previously exposed two extrajudicial killings before they actually occurred.</p>	<p>Last accessed 13th November 2021</p> <p>Sri Lanka: Journalist ordered to 90-day detention for alleged intelligence breach. International Federation of Journalists. Published 26th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>
6	16 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>On 17th August, social media journalist Thushara Wanniarachchi was summoned to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to record a statement in connection with her alleged links to LankaeNews journalist and former Air Force Intelligence Officer Keerthi Ratnayake. In the early hours of the previous day, the Police searched her house and seized old laptops, and mobile phones that she had used. She claimed that the police officers had indicated that she was in possession of a computer and telephone belonging to Ratnayake.</p>  <p><i>Facebook status she published about search in her house conducted by the Police on 15th August.</i></p>	<p>Another web journo grilled by CID. The Morning. Published 17th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Facebook post. Thushara Wanniarachchi. Published 15th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
7	12 th Aug 2021	Not mentioned	<p>Two men claiming to be officers of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) had attempted to enter the house of R. Sivarajah, the Editor of Tamil newspaper 'Thamilan'. They visited his apartment at around 2.30 am demanding to search the premises. However, the security at the gate of the apartment had refused to allow the 'CID officers' inside. On the day, R. Sivarajah has participated at a political talk show on Vasantham TV. The editor has made a Police complaint regarding the incident, while Police or CID have not taken responsibility in making such a visit by their officers.</p>	<p>Two men claiming to be CID attempt to enter home of Editor Colombo Gazette. Published 12 Aug 2021. Last accessed 15 Nov 2021.</p> <p>Sri Lanka: FMM calls on IGP to investigate and take action on threats to Thamilan editor R. Sivaraj. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 13th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.</p> <p>Chief editor of 'Thamilan' newspaper stalked by unknown individual. True Ceylon. Published 13th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th Nov 2021.</p>

8	12 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Derana Journalist Sumedha Sanjeewa who went to cover gas shortage in Pelawatte area was assaulted by a civilian. This incident may have occurred in the context that the specific media institution has been pro-government and people are angered about the rising cost of living in the country.</p>  <p><i>Sumedha Sanjeewa showed himself bruised because of assault. Photo courtesy: News Center.lk</i></p>	<p>ගැස් හිගය ආවරණය කිරීමට ගිය දෙරණ මාධ්‍යවේදියාට ගැස් පෙර්ලිමේ සිටි ජනතාව පහරදෙයි (වීඩියෝ). Colombo Fox. Published 12th Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Watch: Derana journalist Sumedha Sanjeewa who was covering the gas shortage has been assaulted. News Center.lk. Published 12th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
9	15 th Aug 2021	n/a	<p>Journalist Vimukthi Dushantha has been threatened by an Army Captain named Chaminda Liyanage regarding a facebook post he had published criticizing a news published in Army Website. The journalist said that the military officer had threatened and tried to influence him. Vimukthi Dushantha is the editorial director of infosrilanka.lk website. He is also an executive committee member of the Professional Web Journalists' Association.</p>	<p>An Army official threatened journalist Vimukthi Dushantha concerning a post on his Facebook Free Media Movement. Published pg:3,4 MFRMD Report August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Facebook Post. Vimukthi Dushantha. Posted 15th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>
10	24 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Journalist Tharindu Uduwaragedara made a complaint to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) regarding an attempt to obtain his personal information by a person who claimed to be a Police officer. He said that a female who introduced herself as a police officer attached to the Medical Officer of Health (MoH) office of Kolonnawa called him and asked for personal information. When he inquired from the office, he was informed that no such information gathering was conducted.</p>  <p><i>Journalist Uduwaragedara speaking at a press Briefing. Photo Courtesy: Top News Lanka.</i></p>	<p>Journalist Tharindu Uduwaragedara complained to the Inspector General of Police regarding persons who identified themselves as police. Free Media Movement. Published pg:4 MFRMD Report August 2021. Last accessed 2021.</p>


11	26 th Sep 2021	online	<p>Daily Mirror published that journalists are finding it difficult to ask critical questions or follow up questions with government ministers and officials during press briefings and cabinet briefings held online. In some instances journalists have been cut short from raising follow up questions and not even allowed to raise questions at all if they are representing a media institution that is deemed hostile to the government. The article further alleged that governments and ministers and officials send their media secretaries and speechwriters to these briefings in the guise of journalists to ask prepared questions to shift the attention into a particular subject. When the newly declared Media Centre for National Development organized a press briefing with the Minister of Fisheries Douglas Devananda, a former journalist currently working as an official had posed two lengthy questions on a different subject while giving the minister some clues on the response.</p>	<p>Critical questions virtually impossible. Daily Mirror. Published 26th September 2021. Last Accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
12	7 th July 2021	n/a	<p>Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa alleged that a high profile group related to the government along with a group of lawyers are making attempts to revoke the broadcasting license of the Sirasa Media network, as he got to know through a confidential source. Sirasa Media Network has been much critical of the government in the recent past. Later Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella told the media he has recently sought legal advice pertaining to what he calls the conduct of Sirasa TV. He further told the Island journalists that the Opposition political parties couldn't challenge his right to take action according to the law.</p>	<p>Tense situation in Parliament after Opposition Leader reveals conspiracy to ban Sirasa TV. Newswire. Published 7th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Media Minister confirms seeking legal advice on Sirasa telecasts. The Island. Published 12th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
13	1 st July 2021	online	<p>Deputy Inspector General Deshabandu Thennakoon has made comments in a threatening tone regarding a news article published by Journalist Tharindu Jayawardane. During a series of facebook comments, Thennakoon repeated said that Jayawardane has published lies and also noted that Nature will punish Jayawardane and he will face the destiny of Prabhakaran and others. Prabhakaran is the leader of the terrorist group LTTE who fought against the Sri Lankan government.</p>  <p><i>Image of the Facebook post where the alleged threats were made.</i></p>	<p>Facebook Tharindu Iranga. Posted 1st July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Deputy Inspector General Deshabandu Thennakoon responded threateningly regarding a news story shared by journalist Tharindu Jayawardhana on Facebook Free Media Movement. Published MFRMD pg:3 July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p> <p>Trying to Silence a Fearless Voice: The Case of Tharindu Jayawardhana. The Groundviews. Published 17 Aug 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>



14	12 th July 2021	Batticaloa	<p>Batticaloa district's Terrorism Investigation Division (TID), a branch of the Sri Lankan police interrogated Nilanthan, a freelance Tamil journalist and the secretary of the Batticaloa District Tamil Journalists Association, a local press freedom group, for about three hours. Officers questioned Nilanthan about his income sources, and demanded the login details of his Facebook, WhatsApp, email, and bank accounts, according to the Tamil Guardian. They also asked him if he supported the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a banned group that the government considers a terrorist organization, according to that report and the human rights group.</p>  <p><i>Journalist Nilanthan. Photo courtesy: CPJ</i></p>	<p>Sri Lankan anti-terror authorities interrogate journalist Selvakumar Nilanthan. Committee to Protect Journalists. Published 14th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Tamil journalist interrogated by Sri Lanka's Terrorism Investigation Division Tamil Guardian. Published 12th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
15	9 th July 2021	Colombo	<p>Editor of VoiceTube, Thushara Sewwandi Witharana was summoned to the CID over a recent statement made by consumer rights activist Asela Sampath, who had stated that a Chinese firm was attempting to portray the Sinovac vaccine as a finished product in Sri Lanka. Sampath's statement had been published on VoiceTube & accordingly Thushara Sewwandi Witharana, its Editor has been summoned to the CID based on a complaint made by State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals Channa Jayasumana.</p>  <p><i>Sri Lanka pharmaceutical company addressed Prof. Channa Jayasumana for a special government approval for purchase of the Sinovac vaccine to manufacture in Sri Lanka. Photo Courtesy: News Hub.lk</i></p>	<p>Journalist Thushara Sewwandi summoned to CID over Channa's Sinovac complaint. News Hub.lk. Published 9th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>

