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அனைத்து பல்கலைக்கழக மாணவர் ஒன்றியம்
INTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' FEDERATION

Students' Union, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Gangodawila, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka.
www.iusfsl.org media.iusfsl@gmail.com +9471-6 067 106

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Report on Assault, Abduction, Imprisonment and Intimidation of Peaceful Protestors

There was serious public opposition to the Podujana Peramuna government lead by President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa. Eventually, President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa had to flee the country and the Podujana Peramuna government, including Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who had a two-thirds majority in Parliament, had to resign. This historic popular uprising did not happen by accident and many grave reasons can be identified.

The government failed to control the COVID-19 pandemic that started spreading across the country from March 2020. No emergency measures were taken and instead, various dubious practices were employed. Ignoring guidelines of the health authorities, using military force and arbitrarily imposing force on the public, not allocating finances at a time when emergency allocations for healthcare was essential, and COVID patients were left to die on the streets. Shattering the expectations of 6.9 million voters, the role of the government was limited to media shows only.

At a time when people's sources of income had been lost due to the COVID pandemic, agriculture sector was thrown into a deep crisis by introducing an urgent fertilizer policy and it became a far-reaching problem until the impact of a food shortage exacerbating the sufferings of people already experiencing. The farmers' struggle against the arbitrary fertilizer ban became the most serious public opposition to a government in recent history.

At a time when schools and universities were closed and education was disrupted, the Kotelawala National Defence University Act was brought to privatize and militarize education without taking necessary urgent measures. Conspiracies were made in Parliament to pass the Kotelawala National Defence University Act despite the opposition of university students, lecturers, school teachers, trade unions, mass organizations etc. and the people who protested were repressed using the Quarantine Act and the Public Property Act. Five activists of the struggle against the Kotelawala National Defence University Act were illegally imprisoned for five months and sixteen other activists were detained in a military camp under the guise of quarantine.

The historical teachers' struggle that arose in recent history, demanding the removal of wage disparities that have been in place for a period of 22 years, also started with the suppression of the struggle against the Kotelawala National Defence University Act as the proximate cause. On June 8, 2021, the protest against the Kotelawala National Defence University Act by the students' movement for free education near the Parliament roundabout was attacked

and suppressed by brutal police force, and 32 people including teachers' union leaders who joined it were arrested. The government did not release the detainees even though they were granted bail by the court and continued to arbitrarily detain them in an army camp in Mullaitivu area. The teachers' struggle, which was formed as a proximate cause of this repression, expanded its slogans to remove the salary disparities suffered by teachers for years, and eventually it became the largest teacher's struggle in recent history.

The brutal attack on the peaceful demonstration held in front of the American Embassy in Sri Lanka in support of the struggle of American citizens against the killing of George Floyd is also an important milestone that intensified the people's displeasure with the government. Without any reason, the police and anti-riot forces attacked the demonstration and not only young men, women, small children but also elderly citizens were brutally beaten and arrested. That attack, which was a good reflection of the anti-democratic autocracy of the Rajapaksa government, was a strong reason for the formation of serious social opposition around the government.

The government mercilessly increased the prices of goods while income sources were destroyed, crops were lost, jobs were lost and people's lives were being pushed into a serious abyss. Indirect taxes on the people were increased immensely by giving tax concessions to large-scale companies that were earning income. Not only did the prices of goods rise, but the shortage of essential goods also gradually grew. Fuel, gas, kerosene, rice, milk powder queues commenced. Restrictions were imposed on the delivery of goods from shops including Sathosa. Medicines were in short supply in hospitals. Patients, children and pregnant mothers were dying due to lack of essential medicines. Hunger spread across society. Today, out of 58 lakhs families in this country, nine lakhs have fallen into a crisis of not being able to provide food. 38 lakhs families manage hunger by taking only one meal a day.

The Rajapaksa gang and their followers and all the successive rulers who ruled this country for the past 74 years are responsible for this crisis. They looted public money in billions. Tsunami relief scam, white cloth '*Silredi*' scam, MiG Aircraft Deal, Central Bank bond scam, sugar tax are some of the shameless exploitation of public funds. The people were drowned in debt by taking loans from countries all over the world and the people inherited only tragedies like landslides and floods due to the informal development projects carried out with the borrowed money. Most of the borrowed money was not allocated to these informal development projects and they piled up in the politicians' safes. Basic needs like education, health, transportation was restricted, and people's property was sold wholesale. All the governments that ruled this country for 74 years systematically dragged the people from crisis to catastrophe and implemented a policy of personal gain than public benefit. The Rajapaksas and their followers are responsible for a significant part of this crisis. The current economic, political and social crisis is not the creation of the people, it is the creation of the entire ruling regime including the Rajapaksas.

