



25-08-2006

Dear Sir/Madam

Urgent Appeal

There are more than 7000 students following different courses of education at the University of Jaffna. Out of this number over 2000 students are from the districts of Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Vavuniya, Batticaloa and Ampara. About 800 students stay in the University hostels and others have rented out rooms in private houses.

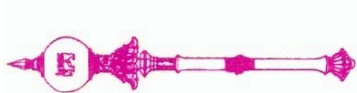
In this situation, from time to time they carried out protest demonstrations democratically against the iniquitous arrests, tortures, abductions and molests of innocent civilians by the Sri Lanka Army and EPDP in the Jaffna peninsula and were successful in creating an awareness among the people and international community about the hooliganism of the Sri Lanka forces.

So the Sri Lanka forces are trying to utilize this current belligerent environment, in order to fulfill eliminate the students leaders. The forces and the ministry of defense are creating wrong opinions about the students in the international community. The forces have been spreading false information that weapons are concealed in the university and University hostel, training provided in the university premises and the involvement of the University students in the attacks against the forces.

The students participated only in the democratic protest marches, road blockades, and boycotting duties but not in any hostile activity against the forces. Even then the army attacked the students and tried to eliminate them on several occasions such as the incidents listed below.

On Monday -14. 08. 2006 when the curfew was relaxed and when the students staying in the university hostel were at the entrance of the hostel, the army attached to Urelu Camp arrived there in civil clothing and hurled a grenade towards the students. The delay in the explosion of the grenade made the students to prostrate on the ground. In this incident Dayalan a totally blind 2nd year student was injured and admitted to the Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

On 16.08.2006 when the curfew was relaxed Sivasnagar of Jaffna University and K Pratheepan of Advanced Technical Institute went out to the shop 500 meters from the University located in front of the play ground, to buy food items. The army intelligence attached to the Urelu Camp who was waiting in the area shot dead the two students. The aim of the Sri Lankan forces in killing these two students is to instigate the other students to launch demonstrations and use it as a pretext to attack them and perhaps even kill them.



The Vice Chancellor of the University of Jaffna, Prof.A.Kumaravadival, and Additional District Judge for Jaffna, Mrs. Srinithy Nanthasegaran, were notified of the dangers facing the students. They together with the Government Agent for Jaffna, Mr.K.Ganesh contacted the army, informed them that the students are innocent and requested the forces to cease the severities imposed on the students and district army commanders to ensure their protection.

In return the army stated that the weapons are concealed in the university, and students are being trained with a plan to attack the forces. The Additional District Judge, Vice Chancellor, and the Government Agent discussed the allegations of the army and explained that the students are innocent and do not possess any weapon. But as the suspicion of the army could not be cleared, the army said that the university should be checked. Hence the Additional District Judge granted permission and the Vice Chancellor too consented to the request of the army. In such a situation on Friday – 18.08.2006, around 3,000 soldiers encircled the Jaffna University including the hostels and informed the Vice Chancellor. They told the Vice Chancellor that they wanted to check the university, requested him to be present, and so he also went with them. All the rooms of the university Students' hostels were rummaged and the students were severely intimidated.

The army entered into the hostel on the cover of checking. They had taken the photographs of all the 110 students present at that time and had also taken video. They had noted down their details such as names, addresses, and family particulars.

They are presently trying to search and arrest all the presidents, secretaries, and treasures along with the committee member of all the five student unions of the five faculties. As only a few of them were in the hostel, the army assaulted and scolded them in filthy language.

This is a violation of the fundamental rights and silencing the democratic voice of students. During the checking several students were brutally attacked and some students walking on the staircase were pushed down the stairs by the army.

Possessions of the students such as cash, walkman Radio, several mobile phones, , one phone worth over Rs 86000/= were stolen by the army from their hostel rooms. They were warned that they would be killed, if they lodged a complaint with anyone.

While the checking was taking place the President of the University Students' Union was in his Office room. The forces arrested the Union President and severely assaulted him. When this incident was going on, the Vice Chancellor was in the Students' Hostel. The army took him to the students' complex, told him that they had arrested a person and showed him to the Vice Chancellor.



When he looked at the arrested person, Vice Chancellor told that he knew him well; he is the new President of the University Students' Union – Mr. S. Pakeerathan of the Arts Faculty, 3rd Year.

The soldiers, who did not accept the opinion of the Vice Chancellor, arrested the Union President Sivarajah Pakeerathan and handed him over to the police. They showed some documents to have been taken from the Students' Union office room. These documents were in fact put there by the soldiers themselves to create the evidence to justify his arrest.

When the army carried the search they did not bring to the notice of the vice chancellor that they have found any bomb. If the army had found any bomb, they should have shown those bombs to the vice chancellor or to others who were in the University. But the army had failed to do this.

The army has since then been making propaganda through the government and military media that they recovered 15 bombs from the Jaffna University.

At the same time, Sri Lanka forces had demolished the monument erected by the students in the memory of the fallen heroes who studied in the University and later joined the liberation struggle and sacrificed their lives. The monument put up with a cost of several million demolished by the army has enraged not only the students but also the Vice-chancellor, University professors, lectures, employees and others including the government agent, government officers and the public.

The Tamil National Alliance vehemently condemns this barbarous immoral behavior of the Sri Lanka forces. On Sunday 20.08.2006 Vice-chancellor Prof.A.Kumaravadivel briefing the media, denied the government media report that bombs had been recovered from the University and said that the press release was based on false information.

Again on the same day afternoon when curfew was in force, the forces with heavy vehicles and weapons surrounded the University premises without the permission of the Judge or Vice Chancellor and on the pretext of a search, caused tension among the students. The army stayed there till 8:00 pm.

The government of Sri Lanka removed the proscription on Liberation Tigers on signing the peace accord. There after it is legal to have the photographs of the Leader of Liberation Tigers V.Pirapakaran and of the fallen heroes in the houses or offices.

In such a circumstance the Sinhala Army showed the photographs of the LTTE Leader V.Pirapakaran and the fallen heroes to the media to mislead the international community that the University Students Union office is an office of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam.



Mr. Sivaraja Pakeerathan - President of the University Students Union was elected only a month back as president and was accepted by the University Administration.

At present, the students are debarred from communicating with their parents or to travel to their native residences by ship. The students are warned by the forces that they should not involve in any democratic agitation inside or outside the University.

As such I request you to understand the conspiracy of the Sri Lanka forces in fabricating false charges on the president of the University Students Union and depicting the students as extremists to justify killing the students staying in the hostel. I appeal to you to take immediate and appropriate action to rescue all the students entangled in this peril.

Thanking you.

Yours truly,
S.Kajendren.MP