



General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 September 2021

English only

Human Rights Council

Forty-eighth session

13 September–1 October 2021

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by Association des étudiants tamouls de France, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 August 2021]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Tamil Eelam Under Heavy Militarization and Occupation

The armed forces of Sri Lanka consist of the Army, Navy and Air Force. According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies February 2019, “The Military Balance”, the Sri Lankan military has 2,55,000 active members. This is larger than the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (146,390), Israel (168,550), France (203,910), and Saudi Arabia (227,000).

The 2,40,000 personnel of the Sri Lankan military remain in the North-East region, including around 60,000 in Mullai-theevu District, and continue to occupy lands belonging to the Tamil and Muslim people.

Sri Lankan Navy brutally assaults Tamil fishers in Mullaith-theevu on Thursday, 09 July 2020. The current militarisation of Tamil North-East highlights the intensifying risks to journalists and Tamil activists, who already face intense police and military surveillance, as well as threats of violence and increased inhuman harassment.

Education under Militarization

Higher Education, Department of Health and department of Agriculture are being militarized and privatized by the Sinhala Buddhist fascist government. It has introduced Koththalavalai national defence University Act and amendments in the University laws that engulf the democracy in education, clearly rebuff free education to all citizens and convert education into commodity.

Due to this communal militarization the former Vice Chancellor was asked to resign and the professor and head of the department of Legal Studies was forced to resign for no valid and adequate reason. All the associations in the university of East and that of Jaffna condemned and dissented against all forms of interferences of the Sinhala military and politicians in the field of education. The intellectuals, professors, non-teaching staff, and social activists and human rights activists conducted a public rally against military-market education, militarized education and communal education.

Kidnapping by Military

On 10. 08. 2021 Sarkunasingam Thamizhini (32 years old), her daughters (5 years old) and (4 years old) were found missing from the home. They were at home on the day at Maharambaikulam, Vauniya district. The husband of Thamizhini reported to the policemen. He doubts that the military might have kidnapped them.

On 10. 07. 2021 K. A. and her two children were abducted at Nagar Illuppaikulam, Vauniya. Her husband doubts that this abduction might be done by the Sinhala military for forced prostitution in North and East Provinces.

It is doubted that Mr. Balasundraraja Prabhakaran was kidnapped by the military on 5. 06. 2020. He was going for business from Mallavi to Vauniya. He is living at Balinagar, Vaunikulam. His wife has complained in the police station.

Intimidation by Military

The Sinhala communal military intimidates the Thamizh media persons, the Thamizh educationists, the Thamizh politicians, the Thamizh lawyers, the Thamizh social activists, the Thamizh human rights activists, the Thamizh social movements, the Thamizh priests and nuns and the Thamizh civilians by filing false case, standing and watching the houses of the women leaders of forced disappeared people, checking and interrogation, kidnapping or abduction and appearing with weapons in front of the civilians.

On 06. 08. 2021 journalists and priest went to the Human rights forum of Amparai district and complained that the police of Uppuveli station have filed a case against them against the

law. The police have failed to file a case on the person who has produced a fake video on relief work that has not taken place.

Media oppression plays a vital role against the Thamizhs in the Northern and Eastern provinces in order to suppress the uprisings of Thamizhs that should not made known to the international world. The media brought out scams done by the government officers with the permission of ministers, illegal confiscation of Thamizh land by the archaeological department, illegal establishment of alcohol factory in Thamizh area and unlawful activities by the Sinhala military and policemen to the public through their media. They were tortured and intimidated by the military and police.

They were denied to remember the death of journalists in front of the cemetery of those journalists in Batticola. Unlawful confiscation of land of pasture, taking land for military, well-planned Sinhala settlement in the land of Thamizhs and under the Sinhala civil protection section the Thamizh home land is being distributed to the Sinhala people, in the name of free economic zone the Sinhalese were settled in Batticola were brought to the lime light by the Thamizh media. Mr. V. Krishnakumar, the president and Mr. S. Nilanthan, the secretary of Union of Journalists of Batticola district was interrogated for three hours, kept under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and intimidated him. Their face book, account, mail and Whatsapp were blocked by the police and military.

