



PAFFREL

**Parliamentary General Elections –2010
Third interim report – 7th April 2010**

1. Introduction

All arrangements have been made by the Election Commissioner's Office to hold the general election scheduled for tomorrow the 8th April 2010 to elect representatives to the supreme legislative body of the Country.

2. Pre Election Period

PAFFREL commenced its observation on the day of nominations on 19th February 2010 and continued without interruption up to 7th April 2010, and only a few more hours are left to end this pre election period. During the early part of the pre election period the reports received from our observers reveal that there had been 142 violent incidents. When compared with the violent incidents that occurred during the pre election period of, 2004 General Elections, and the Parliamentary Elections held recently the above figure indicates a significant reduction in violence. However, a week before the elections an increasing trend in violence have been reported with an unfortunate homicide within the final 3 days of the pre election period, thus indicating a dangerous situation. At 11 pm on 04.04.2010, Mr. Jeevan Prasanna Jayawardane a 22 year old supporter of UPFA from Mawatha area in Kurunegala District while traveling in the cab MW TB 3968 belonging to the North Western Provincial Council was shot and killed by unidentified men.

Further since the day of nominations, reports received from all our mobile observers have indicated 298 incidents out of which 270 incidents were confirmed while 28 remained unconfirmed. During the pre election period of the 2004 General elections, reports indicated 235 violent incidents out of a total of 293 incidents that were reported. Similarly at the Presidential Elections held in 2010 and during the pre election period, 757 incidents were reported of which 503 incidents were violent in nature. A comparison of incidents of violence at the two elections therefore indicate a somewhat reduction in violence at the Parliamentary General Elections. However what is striking out of the reports received from our mobile monitors is the eruption of violence within the supporters of the same party coupled with display of illegal propaganda, misuse of state property and power. An increase in violence during the past few days had been observed and the most number of incidents had been identified from the Central Province. Out of the Districts, Kandy District had shown the highest number of violence followed by Nuwara Eliya, Badulla and Kurunegala. Taken as a whole our observers indicate that during the pre election period most number of incidents had taken place in the electoral District of Udunuwara and at the 2004 Elections it was identified at the electoral district of Hiniduma..

3. Assaults

Out of the total incidents reported, mostly were the assaults of rivals and 64 such incidents have been confirmed. Kandy District has indicated the recorded number of assaults followed by the Districts of Nuwara Eliya, Anuradhapura and Kurunegala. Similarly at the General Elections of 2004 there were 89 such incidents and the corresponding figure at the 2010 Presidential Election was 168 inclusive of 41 unconfirmed incidents.

4. Damage to Party Offices

Attacks of political party offices have been reported and there had been a total of 27 such incidents. In the Districts of Hambantota, Kurunegala, and Badulla an increase in the number of such incidents had been reported. At the 2010 Presidential Elections there were 185 confirmed and 21 non confirmed incidents.

More over attack on movable and immovable properties numbering 21 had been reported and confirmed out of which the most prominent were attacks on houses and torching of vehicles, and such incidents took place mostly in the Gampaha District. At the 2010 Presidential Elections there were 38 confirmed and 5 unconfirmed incidents.

5. Conflicts among the same party candidates

A very disturbing feature at this election is infighting between the supporters of the same party for preferential votes which synthesizes with the prevailed system of election. 54 incidents of infighting have been reported with 51 confirmed and 3 not confirmed and most assaults had taken place in the District of Kandy and a few of such incidents are given below.

1. On 02.04.2010 a conflict had arisen among supporters of the two UPFA candidates, Mr. Duminda Dissanayake and Mr. S.M.Chandrasena of Kalawewa Electoral Division in Anuradhapura District. Their supporters were returning after attending a meeting in Kekirawa, and at Eppawala a conflict among them had ensued. As a result 10 were injured and admitted to Anuradhapura Hospital.
2. On 04.04.2010 at about 8 p.m a musical show had been held in Attampitiya bus stand which is in Badulla Hali Ela electoral Division. A conflict had ensued between the supporters of Dilan Perera and another candidate of UPFA. As a result two were injured and R.M. Sumanasiri with minor injuries was admitted to Atampitiya Rural Hospital.
3. On 05.04.2010 a conflict ensued between the supporters of UPFA candidates Mr. Ranjith Abeyratne and Mr. Ranjith Maddumabandara of Moneragala District. Supporters and vehicles belonging to the former were attacked by the supporters of Mr. Ranjith Maddumabandara

Further 53 supporters of the same party had been hospitalized on 19 occasions. Out of the 36 occasions reported during the period UPFA accounted for 52%. The number of UPFA supporters hospitalized as a result of infighting was 67% of the total number of 78 hospitalized from all incidents during the period.