Therefore, demanding the resignation of the government including the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the struggle that arose was not a mere coincidence or an irrational protest, but it was systematically created by the ruling policy implemented by imposing force on the people by oppressing the people economically. The rulers who pushed the society into a

severe economic and political crisis are now trying to consolidate their power by imposing an undemocratic coercive military rule on the society and repressing the people.

Ranil Wickremesinghe, who usurped the presidency by carrying out a constitutional coup after the ouster of Gotabhaya Rajapaksa is a notorious politician with a notorious history of oppressing the people by running torture centers like Batalanda. In the 2019 presidential election, Gotabhaya Rajapaksa was given 69 lakh votes by the people to oust this disgraced politician from power. Therefore, Ranil Wickramasinghe is a person who was rejected by the people even before Gotabaya Rajapaksa. It is clear that when such a person became the executive president with all the powers, it was not a mere coincidence that he undemocratically used military force and unofficial mobs to suppress the protesting people.

Ranil Wickramasinghe, who has no peoples' base, and the followers of the Rajapaksa gang, which still has a parliamentary majority, are currently unleashing massive repression on the people. Repressive incidents such as illegal arbitrary arrests, beatings, abductions, character assassinations, social media campaigns, threats, sudden raids on homes and offices of activists of student organizations, trade unions, and mass organizations are becoming common in this country. They are running a regime that treats the people like terrorists and is spreading fear throughout the society. We strongly urge all of you who read this report to help defeat this repression of the Ranil-Rajapaksa junta and protect the people's struggle for a better life.

1. March 31st - Attack on the Mirihana Protestors

By the beginning of March, people's protests had started in all parts of the country against the scarcity of goods and the pressure of the ever-increasing cost of living. In particular, the electricity cut had reached the limit of 15 hours a day. Fuel queues had started. On a daily basis, people across the country came out of their homes to light candles and hold peaceful protests. In the evening of March 31, the people gathered near the President's residence in Mirihana, Nugegoda, started a peaceful protest against this background.

To suppress this protest, the government suddenly imposed curfew, but the people did not leave the place. The most brutal events begin after that. Unofficial government mobs were subtly included among the protestors to create a conflict. The group pelted stones at the security forces and destroyed a bus belonging to the army by setting fire to it. It was later revealed with evidence that these property damages were caused by mobs led by the government.

Around 08.30 pm the police were deployed and tear gas and water cannons were fired at people. Later, military personnel were deployed, and the protestors were brutally beaten and dispersed. Journalists covering the incident were attacked and camera equipment destroyed. Videos of army officers kneeling on the highway and beating them with sticks and police officers pelting people with stones were circulated on social media.

A large number of people, including four journalists, who were seriously assaulted, were taken to hospital and 54 people were arrested. The arrested group was prosecuted using the

Public Property Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the government tried to brand this protest as a terrorist attack by an extremist group.



<http://www.adaderana.lk/news/81547/several-journalists-including-ad-reporters-injured-during-mirihana-protest>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S81hEVijHQY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyamFeXN0yw>

2. Arresting People Who Criticized the Government on Social Media

People who criticize the government on social media are arrested from time to time. A notable incident here was the arrest of Thisara Anuruddha Bandara, a social activist who had set up a WhatsApp group called Gota Go Home, on April 01 at midnight in Gampola, Atgala area. It was by a group of officers from the Colombo North Crime Division.

The police did not disclose the place where the arrested Thisara Anuradha Bandara was detained and on the night of April 02, the Modara police produced him in the Hulftsdrop Magistrate's Court and subsequently granted bail.



<https://m.facebook.com/NewsfirstSL/videos/news-just-in-activist-thisara-anuruddha-bandara-detained/431623355398445/>

3. April 03rd - All Island Curfew

The government continued to try to intimidate the people by imposing curfew and on April 03, curfew was imposed across the country and people were forced to stay at home. However, people started protesting across the country challenging the curfew.