16	27 th July 2021	Colombo	Freelance journalist Nandana Weeraratna was summoned before the CID office in Colombo on 30 th July and interrogated about an article he had published about Killings in Welikada prison during Black July in 1983. Police informed that several persons have made a complaint against him as he had named a few alleged perpetrators of the killings.	Police Computer Crimes Division questioned journalist Nandana Weeraratna regarding an article published on the assassination of 53 Tamil prisoners in Welikada prison in July 1983. Free Media Movement. Published pg: 4 MFRMD Report July . Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
17	29 th July 2021	Anuradhapura	The convener of a collective of artists in Anuradhapura has allegedly threatened a journalist working for Mawbima newspaper after the journalist inquired about collecting money from people with the promise of providing lands. The convener has allegedly collected one thousand rupees from each person seeking lands. The collection of funds allegedly occurred inside the Anuradhapura branch office of the Land Reform Commission of Sri Lanka. Based on a request made by the collective of artists, it is reported that the Minister of Lands has approved 71 pieces of lands to be distributed among the artists according to Mawbima newspaper. The journalist has inquired the convener why she has collected money to provide public land and her authority to do so. In response to the journalist, she has denied that she was involved with such a thing. After some time, another person claiming to be the secretary of the organization had made a phone call to the journalist in a threatening tone.	අනුරාධපුරයේ රජයේ ඉඩම් දෙන්න මුදල් එකතු කරලා: ප්‍රශ්න කළායි සංවිධානයේ ලේකම්ගෙන් 'වච්ඡිම' මාධ්‍යවේදියාට තර්ජන. Mawbima. Published 29 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
18	19 th Sep 2021	N/A	The Minister of Mass media participating at a television talk show stated that the duty of (investigative) journalists is not limited to publishing in the newspaper, but also to provide such information to legal authorities. He also noted that Code of Criminal Procedure recognizes that concealing evidence is a criminal offence. When journalists questioned whether journalists are exempted from revealing sources, Rambukwella responded saying if journalists cannot do anything about serious incidents, they should at least reveal the source to those who can take action. INFORM believes the safety of journalists and their sources could be heavily problematized by this kind of statement or policy. Also considering the fact that the statement was made by the Minister, it is likely that government or legal authorities may influence and force journalists to reveal their sources and take legal action when they fail to do so.	LK IRA 08 2021-07-19. Swarnawahini TV (Youtube). Published 19 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.


19	9 th July 2021	Colombo	<p>Journalist Chamuditha Samarawickrema was summoned to Colombo Crime Division (CCD) of Sri Lanka Police and asked to provide a statement clarifying over alleged anti-governmental comments he made during a youtube video. The inquiry was based on a complaint made by the Inspector General of Police (IGP). Samarawickrema was first summoned to the CCD on 9th of July and informed that he is required to furnish a statement on his controversial comments on a government move to import 100,000 kgs of ‘ponni’ rice and mismanagement of the ongoing Covid-19 vaccination. Since he was not previously informed the reasons for summoning he asked for another date, and then he was summoned on 15th July. Samarawickrema had made these comments during the Paththare Wishare programme based on information that were publicly reported. Samarawickrema said that he believed the CCD summoned him to record a second statement regarding his complaint pertaining to an alleged threat to his life after he exposed how a leading actress and a fashion designer organized an event violating covid19 health regulations. The CCD had initiated this inquiry following a complaint received from IGP C. D. Wickremaratne.</p>	<p>IGP lodges complaint against Chamuditha over disparaging comments on Government. The Island. Published 19th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Journalist Chamuditha summoned before CCD over recent statements. Newswire. Published 13th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
20	10 th Aug 2021	N/A	<p>Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella speaking at a Press Briefing stated that the government is contemplating legislation that will target websites whose posts it deems “defamatory” and have no visible ownership, amid concerns of a clamp down on freedom of expression. The ministries of justice and media are developing a mechanism to control websites carrying allegedly defamatory content, Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said, as online criticism of the establishment mounts in the island. The idea is to “protect the rights of the people” without hindering freedom of expression or freedom of the press, he said. “There is an opinion that there should be some measures with regard to websites that do not have owners and defame certain people deliberately, manipulating facts,” he added.</p>	<p>Sri Lanka govt mulls ways to control websites amid rising online activism. Economynext. Published 11th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>
21	4 th Aug 2021	N/A	<p>Labour Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva speaking at the Parliament called for the regulation of websites and social media. Having just spoken about child abuse, he told that social networking sites such as Facebook are 90% responsible for the scourge because of an alleged tendency to “constantly highlight” such incidents. Then he proposed either to ban these websites or to regulate them. “There are no laws in this country to suppress (mardanaya kireema, Sinhalese for suppress) or to regulate these websites. I have raised this matter at the cabinet level, too,” said de Silva. “In China, there is no social media. We’re not like that. We open the stable door first and then try to catch the horse after he’s bolted,” he added.</p>	<p>Ban or regulate social media in Sri Lanka, top minister tells parliament. Ecomynext. Published 5th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p> <p>Hansard: Volume 284 - No. 2 Published 04th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021</p>

22	26 th Sep 2021	N/A	Police Spokesman SSP Nihal Thalduwa told DailyMirror that police are monitoring all suspicious groups on social media which could be a threat to national security. Though the statement was made in relation to a suspicious group linked to terrorism, INFORM believes this may extend to monitoring civil society groups and others using national security as an excuse.	Ban or regulate social media in Police launch probe into suspected ISIS Whatsapp group operating in SL. Daily Mirror. Published 26 th September 2021. Last Accessed 15 th November 2021.
23	2 nd July 2021	Trincomalee	Police arrested a young Tamil man from Trincomalee under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for sharing a photo of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leader Velupillai Prabhakaran on Facebook. 24-year-old Shanmugarasa Vidulashan was arrested after a photo which was originally posted in 2018, appeared on the Facebook timeline automatically as a 'memory', according to Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka. Vidulashan is to be remanded until July 17.	Tamil man arrested after sharing photograph of LTTE leader on Facebook. Tamil Guardian. Published 06 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Tweet. Posted 3 rd July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021
24	13 th August 2021	Colombo	A court order was issued banning a Rap song on underworld for containing abusive language and bad influence to children. The song was made by the group named Rasthiyadu Padanama. The Colombo Crimes Division had filed a case at the Huflds dorp Court based on the complaint filed by the group of parents. The court which released the three individuals involved to produce the rap song on bail had instructed for the song to be removed from the internet within hours of their release. Investigations had also revealed that the singers had been funded by notorious underworld figure Keselwatta Dinuka, who died 04-months ago, to produce and release the song.	‘රස්තියාදු පදනමේ’ නිදෙනෙක් අත්අඩංගුවට – ‘කාට කාටත්’ අනුග්‍රහය කෙසෙල්වත්තේ දිනුකගෙන් Divaina. Published 12 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Rap song on underworld ordered to be removed : Arrested individuals granted bail. Newswire. Published 13 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021