6. Misuse of State Property

In addition to above incidents, written complaints and phone calls are continuously being received regarding the misuse of state authority, resources, and the services of state officials. There were 20 confirmed reports in this connection. It has also been observed that for propaganda work Government buildings and vehicles have also been used. Moreover appointments, transfers, interdictions at this election period have also been observed.

7. Other Incidents Reported

Apart from above following incidents of bomb explosions, threats, intimidation, destroying of private property, dismantling and torching of cutouts, disturbing propaganda work of rival candidates have also been reported.

1. On 05.04.2010 in the Kelaniya Electoral Division of Gampaha District, the office that was in front of the house of the candidate of New Democratic Front Mr. Canisus Palihawadane was attacked by an unidentified gang who had arrived in a van at 1.15 a.m. They had not only destroyed the decorations that were in front of the party office but had also destroyed the cut outs of Mr. Canisus and Mr. Sarath Fonseka and a few of these also had been taken away in the vehicle they came.
2. On 04.04.2010 in the Bibile electoral Division of Moneragala District, the cab in which UNF candidate Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri was traveling was attacked and damaged at 9.50 p.m by a group of people in Medagama, when he was traveling towards the hospital from the city of Madegama. Even though the cab was damaged Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri and his supporters who were in the vehicle escaped unhurt.
3. On 04.04. 2010 in the Electoral Division of Kalawana in Ratnapura District a conflict had arisen between the supporters of UNF candidate who were engaged in the publicity campaign of Dunesh Gankanda, with the supporters of UPFA and the vehicle of a supporter was attacked.

8. Illegal Propaganda

Even though the Election Commissioner has ordered to stop all election related propaganda work at mid night of 05.04.2010 but in the Districts of Colombo, Kandy and Galle, posters, cutouts and banners are still being displayed.

However in the other Districts most of the illegal propaganda, cutouts and banners have been removed by the Police. In this connection it has to be noted that the delay in

removal of this illegal propaganda will certainly have a debilitating effect on the conduct of an impartial election in the Country

Criteria to Elect the Candidates

At this Parliamentary election you as a voter may be aligned and has worked to a particular political party, or may be working for an independent candidate, yet when you elect your representatives you are entrusting the formulation of laws, economic and social development and the entire administration of the country for six years to these elected candidates. After the election you have no authority to call them back. Hence in the process of selecting candidates we request to focus your attention to the criteria given below and select the most suitable group of people to govern the country.

01. The prospective candidates were not and are not involved in gruesome acts of violence.
02. He/she conducted the election campaign respecting the prevailing election Laws of the Country.
03. He is not a person who had indulged and who is indulging in business that impedes social welfare and has earned enormous wealth through such means and has come to the fore front in society as a result.
04. A disciplined and exemplary person respected by people.
05. A person who has a vision and has introduced strategies to improve the economic and social development of the area concerned.
06. A person who has done some service during the last 6 years to the area concerned.
07. He has already identified the resources and the necessities of the electoral district concerned and is of sympathetic concern to the needs especially of poor, feeble and all persons who are socially, politically, and economically weak and vulnerable.
08. Should be capable and be able to actively and willingly participate to remove all impediments to national unity and is a capable person to build up consensus at local and national level to remove all obstacles to unity as a nation.
09. Must be sensitive to the cultural and linguistic, religious and wellbeing of the people.

Taking into consideration the above facts PAFFREL kindly requests you to select the representative of your choice early morning on the Day of the Elections.

Confirm Identification

Even if you have not received the official ballot paper you are permitted to cast your vote after proving your identity which is compulsory. Hence at the time of voting any one of the following IDs should be in your possession to prove your identity.

1. National identity card issued by the Registration of Persons Department
2. Valid passport
3. Valid driving license
4. Government Pensioner's identity card
5. Elder's identity card
6. Identity card issued to clergy by the Registration of Persons Department
7. Temporary identity card issued by the Commissioner of Elections and by the Registration of Persons Department for the Presidential Elections, and the temporary IDs issued for the Provincial Council Elections excluding the ID issued for the Eastern Provincial council Elections
8. Temporary identity card issued by the Commissioner of Elections

After casting the vote and without unnecessarily congregating around the polling stations the voters are advised to be involved in their daily activities. Such action will not only prevent the eruption of violent incidents but also would enable to protect the inalienable rights of the voters.



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