The students of Peradeniya University held a protest on March 03 protesting against the attack on Mirihana and demanding relief to the people. A large police force intervened in the protest and fired tear gas and batons on two occasions at Galaha junction in front of the university.



<https://www.newsfirst.lk/2022/04/04/protests-erupt-across-sri-lanka-protestors-refuse-to-accept-interim-solution/>

4. April 08th - Water Cannons and Tear Gas Attacks on University Students at Parliament Roundabout

A protest march organized by the Inter-University Student Union was organized on April 8th from Kelaniya University to Parliament Roundabout. However, police and anti-riot units used water cannons and tear gas to block the road near the entrance of the Parliament. A large number of civilians also gathered for this protest and due to this attack, the university students as well as other civilians suffered injuries and physical damages.

Passengers and drivers of vehicles including buses traveling on the roads at that moment were also inconvenienced due to this. The people of the country as well as foreign countries were criticized for this barbaric attack by the government, which did not even consider the children and the elderly.





<https://www.newsfirst.lk/2022/04/08/video-rose-offered-to-police-manning-parliament-barricade/>

5. April 18th - Shooting at Rambukkana

On April 18th, people queued up for three days near the petrol station in Rambukkana town against the non-delivery of fuel and the extraordinary increase in fuel prices on that day. The protest did not end even on April 19 and people started gathering at the protest site in large numbers. In order to disperse the protest, the police started firing tear gas and water cannons on the night of the 18th and then baton attacks as well as sticks and stone attacks.

In order to provide an opportunity to suppress the people brutally, vehicles were set on fire by the government's unofficial gangs with the knowledge of the police, and videos and photos were shared on social media to prove it.

Later, the police opened fire on the protesters. Chaminda Lakshan was killed in these firing attacks using T 56 firearms and Sahindu Rangana, an 18-year-old school student, was shot in the abdomen and seriously injured. A 15-year-old school student, Hasitha Kumara, was also among those injured in the shooting. Another 24 people who were injured in police attacks and firing were taken to hospital. Videos of people chasing after people fleeing from police assaults and firing shots went viral on social media.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZoqeRo_bLQ

6. Arrest of 13 Youth Who Protested at the Polduwa Junction.

Police arrested 13 youths near the parliament demanding the members of parliament to support the no confidence motion. The protesters were handing over a letter to the secretary of the speaker when a senior police officer told them that there has been a court order against their protest but he was unable to produce any documents to prove his claim.

The group including one student still attending school and three females were charged for violating the Parliamentary Privileges Act and was later produced to Kaduwela court and were released on personal bail.

The group has filed Human Rights Complaints and Fundamental Rights Petitions against the ill treatment in the police custody, not allowing access to legal counsel and assaults caused by the police which resulted in some of them seeking medical support.

Several opposition MPs and the opposition leader questioned the parliament and stated their disapproval of the arrest. Amnesty International Regional Director for South Asia Yamini Mishra called on Sri Lanka to drop all charges against the protesters. The Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) also issued a statement regarding the incident, stating that those engaged in the lawful exercise of their right to protest cannot be arrested.



<https://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/archives/77330>

https://www.dailymirror.lk/top_story/Dozen-arrested-for-protesting-near-Parliament/155-236256

<https://www.dailynews.lk/2022/05/05/political/278319/protesters-obstructing-mps-near-entrance-bailed>

7. Attacks on University Students Near Parliament Roundabout

A demonstration organized by the Inter-University Student Union was held near the entrance of the Parliament on the 5th and 6th of May. University lecturers also participated in this protest and a large number of people including trade unions, artists also joined in supporting the students.

The protest was attacked by the government with expired tear gas and CS4 gas used in military operations. A number of students were hospitalized with injuries after being hit by tear gas bullets and a large number of tear gas victims had to be treated for fever and pneumonia-like symptoms.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GZDOO6oVw0>

8. Attacks on Galle Face Protestors

The Galle Face struggle started on 09th of April and on 09th of May, the people involved in the struggle were brutally attacked. A group of around 2,000 consisting of local politicians, ministers, government supporters and thugs were gathered at the Temple Trees under the leadership of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, Ministers Johnston Fernando, Sanath Nishantha, Namal Rajapaksa and other politicians gave motivational speeches and sent the group to the Galle Face protest site.