	Date	District	Repression of Whistleblowers, activists, and civil society	Source
25	23 rd Sep 2021	online	<p>Former Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) Executive Director Thushan Gunawardena stated that he received a number of threatening whatsapp messages, after he exposed a serious corruption case relating to the government retail network Sathosa after resigning from his position in September. He told the media that he lodged a complaint at the CID about the threats he had received. Later in October, it was reported that a suspicious group travelling in a white van had arrived at his house searching for him.</p>  <p><i>Thushan Gunawardane. Photo Courtesy: Daily Mirror</i></p>	<p>Former CAA Executive Director Who Revealed Serious Cases Of Corruption At Sathosa Now Facing Threats. Asian Mirror. Published 27th September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Ex-CAA Director lodges 'white van' complaint. The Morning. Published 11th October 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
26	21 st August 2021	Colombo	<p>Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya (JSS) Secretary Ananda Palitha was arrested by the CID of Police on 21st August. He was granted bail on the following day. His arrest was due to a statement he made at a press briefing on the prevailing fuel shortage in the country. He stated that existing petroleum fuel stocks in the country would only be sufficient for around 10 days, while crude oil supply has also been uncertain due to the prevailing foreign reserve crisis. Arrest of Ananda Palitha could have been based on a complaint made by Sumathi Wijesinghe the President of CPC who claimed Ananda's statement as a misleading, false and anti-government statement. Wijesinghe also said that they were planning to file a complaint against Ananda Palitha prior to his arrest. While the Police has requested the court not to grant Ananda bail on the basis that he would make similar statements in the future, the magistrate pointed out that Freedom of Speech has been assured by the constitution, and expressing opinions based on factual information is not a matter for remanding.</p>	<p>ඉන්දන සංචිතව දින 10 කට පමණයි. (Ananda Palitha). V FM Radio 107 (YouTube). Published 20th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>තෙල් හිඟයක් නෑ කියන්න බොරු - තෙල් සංචිත තව දින 10කින් ඉවරයි - Hiru News. Hiru News (YouTube). Published 20th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>'Expressing the TRUTH no reason to Remand' - Magistrate, Releases Unionist. News First. Published 22nd August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>

27	August and October	Colombo	<p>Former Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara was summoned to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) over several comments he made during a YouTube Interview with senior Journalist Chamuditha Samarawickrama. During the interview he had made a number of allegations of corruption in various purchases of the Health Ministry. He has been summoned following a complaint made by the Chairperson of the State Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Corporation Dr. Uthpala Indrawansa and Chairperson of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority Dr. Rasitha Wijewantha for allegedly 'misleading the general public by stating false information'. He was summoned for interrogation at least twice on 31st of August and 10th of October.</p>  <p>Former Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara. Photo Courtesy: Newsfirst</p>	<p>Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara summoned by CID. Newswire. Published 30th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara summoned to CID for interrogation. Lankanewsweb.net. Published 11th October 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>CID summons Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara. Daily Mirror. 31st August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
28	14 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Former Inter-University Student Federation Convener and Medical doctor working in the Avissawella government hospital was visited by officials claiming to be CID officials to obtain a statement regarding facebook posts he had published on the covid-19 situation and difficulties faced by the health sector. They visited him on 14th August and informed him that they had visited him as a Deputy Inspector General of Police had instructed them to visit him and check his mental health status in relation to recent facebook posts he made. After he exposed the incident another officer who visited him on the following day informed that the CID has not sent any officers to visit him, but they could be government intelligence officers related to another institution.</p>  <p>Medical Doctor Najith Indika, along with the facebook post he published. Photo courtesy: GossipLanka news</p>	<p>Facebook. Najith Indika. Posted 18th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>සමාජ ජාලයන්හි ඇතිව ඇති වෛද්‍යවරයාගේ මානසික තත්වය පිරික්සීමට සහ මාධ්‍යවේදිකයන් නිවස සොදිසියට පොලිස් කන්ඩායම! Sri Lanka Brief. Published 16th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>

29	11 th Sep 2021	N/A	Divaina newspaper published a news article alleging that an unregistered NGO run by a person who had strong connections with foreign embassies had prepared a report with false information and shared it internationally. The article said that he had made a report “consulting 1000 persons (falsely) claiming that 66.4% of Sri Lankan citizens are anti-governmental and shared it with 40 countries”. Even though the newspaper did not name any individuals or organizations, this seems as an attempt to create a moral panic or hostile attitudes against NGOs among the general public. The article was titled as "information found about an NGO that sent sheer lies to the world."	ලෝකයට කෙප්ප යැවූ එන්ජීඒ එක් පැවිකිරිය හෙළිවෙයි. Divaina. Published 11 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
30	9 th Sep 2021	N/A	Divaina newspaper published a news titled "a fake NGO that earned Dollars found." The news said that state intelligence have found information regarding an NGO that acquired 1-5 million USD funds without government registration. The article further said that it was run by a person who has strong connections with the US embassy and alleged that an unnamed senior officer had said that this unnamed NGO has used their funds for regime change (election) in Sri Lanka. This news also seems like fake news published in order to create moral panic or hostile attitudes towards NGOs among the general public. It also promotes the idea that NGOs should be under the surveillance of the state and it is illegal to acquire funds without government registration.	ඩොලර්වලින් සල්ලි ගැරු හොර එන්.ජී. ඩී.වක් හෙළිවෙයි. Divaina. Published 9 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
31	8 th Sep 2021	N/A	President in his capacity as the Defence Minister instructed "the Legal Draftsman to prepare a Bill to enable the introduction of a new Act to suit the present day needs in place of the Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration & Supervision) Act, No. 31 of 1980". This decision was taken at a cabinet meeting of Ministers held on 9th August. According to the Morning newspaper, Department of Social Services Director Chandana Ranaweera Arachchi has said that introducing certain new regulations to the Act was a long-standing decision. However, when the journalists contacted the Ministry of Defence, its officials were not aware of such content that would be included in the new Act. INFORM believes the new law on NGOs could further restrict the activities of NGOs and might lead to increased surveillance and monitoring of NGOs by state bodies such as the Defence Ministry. Such monitoring and surveillance could be easily misused to repress the dissent of the civil society and bring new challenges to the activists working in NGOs, and their beneficiaries, and support systems and to the donor agencies.	New laws to regulate NGOs and social service orgs: Cabinet moves to draft new legislation. The Morning. Published 14 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Amendment to the Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration & Supervision) Act, No. 31 of 1980. Office of the Cabinet of Ministers. 09 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. “Govt to introduce fresh legislations to supervise NGOs, INGOs” - Raja Goonaratne. Daily Mirror. Published 21 st September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