Mrs. Thambiraja Selvrani participated in the protest of the relatives of the enforced Disappearance took place on 27. 07.2020 in Batticoloa Dstrict. Three days before this protest (24. 07. 2020) the leader of the relatives of the enforced Disappearance in Batticoloa district Mrs. A. Amalanayagi has informed me that the relatives of the enforced disappearance of eight districts will conduct this protest with the permission of police officers at Sengaladi in Eravur. On 27. 07. 2020 the police officers, CID and military people came to the protest place and ordered the people to disperse without conducting public protest, because we have brought the copy of the court order for not conducting the protest. The leader of Batticoloa Mrs. Amalanayagi responded to the police officers "you gave permission on 24. 07. 2020 for conducting this public protest. Now you are not allowing us to do this".

They turned their deaf ears to their cry saying that they have got the court order for not conducting this protest. The relatives of the forced disappeared people wept and pleaded for the permission to conduct this protest. But they gave a copy of the court order to Mrs. Amalanayagi and said that for further details you can appear in the court of Batticoloa on 12. 08. 2020 and get the information. You cannot conduct any meeting in Eravur for 14 days. They never allowed us to conduct the protest. Finally we dispersed after trying all the possibilities. She was physically present there witnessing all these events in Eravur.

On 15.08. 2021 Sunday night the army soldiers turned off the flashing electric lights on the streets of Ponnalai West area of Jaffna, threatened people and searched houses. They also chased and attacked the Thamizh youths in the area. The youth fled the area and civilians fled their homes and took shelter in th fields, as they were frightened of the aggressive action of the Srilankan army soldiers. People in this area registered complaint with the Vadukkottai police station in connection with the attack by Srilankan Army soldiers and intimidation by breaking into people's houses in Ponnalai West. The Jaffna district commander of the Srilankan army has been asked for clarification on Ponnalai incident by Human rights commission on 20. 08. 2021.

Militarized Health Department

After military taking the responsibility of health department of the nation health of the nation is being deteriorated very badly. Security force intimidation of garment workers is particularly acute in the Thamizh-majority north of Srilanka, which has remained heavily militarized since the end of the civil war in 2009. Human Rights Watch called on the Srilankan government, factory owners and international clothes brand sourcing from Srilanka to protect the safety, employment rights and right to health of garment workers during the covid-19 pandemic. The Srilankan military has no plan for controlling the spread of Covid - 19 in Srilankam particularly in the Northern and Southern Provinces that are homelands of Thamizhs.

Dr. Nalinda Jayatissam the former JVP Member of Parliament said that data and information on covid deaths and positive cases are manipulated at the need of the President. He also said the president had got the health officials (Military officers) to convince people that the virus has not spread in the community as yet. He urged the Srilankan Health Ministry Secretary, Director General of Health Services and Chief Epidemiologist not to become a cat's paw of the Gotabaya government by issuing manipulated data on Covid – 19 situations.

Militarization of the Civil Administration

The Rajapaksa government has rapidly expanded the role of the military by appointing serving and retired military officers for the civil administrations and creating several special “task forces.”

Over 30 state agencies, including the police and the nongovernmental organization secretariat (NGO Secretariat), which regulates civil society groups, have been placed under the Defence Ministry. The Defence Ministry has led the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and has failed to uphold the government's responsibility to ensure that response measures do not target or discriminate against particular religious or ethnic groups.

We ask to the HRC Members to:

- organize a Special session on Sri Lanka as earlier possible.
- Refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court.
- have a new Resolution under Agenda 4 to appoint a special Rapporteur to monitor and investigate ongoing human rights violations and repression against the Eelam Tamils.

Gouvernement en Exil du Tamil Eelam, GLOBAL TAMIL MOUVEMENT, Association des Droits de l'Homme de Nevers, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.