At that time, there are videos inside the Temple Trees and videos released on social media by local politicians saying that the Galle Face protest will end today'.

The people who came from the Prime Minister's official residence carrying iron rods first attacked the protestors at the 'Maina Go Gama' protest site and set fire to the attics where they were staying. Later, a large group of people suddenly stormed the Galle Face struggle ground and mercilessly attacked the people involved in the struggle and burnt the tents where they were staying.

Minister Sanath Nishantha, Member of Parliament Milan Jayathilaka, Moratuwa Mayor Saman Lal as well as Western Province Deputy Inspector General of Police Desahbandu Tennakone can be shown with video and photo evidence among the mobs that attacked Maina Go Gama and came to Galle Face.

A large contingent of police and army remained at the spot, but at least they did not erect a road block. No intervention was made when the protestors were attacked. Arab Wasantha alias Ashanta Nalaka Wijesinghe, a well-known pro-government thug, beat a protester named Salika Anuranga on the head with iron rods in front of the police. Kamal Gunaratne, who was the secretary of the Ministry of Defence, and the high officials of the police, including the Western Province Deputy Inspector General of Police Deashbandu Tennakoon, should be held responsible for neglecting their duty and not taking any actions to stop the brutal attack made on peaceful protestors. Later, tear gas and water attacks were also hurled at the people involved in the struggle.

In this brutal attack, 223 people were injured and hospitalized, and Salika Anuranga, who was seriously injured, was left disabled due to skull damage.





<https://ceylontoday.lk/2022/05/09/galle-face-green-protest-site-attacks-nine-people-hospitalised/>

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/live-violence-across-sri-lanka-homes-burn-and-pm-resigns>

<https://www.dailymirror.lk/print/recomended-news/Wounded-protesters-push-for-justice-through-blood-sweat-and-pain/277-238697>

9. A Wave of Arrests Across the Country

With the brutal thug attack on the peaceful protest site of Galle Face on May 09, people in all parts of the country started protesting furiously. The people who participated in the attack were attacked and the houses of the politicians were also attacked. The desire of the government, including the Rajapaksa gang, was to create a public disturbance and justify the repression. After that, the government arrested the common people who reacted against the

attack while the people who attacked the Galle Face struggle were at large with no legal action.

Thus, nearly 2000 people were arrested across the country. Cases were filed against them under repressive acts such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Public Property Act, and those responsible for the attack are still at large.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCtSJY7IDRk>

10. Arrest of Amal Salinda

On June 20, Amal Salinda, a front-line activist of the struggle, was arrested saying that he interfered with and obstructed the police's duty. He was remanded until June 07.



<https://mobile.twitter.com/EmDeeS11/status/1538232931583287301>

11. Trying to Use the Prevention of Terrorism Act to Suppress the Struggle

Even now, a big ideological campaign is being carried out under the leadership of the government to brand the people's struggle against the existing regime as an act of terrorism and the activists as terrorists and fascists. Ranil Wickramasinghe and the Ministers of the last few days have been talking about such things. This opinion is being intensively socialized under the knowledge of the rulers through pro-government media and social media.

By socializing this opinion, the government is preparing to prosecute the activists of the struggle through the already passed Prevention of Terrorism Act by making absurd accusations. Therefore, bringing such false accusations to the peaceful people's struggle against their rights and anti-people rule is a reiteration of the government's strict repression.



Law will be applied to people who attacked protesters

on May 9, those engaging in violence, terrorism: Prez

https://www.dailymirror.lk/top_story/Law-will-be-applied-to-people-who-attacked-protesters-on-May-9-those-engaging-in-violence-terrorism-Prez/155-242355

12. Imprisonment of 09 Activists of the Struggle

A demonstration was held in front of the police headquarters on June 09 demanding the implementation of the law against ministers like Sanath Nishantha, Johnston Fernando and Western Province Deputy Inspector General of Police Deshabandu Tennakoon who were involved in the May 09 attack. The protest was brutally dispersed by tear gas and CS4 gas attacks and then the police issued a public press release stating that Colombo Fort Court Magistrate Thilina Gamage issued warrants for the arrest of 09 front-line activists of the struggle. However, the concerned magistrate had not issued such an order. However, the police raided the houses and places where the following persons were suspected to be on many occasions in search of these activists.