32	8 th Aug 2021	N/A	Ratkerewwe Jinarathana Thero, former Convener of Inter-University Student Federation has been threatened with abduction following recent student protests: “Someone keeps threatening me everyday using the number 0725167782. I am afraid to go to the police as I fear they might arrest me” Thero has told.	Tweet . JDS Lanka. Posted 8 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
33	After 3 rd August 2021	N/A	A leading activist of the Federation of University Teachers’ Association (FUTA), Dr. Mahim Mendis of Open University has been threatened over the phone multiple times for speaking at the FUTA protest on 3rd August. On 15th of August FUTA made a public appeal from the Sri Lankan people to intervene and stop the “private mercenary” behaviour of the police force, while the Frontline Socialist Party (FSP) on 13th August requested the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) for an immediate investigation into the alleged threats that activists are facing from the Police. Letter issued by FUTA also said "the Police is carrying out a witch-hunt against Dr. Mahim Mendis and 15 other activists who participated in this peaceful protest walk and rally which culminated in the symbolic burning of a coffin and the pushing down of a few barriers.”	FUTA and FSP claim Govt. exploiting Police. The Morning. Published 15 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Tweet . Posted 8 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
34	August 2021	Colombo	In August 2021, Shehan Malaka Gamage a young activist representing victims of Easter Sunday Bomb attack was questioned for over 70 hours during 8 consecutive days after he made a controversial statement at a press conference alleging that political actors related to current ruling government might have played a major role in the Easter Sunday bombings. Soon after his statement, Gamage was summoned and interrogated at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Sri Lanka Police for 8 consecutive days daily. Gamage was interrogated about his personal life, his friends, and connections he had with other people, in addition to the statement he made. He noted that he experienced psychological distress by being questioned for such a long time daily, and also noted that it could be largely an intimidation of victims of Easter Sunday Bombing, rather an investigation into the matter.  <i>Shehan Malaka Gamage at the controversial press conference. Photo Courtesy: Lanka News Web.</i>	Speech of Shehan Malaka Gamage පාස්කුවට මාස 28 පිරෙන තැන තරුණයෙක් කියපු ආන්දෝලනාත්මක කතාව! The News Reporter (YouTube). Published 17 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.


35	7 th July 2021	Colombo	<p>Sudesh Nandimal De Silva - a prisoners' rights activist and an eye witness in Welikada Prison massacre in 2012 had once again faced threats. Two unidentified persons had visited apartment complex where Nandimal Silva is living. The men have inquired from his neighbors about his whereabouts and made remarks indicating that some harm may come to Silva in the near future. On the same day, some unidentified persons had also visited a relative's house in Mount Lavinia where he used to live some 15 years ago. Nandimal has lodged complaint about the incident with the Dematagoda Police Station on the same day under CIB 1/117/42.</p>  <p><i>Sudesh Nandimal De Silva speaking at a press conference on Prisoners rights. Photo courtesy: Sri Lanka Brief.</i></p>	<p>Failure to identify culprits threatening rights activist Nandimal, may point a finger towards the police – Senaka Perera, Attorney at Law. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 12th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
36	25 th Aug 2021	Batticaloa	<p>Sabaratnam Sivayoganathan of Batticaloa Civil Society Forum was again questioned on 25th August by Counter Terrorism Investigation Division at Saravana Road, in Kallady, Batticaloa. He was initially visited by CTID officers on May 23rd to obtain a statement on his involvement in the P2P protest march.</p>	<p>Tweet. JDS Lanka. Posted 25th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>


	Date	District	Repression of Freedom of Assembly	Source
37	6 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>The Convener of the Inter-University Students Federation (IUSF) Wasantha Mudalige was arrested by the police in the early morning of 6th August 2021. At the time of arrest, Mudalige had been returning from a political discussion on Sirasa TV. According to student activists, there had been about 200 policemen who had surrounded the Sirasa studio complex in Ratmalana where the event was being held. He was arrested without a warrant for allegedly damaging state property during a recent protest near the Parliament Roundabout against the proposed Kotelawala Defense University Act.</p>  <p><i>Arrest of student activist Wasantha Mudalige. Photo courtesy: Lanka News Web.</i></p>	<p>Opposition cries foul as cops in civvies arrest Sri Lanka student union leader. Economynext. Published 6th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>(VIDEO) Student Activists and several others arrested for their involvement in protests. News First. Published 06th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
38	3 rd Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Frontline Socialist Party (FSP) Administrative Secretary Chameera Koswatte and student activist and member of FSP Koshila Hansamali were arrested following a protest held against the Kotelawala Defence University Act. They were arrested on charges of damaging public property and injuring a Police officer during the protest. On 3 August night, the Police had also started going to the houses of some of the protestors, using a list of names.</p>  <p><i>Activist Koshila Hansamali was previously arrested in July while participating at a protest. She was again arrested in August after returning from a protest. Photo courtesy: Lankan.org</i></p>	<p>FSP claims protest arrests 'vengeful'. The Morning. Published 4th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>

39	5 th Aug 2021	Colombo	President of the Sri Jayewardenepura University Students' Federation Amila Sandeepa was arrested in the evening of 5th August for allegedly injuring a police officer on duty.. Police spokesman Senior Deputy Inspector General (SDIG) Ajith Rohana said that the students were arrested in relation to a protest held on 4th August where a tense situation had occurred between the protestors and the Police. Maharagama Police Station Chief Inspector H.H. Janakantha who was at the demonstration had been injured at the protest due to an accident. This was used to arrest and detain protestors.	Maharagama Police OIC seriously injured during IUSF protest. ColomboPage. Published 4 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Opposition cries foul as cops in civvies arrest Sri Lanka student union leader. Economynext. Published 6 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
40	6 th Aug 2021	Colombo	Three van drivers who transported protestors to the IUSF protest were arrested for allegedly violating Covid-19 travel restrictions. Traveling between provinces was lifted from 2nd of August-10th of August. The protest occurred on 3rd of August, a day after the travel restrictions were lifted. In this context, accusation of breaching travel restrictions seems to lack any factual basis, and arrests seem to be motivated by a reprisal against the protest.	Several persons including IUSF convener arrested. Sri Lanka Mirror. Published 6 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Restrictions on inter-provincial travel and weddings imposed again in Sri Lanka. Colombo Page. Published 10th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021
41	13 th Aug 2021	Colombo	Heshan Harshana, a student leader of Rajarata University was arrested by Sri Lanka police at his home on 13th Friday evening, 48 hrs after Inter University Student Federation (IUSF) activists handed over a detailed report on the recent wave of arrests to 8 diplomatic missions in Colombo.	Tweet JDS Lanka. Posted 14 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
42	4 th July 2021	Badulla	The Welimada Magistrate's Court rejected a request by Bogahakumbura Police to issue notice against five people preventing them from organizing a protest. The request was made with regards to All Ceylon Farmers' Federation National Organiser Namal Karunaratne and former Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) Provincial Councilor Samantha Vidyarthna, and three others for organising a farmers' protest over the fertiliser crisis, in violation of quarantine laws. The Magistrate held the view that the request was unnecessary as the Police could arrest the suspects and produce them in court under existing laws.	Magistrate rejects police request to issue notice on protest organisers. Daily Mirror. Published 4 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Magistrate rejects police request to issue notice on protest organisers. The Sunday Times. Published 4 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
43	6 th July 2021	Colombo	Mount Lavinia Additional Magistrate Sanjaya Wijesinghe dismissed the prohibition order requested by the Dehiwala Police preventing a protest that was to be staged on 7th July opposite the Buddhist Center along Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha in Dehiwala, by Venerable Akmeemana Dayarathana Thero and several others. The Additional Magistrate ordered the Dehiwala Police to take necessary actions using police powers, if the protest violated the existing quarantine regulations or public peace.	Court rejects prohibition order on protest by Thero. News First. Published 7 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

44	2 nd Aug 2021	Colombo	Colombo Chief magistrate rejected a request made by Cinnamon Gardens Police to issue an order restraining a protest scheduled to be held in front of University Grants Commission located in Cinnamon Gardens in Colombo City. The protest was organized by an organization named People's Intelligence Centre headed by Prof. Ananda Jayawickrama. The magistrate held the view that Police have powers to arrest those who violate health guidelines.	Court rejects Police request to prevent protests. Hiru News. Published 02 nd August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
45	6 th Aug 2021	Gampaha	Gampaha Chief Magistrate Manjula Karunarathna rejected a request made by Bemmulla Police to ban a protest organized by teachers on their salary anomalies. The Police submitted to the Court a letter issued by the Director-General of Health Services addressed to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), requesting to restrict public gatherings. However, the magistrate ruled that protests could not be banned using such a letter issued by a public official. The magistrate further stated that the facts mentioned in the letter could not be regarded as health regulations which were in line with articles 2 and 3 of 1987 No. 03 Quarantine and Disease Prevention Ordinance.	සෞඛ්‍ය ප්‍රධානියා පොලිස්පතිට යැවූ ලිපිය නීතියක් නෙමෙයි : පාලන තහනම් කරන්නැයි කළ පොලිස් ඉල්ලීම ඉවත්ව. MediaLK.com. Published 8 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
46	23 rd Sep 2021	Jaffna	The Jaffna Magistrate Court issued a ban on commemorating the 34th anniversary of Tamil rebel Thileepan's hunger strike unto death. The ban came after the Jaffna police filed an injunction with the court requesting for this ban to take place on 26th September in the Jaffna Thileepan memorial. Police had claimed that they received information about members belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) operating within Sri Lanka and from abroad are planning to organise a commemoration. The police further alleged that commemorations would violate COVID-19 regulations. The court granted the police's injunction.	Jaffna Magistrate Court imposes ban on Thileepan commemoration. Tamil Guardian. Published 23 rd September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
47	14th Sep 2021	Batticaloa	On 14th September, at the request of Sri Lanka police, Batticaloa Magistrate court issued a banning order preventing Batticaloa Mayor T.Saravanabavan and three others from holding "Thiyagi Thileepan commemoration week" to mark remembrance of the late LTTE member, Thileepan, who died while on hunger strike three decades ago. Accordingly Batticaloa Mayor T. Saravanabawan, former NPC member T. Ravikaran, head of Mullaitivu District Association of the disappeared Ms. Mariya Suresh Easwari & 25 others have been served with restraining orders banning them holding any memorial event.	Tweet. JDS Lanka. Published 18th Sep 2021. Last accessed 18th Nov 2021. Tweet. JDS Lanka. Published 27th Sep 2021. Last accessed 18th Nov 2021.

48	13 th Aug 2021	Colombo	Daily Mirror reported that Judicial Officers and lawyers have expressed dismay over a recent Judicial Service Commission (JSC) meeting where judges have been insisted by the government to use sections 98 and 106 of Code Criminal Procedure to control protestors and public gatherings taking Covid-19 context into consideration. Section 98 provides powers to issue conditional orders to remove any nuisance, while section 106 provides powers to issue absolute orders at once in urgent cases of nuisance. A magistrate who spoke to the Daily Mirror has said that JSC meeting resulted in an impression that the Magistrates should follow those instructions contrary to applying their judicial mind and this can be considered as a subtle pressure on Magistrates when engaged in the performance of their official duties. The meeting titled “Matters relating to judicial proceedings in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic” was held on 13th August with the participation of Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya, two members of the JSC Supreme Court Justices Buwaneka Aluvihare and L.T.B. Dehideniya and another Supreme Court Judge Mahinda Samayawardena.	BASL write to JSC: Was the JSC seminar an attempt to impress Magistrates to give in to police requests to curb protests? Sri Lanka Brief. Published 17 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Judges and lawyers express dismay over recent JSC meeting. Daily Mirror. Published 15 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
49	6 th Aug 2021	Colombo	Police officers in civvies have allegedly attempted to abduct Aminda Lakmal a university lecturer working in the Sri Jayawardanapura University when he along with other university teachers and students were returning after a protest against the proposed Kotelawala Defence University Bill. Three Police officers in civvies have attempted to take him away forcefully, when the other university students and teachers travelling in the same bus have intervened. Then a Police officer had threatened the bystanders saying that they will also be arrested if they obstruct the duties of a Police officer. When others asked to provide details of the person he wanted to arrest, he had shown his identity card in which it was mentioned as the Crime OIC of Mirihana Police. After many bystanders started asking questions of reasons to arrest him, the Police officers have then stated that it had been a mistake and actually they have been looking for a different person.	Sri Lanka: Plainclothes police tried to abduct a university lecturer: Govt is bringing the abductions back to instil fear charges Sumanthiran. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 6 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. ජපුර කමිකාවාරයවරයෙකු මිරිහන පොලියෙහි බලහත්කාරයෙන් දඬුවම් ගත් උත්සහය වරදයි. Aithiya. Published 6 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
50	7 th July 2021	Batticaloa	Police have arrested 18 people who protested demanding justice about the death of Mahalingam Balasundaram who was shot dead by a Ministerial Security Division (MSD) officer attached to parliamentarian Sathasivam Viyalendiran. The parents of Mahalingam Balasundaram were among those arrested with other local demonstrators at Gandhi Park, Batticaloa. Batticaloa police had insisted that the arrests were made on the basis that public protests violate current COVID-19 guidelines and that all 18 people arrested to face legal action following an antibody test. Balasundaram was a tipper truck driver. According to local journalists, Balasundaram had been travelling in a	18 arrested by Sri Lankan police for protesting killing of Tamil man by state minister's bodyguard. Tamil Guardian. Published 7 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Tweet. JDS Lanka. Posted 7 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

			<p>three-wheeled rickshaw, when a confrontation arose with the ministerial security guard. The verbal confrontation had escalated into a scuffle and the security guard is said to have shot Balasundaram in the head. The suspect MSD officer has been remanded following the incident. The protestors demanded justice regarding the incident.</p>  <p><i>18 Protestors arrested in Batticaloa. Photo courtesy: Tamil Guardian.</i></p>	
51	4 th Aug 2021	Colombo	<p>Police have arrested a total of 44 people and seized 10 vehicles following a massive protest that took place opposite the Presidential Secretariat on 4th August. The protestors have demanded an end to salary anomalies of teachers and principals. With no solution to their demands, the teachers have been protesting for the 24th day on 4th August. At the time, the discussions between the government and the trade unions held on 3rd August had failed. Teachers have also defied a government order for all state public servants to return to work on 2nd August, ending a work-from-home spell over COVID-19. The protestors have made their way to the president's office in Colombo in vehicle parades from five different location: Nawaloka grounds, Negombo, Kadawatha expressway entrance, Pannipitiya Dharmapala College, Moratuwa town, Galle and Kandy. 44 arrested persons included 22 male teachers, 16 female teachers and 6 other persons. Upon their arrest Police have conducted covid-19 rapid antigen tests on them, while all of them have been tested negative. The court granted bail to all the protestors when they were presented before the Fort Magistrate Court on 5th August. They were charged with unlawful assembly, obstruction of vehicular movement and main roads, as well violating the Quarantine Rules and Regulations. While Police have requested protestors to be further remanded, and PCR tests to be conducted on them, the court has rejected both requests.</p>	<p>(VIDEO) Teachers and Principals stage massive protest in Colombo; Dozens arrested by Police. News First. Published 4th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Protests continue in Sri Lanka over teachers' salary demands, KNDU bill; two arrested. Published 4th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>