- I. Wasantha Mudalige, Convener of Inter-University Student Union
- II. Galvewa Siridhamma Thero, Convener of Inter-University Bhikshu Union
- III. Lahiru Weerasekera, the national organizer of Youth in Change (Wenasaka Tharunya)
- IV. Eranga Gunasekara, National Organizer of Socialist Youth Association
- V. Dhammika Munasinghe, Convener of the Centre for Joint Development Officers
- VI. Social media activist Rathindu Suranga Senaratne
- VII. Jagath Manuvarna, Actor
- VIII. Jehan Srikantha Appuhami, Actor
- IX. Ratkarauwe Jinarathana Thero, the former convener of Inter-University Student Union.

The police also raided the office of Front Line Socialist Party (Peretaguami Samajwadi), which was a registered political party, and carried out forceful searches. Then on June 23, among the activists above named, activists named below,

- I. Lahiru Weerasekera
- II. Eranga Gunasekara
- III. Dhammika Munasinghe
- IV. Rathindu Suranga Senaratne
- V. Jagath Manuvarna

- VI. Jehan Srikanta Appuhami
- VII. Ratkarave Jinarathana Thero

Surrendered to the Maradana Police Station through lawyers and charges were filed against them under the Public Property Act. Later, they were remanded for 8 days and the court granted bail on July 1, accepting the facts pointed out by the lawyers that the filing of charges under the Public Property Act is not legal.



<http://www.adaderana.lk/news/83236/four-anti-govt-activists-under-arrest-granted-bail>

13. Issuance of Warrants to 11 Students Who Protested Against the Repression in Ruhuna and Kelaniya Universities.

The Inter-University Student Union held a protest in front of the Ministry of Education in Battaramulla on June 10 demanding the immediate opening of the universities that have been closed for three years. The demonstration was dispersed with tear gas and baton attacks and videos of policemen beating students with their hands and feet also went viral on social media.

The Kaduwela court issued warrants against 11 students involved in the protest and charged them under the Public Property Act. Warrants were also issued and house searches were conducted for several people who were at home at the end of the university term and who were not involved in the protest.

14. Tear Gas and Water Cannon Attacks Again on the Inter-University Student Federation Protest

A protest march organized against the government led by the President in view of the continuing anti-people rule of the government came again from the University of Kelaniya to the World Trade Center in Colombo.

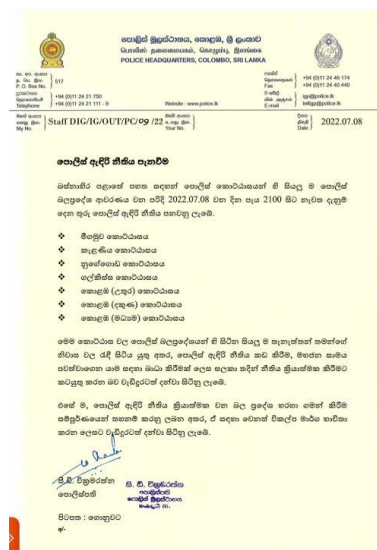
There too, the security forces of the government fired tear gas and water cannons at the protestors. A large number of civilians were involved in this protest and they and several university students were injured and taken to the hospital. In addition to the police, military units were also called to quell the protest.



<https://www.newsfirst.lk/2021/06/21/video-scuffles-during-iusf-protest-in-colombo/>

15. Curfew on July 08th in Several Divisions of the Western Province

Curfew was suddenly imposed on the Western Province on July 08. In a situation where people's agitations against the government were intensifying all over the country, this was clearly seen as a disgraceful attempt by the government to prevent such protests from being organized in the capital on July 09.



<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2365328/sri-lanka-police-impose-curfew-fire-tear-gas-as-unrest-escalates>

16. Shots Fired Again Near the Presidential Office

On the 9th of July, there was a big public uprising and the government implemented various tactics to prevent the people from coming to Colombo. Fuel supply was suspended and bus and train services were also stopped. However, tens of thousands of people somehow came

to Colombo and police and army attacks started that morning. On this day too, tear gas expired in 2009 and CS4 gas attacks were launched on the people.