			 <p>A scene of the protest held in front of Presidential secretariat by teachers trade unions. Photo Courtesy: Daily Mirror</p>	
52	4 th Aug 2021	Kandy	<p>Police have arrested and presented participants of another protest demanding to solve salary anomalies of teachers that was held in Kandy. The arrested persons were presented before a court in Kandy and involuntary covid-19 antigen tests were conducted on two of them.</p>	<p>ගුරු-විදුහල්පති අයිතිවාසිකම් අරගලය මර්දනය දිගටම; එක්ව පෙළ ගැසෙමු - ගුරු සහ විදුහල්පති වෘත්තීය සමිති සන්ධානය. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 30th September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
53	15 th Sep 2021	Batticaloa	<p>Speaking to the press on 22nd September in Batticaloa, Eastern Province Secretary of Ceylon Teachers Union, Ponnuthurai Udayarupan, said that he had received death threats from influential provincial supporters of the ruling SLPP party for his role in the teachers strike. On 15th September, he had also made a complaint to the Batticaloa Police regarding death threats he had received.</p>  <p>Ponnuthurai Udayarupan speaking at a press conference on 22nd September, spoke about threats he had received. Photo courtesy: JDS Lanka</p>	<p>Tweet. JDs Lanka. Published 22nd Sep 2021. Last accessed 18th Nov 2021.</p>
54	30 th Sep 2021	Colombo	<p>In September Police informed the protestors who had previously participated in a vehicle parade protest in front of Presidential Secretariat on 4th August to be present at the Fort Police at 10 am on 2nd October. Police have acquired the relevant information of the vehicle owners through the Department of Motor Traffic, by providing the vehicle numbers of people who attended the protest.</p>	<p>ගුරු-විදුහල්පති අයිතිවාසිකම් අරගලය මර්දනය දිගටම; එක්ව පෙළ ගැසෙමු - ගුරු සහ විදුහල්පති වෘත්තීය සමිති සන්ධානය. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 30th September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>

55	8 th July 2021	Matara	Thirteen members of the JVP, including two former provincial councillors were arrested at a protest staged in Akuressa in Matara district against the fuel price increase and the government's controversial chemical fertilizer ban.	Sri Lanka police arrest over 45 for organising protests in violation of ban. Economynext. Published 8 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
56	8 th July 2021	NuwaraEliya	Four people including Nuwara Eliya district JVP organiser Manjula Suraweera Arachchi was arrested over a protest held in Hatton against the proposed Kotelawala Defence University Bill.	Sri Lanka police arrest over 45 for organising protests in violation of ban. Economynext. Published 8 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
57	7 th July 2021	Badulla	Five persons including Samantha Vidyaratna and Namal Karunaratne were arrested for allegedly violating quarantine regulations during a protest they organized in Borlanda in Badulla district on 1st July 2021. The former JVP Provincial Councillor and the national organiser of All Ceylon Farmers' Federation and the other arrestees had organized a protest against the fertilizer import ban. After they went to Police on 7th July, based on a summon made by Bogahakumbura Police, they were arrested and presented before the Welimada Magistrate. They were ordered to be released on personal bails on the same day.	Five including Samantha Vidyaratna and Namal Karunaratne have been arrested for violating quarantine regulations, says Police Spokesman DIG Ajith Rohana. Adaderana. Published 7 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Five arrested for participating in farmers protests, Police looking for two JVPers. The Morning. Published 3 rd July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
58	8 th July 2021	Colombo	Thirty-three people including Ceylon Teachers' Union General Secretary Joseph Stalin were arrested over a protest held against the proposed Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) Bill. It was held at the Parliament Roundabout in Sri Jayawardenapura, Kotte in Colombo District with the participation of trade unions and student rights groups. The Welikada Police officers accused the protestors engaged in an unlawful assembly in violation of quarantine regulations, caused severe public disturbance, inconvenienced the ambulances traveling towards the Sri Jayawardenapura Hospital and obstructed traffic on Parliament Road. On 9th July, the court ordered the suspects to be released on bail. Upon their release they were forcefully taken for quarantining.	Sri Lanka police arrest over 45 for organising protests in violation of ban. Economynext. Published 8 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. CTU's Joseph Stalin and 32 protesters granted bail. Adaderana. 8 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.



Police arresting the Protestors. Photo Courtesy: Adaderana

59	9 th July 2021	Mullaitivu	General Secretary of Ceylon Teachers Union Joseph Stalin and 15 others were forcibly sent off to a quarantine centre in Mullaitivu after they were released on bail on 9th July. Due to continuous protests and criticism by activists, they were finally released from quarantining after one week. Upon their forced quarantining, teachers withdrew from online teaching, demanding their release.	Quarantined protestors in Sri Lanka released several days short of 14-day isolation period. Economynext. Published 16 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
60	25 th July and 5 th August	Kalutara	Chief Police Inspector of Police Head Office had written a letter to the Divisional Secretaries in Horana, Madurawala, and Millaniya DS Divisions with the heading "getting information about an inquiry conducted by Criminal Investigation Department (CID)." The letter had requested information on protests, marches and other meetings organized on the issue of salary anomalies of teachers, who organized such events, where they were held, names of teachers and principals who tested positive for covid-19, and any deaths of teachers and principals due to covid-19. INFORM believes these information were collected in an attempt to repress the protests and create hostile attitudes towards protestors by claiming that protests spread Covid19.	ගුරු-විදුහල්පති අයිතිවාසිකම් අරගලය මර්දනය දිගටම; එක්ව පෙළ ගැසෙමු - ගුරු සහ විදුහල්පති වෘත්තීය සමිති සන්ධානය. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 30 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
61	6 th July 2021	N/A	Sri Lanka banned protests and public meetings until further notice to prevent large gatherings and further spread of COVID-19, based on a letter written by Director General of Health Services Dr Asela Gunawardena to the Inspector General of Police informing him of the decision. However, Gampaha magistrate Manjula Karunarathna stated that protests could not be banned based on a letter from an official.	Sri Lanka bans protests and public meetings till further notice. Economynext. Published 6 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
62	21 st Sep 2021	Colombo	President of Sri Lanka National Association of Principals Mohan Parakrama Wickramasinghe and a female teacher in Dewalapola Vidyalaya in Minuwangoda and Independent Education Workers Union member Ms.Sirini De Silva were summoned to CID and their statements were recorded. They were questioned on their roles related to the protests organized by teachers and principals recently.	ගුරු-විදුහල්පති අයිතිවාසිකම් අරගලය මර්දනය දිගටම; එක්ව පෙළ ගැසෙමු. Sri Lanka Brief. 30 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Tweet. JDS Lanka. Posted 21 st September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
63	8 th Aug 2021	Matara	On 8th of August, former Southern Provincial Councillor Ranjith Munasinghe representing Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) was arrested for not wearing a mask during a protest held on 20th July. He had temporarily removed his mask while speaking to the media. He was arrested when he went to the Police to provide a statement after being summoned by the Police. This arrest seems to be a case of selective prosecution and a reprisal against his participation at the protest, as there were many other instances that public and government officials were not temporarily wearing facemasks while speaking to the media and during events.	Fromer Southern provincial Councilor Ranjith Munasinghe arrested (Video). Hiru News. Published 8 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

			 <p>For example, the Minister of Public Security addressed the media without wearing a mask in Apr 2021. Courtesy: Hiru TV</p>	
64	23 rd Sep 2021	Jaffna	<p>Opposition MP Selvarajah Kajendran was arrested and bundled into a police vehicle for organizing an event for memorializing Thileepan- former Tamil rebel. Video footage shared on social media showed Kajendran resisting arrest and eventually being forced into the police vehicle along with two of his aides at Nallur. The Tamil National People's Front MP had been detained at the memorial, which was held near a temple where Thileepan died in 1987 after staging a hunger strike. Police accused him of violating quarantine regulations. He was later granted Police bail on the same day.</p>  <p>Arresting MP Selvarajah Kajendran. Photo Courtesy: Adaderana</p>	<p>Tweet. Sunanda Deshapriya. Posted 23rd September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>Sri Lanka arrests Tamil MP for commemorating separatist rebel. Aljazeera. Published 24th September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>TNPF MP Selvarasa Gajendran released on police bail. Adaderana. Published 23rd September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
65	29 th Sep 2021	N/A	<p>The State owned sinhala language newspaper Silumina published a fake news article with the headline "Teachers who participated at the protests get covid-19, leading to 25 deaths and 400 covid-19 positive cases." The teachers trade unions wrote a letter to the media minister Dallas Alhapperuma asking to take action on this, as this was fake news seemingly intended to create hate among the public towards teachers who have been protesting on their salary anomalies.</p>	<p>සිළුමිණ පව පුවත ගැන පියවර ගන්න - ගුරු සමිති ඇමැති ඩලස්ට කියති. Sri Lanka Brief. Published 30th September 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
66	11 th Aug 2021	N/A	<p>Cabinet Spokesman and Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said that there was a possibility that the public would attack the protestors, if the teacher Trade Unions did not call off the trade union action at public places. This statement was made in the context when teachers trade unions temporarily halted their protests due to the increasing covid-19 cases in the country. However, this statement seemed as an indirect threat made at the protestors.</p>	<p>In the wake of fast spreading pandemic The public would have assailed protesting teachers: Keheliya. Daily Mirror. Published 11th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>


67	20th July, 2nd Aug, 16th Aug	N/A	<p>President issued multiple gazettes declaring a long list of services as 'essential services' from time to time. These included all types of works related to Sri Lanka Ports Authority, the supply and distribution of fuels, all public transport services, maintenance, security and operational aspects that are essential to carry out such public services, all types of work in District Secretariats, Divisional Secretariats, government officers of all District and Divisional Secretariats, all state banking and insurance services, waste management services by the Local Authorities, all work related to Lanka Sathosa Ltd, Co-operative Wholesale Establishment, Food Commissioner Department, Department of Co-operative Development and Co-operative Societies, all government offices under the Provincial Councils, health services, postal services, special services of delivery of pharmaceuticals and money transactions. Declaring government services as essential services has been a known tactic to stop protests and trade union actions in the government sector in Sri Lanka. This tactic has been used historically by different Presidents since 1978. Soon after this gazette was issued trade unions issued a letter condemning the decision. In the following month, gazettes were issued further extending the same gazette and also declaring services related to health and services related to postal services as essential.</p>	<p>The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No: 2237/23. Published 20th July 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No: 2241/4, Published 16th August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p> <p>The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No. 2239/6, Published 2nd August 2021. Last accessed 15th November 2021.</p>
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	Date	District	Repression of other State officials	Source
68	15 th Aug 2021	Colombo	MP Rishad Bathiudeen has made alleged death threats against a prison doctor. The Prison Department said that it has launched investigations into the incident. The incident reportedly occurred at the dispensary of the Magazine Prison Premises in Welikada Prison where patients were being examined. The Prison Doctor has lodged the complaint claiming that the MP had obstructed his duty and made death threats. MP Rishad Bathiudeen has been held in detention under draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act for his alleged connections with Easter Sunday Attacks. The reasons for such a threat were not reported in the media.	Rishad allegedly threatens doctor at prison: Police, Prisons launch probe. Daily Mirror. Published 23 rd August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
69	6 th July 2021	Colombo	Within 38 days, four Supreme Court judges withdrew from hearing the Fundamental Rights Petition filed by MP Rishad Bathiudeen and his brother Riyad Bathiudeen. Justice Samayawardena is the fourth Supreme Court Judge that refrained from hearing these petitions. Earlier Three judges withdrew from hearing these two petitions. The Fundamental Right petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court seeking an Interim to release them from the custody of the Criminal Investigations Department. They had been arrested and detained due to an alleged connection with Easter Sunday Terror attack under draconian anti-terror legislation 'Prevention of Terrorism Act'. Withdrawal of 4 judges within such a short period brings doubts whether there has been a difficult situation or any influences on judges that prevent them acting independently. They were granted bail later in October.	SC judge recuses himself from considering Bathiudeen brothers' FR petitions. Daily News. Published 28 th May 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. FR filed by Bathiudeen brothers: Justice Samayawardena declines to hear. Daily News. Published 6 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Another SC judge recuses himself from considering Bathiudeen brothers' rights petitions. Colombopage. Published 5 th June 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. SC judge recuses himself from considering Bathiudeen brothers' FR petitions. Adaderana. Published 28 th May 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
70	15 th Sep 2021	Colombo	Two policemen have sustained injuries during a raid on a heroin hideout at Dematagoda. Five suspects have been arrested in connection with the incident. This has occurred when six policemen attached to the Colombo Crime Division (CCD) led by a Sub Inspector of Police engaged in an operation to arrest a drug trafficker at Kalipulla area in Dematagoda in Colombo following a tip off. Then a group of supporters of the suspect attacked the policemen with clubs and projectiles to prevent the suspect from being arrested by police. The injured Policemen have been admitted to the National Hospital in Colombo.	Cops injured in heroin raid: Five arrested. Daily Mirror. Published 16 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
71	19 th July 2021	Anuradhapura	Two Police officers have been knocked down by an illegal sand miner transporting sand. The injured sergeants were officers of the Criminal Investigations	Two Police Sergeants knocked down by sand miner. Daily Mirror. Published 19 th July 2021.

			Branch of the Kekirawa Police. One of them has been admitted to the Kekirawa hospital and the other to the Dambulla Base Hospital. A group of four police officers had carried out the raid on an illegal sand mining site, when a tractor transporting sand had fled to evade the Police. The two officers on a motorcycle had given chase and overtaken the tractor, when the driver had knocked them down. The suspect driver has been arrested.	Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
72	22 September 2021	Colombo	A Police officer has been injured during a drug raid in Obesekarapura, Rajagiriya area in Colombo, when a suspected drug dealer has driven a vehicle knocking down a Police officer. The officer sustained injuries to his head and leg after falling off the speeding vehicle and has been admitted to hospital for medical treatment. Two suspects have been arrested in connection with the incident while the vehicle used by them has also been taken into custody.	පොලීස් නිලධාරියා අනතුරට ලක් කළ යැකකරු රිමාන්ඩ්. Lankadeepa. Published 24 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. Main suspect in Rajagiriya drug raid incident surrenders to court. Adaderana. Published 24 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
73	15 th Sep 2021	Colombo	Two persons who were not wearing facemasks have assaulted a railway train guard of Dehiwala railway station when he had asked them to wear facemasks. 20 years and 37 years old suspects are residents in Dehiwala. The suspects have been arrested and presented before a magistrate.	මාස්ක් නැතිව කෝවිඩයට නඟින්න එපා කී දුම්රිය නියාමකට පහරදීම. Mawbima. Published 15 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
74	15 th Sep 2021	Anuradhapura	A Public Health Inspector (PHI) in Kekirawa has been assaulted by a monk for asking to come on the following day to receive the second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine as the day's vaccine quota has been finished. The incident occurred at the Medical Officer of Health (MoH) Office in Kekirawa. The suspect monk has been arrested based on a complaint made by the PHI.	එන්නත ගන්න හෙට එන්න කීවාම විවරධාරියා සොබා පරීක්ෂකට පහරදීම. Mawbima. Published 16 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
75	19 th Sep 2021	Kalutara	Two Police officers in Aluthgama Police have been assaulted by a suspect and their relatives while trying to arrest a suspect in Pinhena area in Beruwala. They have also threatened to attack them with a club. Later a team of Police officers have arrested the suspects.	හමුදා සෙබළුන්ට පහර දුන් සැකකරු අල්ලන්න ගිය පොලීසියට ප්‍රහාරයක්. Mawbima. Published 19 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
76	16 th Aug 2021	Matara	The residents of a quarantined house have attempted to assault and have verbally abused Public Health Inspectors (PHI) when PHIs have witnessed that the quarantined residents have been drinking alcohol with a group of friends violating health guidelines. They have arrived there based on a tip off they have received. Two persons have been arrested following a complaint made by the PHIs. This incident had occurred in Kottegoda area in Dikwella MOH area.	නිරෝධායන නිවෙසක මත්පැන් සාදයක් වටලන්න ගිය සොබා පරීක්ෂකලාට තර්ජන. Mawbima. Published 16 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

77	12 th Aug 2021	Matale	The Chairperson of Central Province Road Passenger Transport Authority (CPRPTA) Hasitha Wijetilake has been threatened with death by another officer working in Matale insisting them to be promoted as a Deputy Manager. Though the person who threatened him has made various influences through politicians and other persons, Wijetilake has been of the opinion that the person does not have necessary qualifications to be appointed to the relevant position. Then he had made a threatening phone call saying that he would kill Wijetilake at the head office of CPRPTA located in Pallekele.	මධ්‍යම මගී ප්‍රවාහන අධිකාරියේ සභාපතිට මරණ තර්ජන කළ නිලධාරියෙක් ගැන පරීක්ෂණයක්. Mawbima. Published 12 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
78	28 th Sep 2021	Colombo	Colombo Municipal Councilor Mohamed Ramsey was arrested by the Cinnamon Garden Police for threatening the treasurer of Colombo Municipal Council. He has been released on surety bail of 50,000 LKR after being produced before the Colombo Additional Magistrate. Earlier a group of administrative staff of CMC have organized a protest seeking justice regarding the incident.	Colombo Municipal Councilor arrested for threatening Municipal Treasurer. Daily Mirror. Published 28 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. නාගරික මන්ත්‍රී මොහොමඩ් රමසිට ඇප. Lankadeepa. Published 28th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

	Date	District	Other incidents	Source
79	22nd July, 22nd August, 22nd September	N/A	Gazettes calling on the armed forces to maintain public order were reissued in July, August and September, providing the military with additional powers to intervene in civilian affairs. Human rights defenders, families of victims, and survivors of violations fear that this may lead to more intimidation and surveillance of them, and restrictions on activities that may be perceived as dissent.	The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No. 2237/12. Published 20 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No. 2241/6. Published 16 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021. The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No. 2245/34. Published 17 th September 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
80	30 th Aug 2021	N/A	On 30th August, Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency under the extra-ordinary gazette 2243/1, claiming that emergency regulations are required “to ensure the Public Security and wellbeing and maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community” “in the context of the COVID – 19.” Regardless of the reason, when the state of emergency is declared, it provides a wide range of powers to the President with only limited checks and balances. Emergency regulations have been abused in the past, has led to the shrinking space of dissent, and crimes in the hand of the state and non-state actors.	The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, EXTRAORDINARY No. 2243/1. Published 30 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
81	4 th Sep 2021	Colombo	A lawyer has been threatened and faced with an attempted assault inside the Kochchikade Police premises. Attorney-at-law M.N.M. Fazeer has written a letter to the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to look into the incident as the Police have failed take a legal action against the suspect. When Fazeer represented a client arrested by the Police, another person have verbally abused Fazeer at the presence of Officer-In-Charge (OIC) of the Police station.	සෞච්ඡික කුළුණිම පහර දීමට හැඳුම්පතක් එරෙහිව රාජකාරි ඉටුකර නැහැ. Mawbima. Published 20 th July 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.
82	16 th Aug 2021	Colombo	Prof. Vickramabahu Karunaratne, General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) was summoned to the Slave Island Police Station at 10 am on 16th August 2021. However, he was later informed not to come today, as the police station was "busy". On the previous day, he had been questioned by police why Muslims are allowed to get membership of the NSSP and the matter drew media attention. The police have not informed them of a date to re-summon.	Facebook . Nava Sama Samaja Party. Posted 16 th August 2021. Last accessed 15 th November 2021.

83	20th September And 30th September	Colombo	<p>Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) Member of Parliament (MP) Manusha Nanayakkara was summoned to CID regarding a media statement he made over the data deletion in the National Medicine Regulatory Authority (NMRA). In his media statement, MP Nanayakkara alleged that Antigen Test kits could not be imported to Sri Lanka as the information on the companies that applied to import Antigen Test kits to Sri Lanka has been deleted from the government servers in a context only one company of which owners having close links with the ruling government were chosen to import the antigen test kits. He also alleged that the NMRA database was handled by Sri Lanka Telecom, the government telecommunication provider and its Chairperson and the company's chairperson were close colleagues. At the time of deletion, NMRA database has been directly handled by a private company named Epic Lanka. Based on a complaint made by the Sri Lanka Telecom for damaging its brand name, Nanayakkara was summoned to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), even though the complaint was not relating to a criminal charge. According to Newsfirst, the data of the NMRA were initially stored on the government cloud operated by Sri Lanka Telecom under the supervision of the ICTA, however later NMRA has chosen to hand over the management of the data cloud to a private entity through a tender process carried out by the ICTA. Opposition members alleged that data loss of two terabytes was not a mistake as the system had necessary security precautions to avoid such a deletion by accident. While there could be factual errors in the statement made by the MP Nanayakkara, how the incident was handled seemed as an attempt to intimidate dissenting Opposition politicians.</p>	<p>Media statement made by MP Nanayakkara. A5 News sri Lanka. Published 3rd Sep 2021.</p> <p>MP Manusha summoned to CID. Daily News. Published 1st Oct 2021. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.</p> <p>What happened to the NMRAs Data Cloud ? Newsfirst. Published 23rd Aug 2021. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.</p> <p>Manusha sends lawyer to CID to question why he's being summoned. Newsfirst. Published 20th Sep 2021. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.</p> <p>Manusha Nanayakkara summoned to CID. Daily Mirror. Published 30th Sep 2021. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.</p> <p>SLT files legal action against Manusha Nanayakkara. The Morning. Published 3rd Nov 2021. Last accessed 17 Nov 2021.</p>
			 <p>MP Manusha Nanayakkara along with the leader opposition in front of CID. Photo courtesy: Daily Mirror</p>	