The army fired at the people near the presidential office and one person lost his life. Another person was hospitalized with serious injuries due to gunshots and 46 people who were attacked were hospitalized with injuries. Three of them were seriously injured.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgL11rp8vpA>

17. Another Attack on the Galle Face Protest Site

On the night of July 21, the army was deployed in the Galle Face area and a brutal attack was launched. It is special that this attack was launched even though it was announced that the President's Secretariat, which had been occupied by the persons involved in the struggle at that time, would be handed over the next day, June 22.

Suddenly, at around 01.30 am, a large armed army group of around 1,000 soldiers stormed the protest site without prior notice and brutally attacked the protestors with poles and wires.

In particular, the tent where people with hearing and speech disabilities were staying in the struggle ground, as well as the tents where the retired army personnel were staying, were attacked brutally.

All the ways to enter the Galle Face struggle ground were closed by the Army and Navy and there is video evidence that among the people who came to attack there was a group of about two hundred gangsters dressed in uniforms of the Army. A large number of people were injured in this attack and the army did not give the opportunity to refer the injured for medical treatment.

Lawyers Nuwan Bopage, Randimal Gamage, Lahiru Silva and 09 activists including Salika Anuranga who was injured in the May 09 attack were brutally beaten and arrested. Several international media personnel were also attacked as they were attempting to record the incident.



<https://www.newswire.lk/2022/07/22/journ-those-assaulted-at-gallefac/>

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/protestors-beaten-and-journalists-assaulted-sri-lankan-army-storms-galle-face>

18. Enforcement of Emergency Law

From the beginning of April, Emergency Law was enforced on two occasions by Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Ranil Wickramasinghe using their powers through extraordinary gazettes. However, on April 03, President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa enacted the emergency law regulations through a gazette notification, which became void due to the inability to pass in the parliament before the scheduled date.

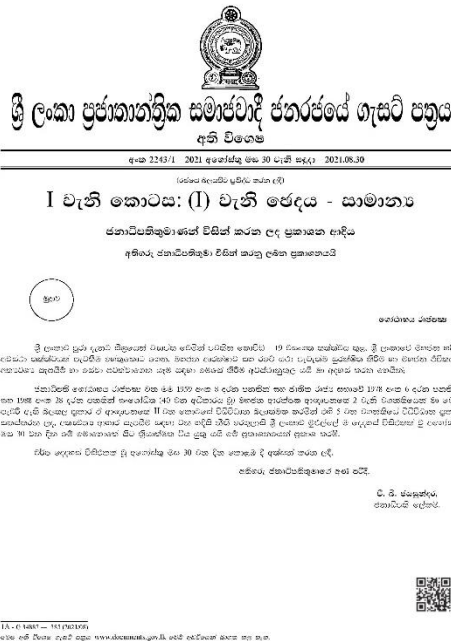
Nevertheless, once again, Ranil Wickramasinghe enforced the emergency regulations through an extraordinary gazette on July 18. It was passed in Parliament on July 28. The regulations contained herein were worse than the emergency regulations imposed even during the period of war in the country and amended provisions had been added making those regulations even more detrimental to fundamental rights and freedoms of people. Those include strict repressive regulations such as;

These emergency regulations contained provisions which enabled the security forces to break the doors and windows of the houses and enter the houses of the common people at any moment.

Provisions under these regulations allowed authorities to arrest people posting opinions on social media to embarrass the government.

Although those who have been remanded in custody must be presented to a magistrate judge within 24 hours, a Deputy Inspector General of Police has been authorized to issue orders to detain suspects for 14 days by these emergency regulations.

Empowering the security forces to detain those who endeavouring to cause disaffection among public officers, those engaged in the service of the republic or those engaged in public services. (The word disaffection has not been defined)



Prohibiting workers from striking and punishing union leaders who organize strikes up to three years of imprisonment. Through such regulations, the government is intensifying the oppression of the people.

<http://www.adaderana.lk/news/83909/sri-lanka-parliament-approves-state-of-emergency>

19. Warrants to Convener and Ex-Convener of the Inter-University Students Federation

On July 21, the Colombo Fort Magistrate Court issued warrants to the convener of the Inter-University Student Union Wasantha Mudalige and former convener Rathkarawe Jinarathana Thero based on alleging that an illegal obstruction has been done during a demonstration in 2021.

https://varunmultimedia.me/videos/btv/vmtube/hiru-news/hiru-tv-news-11.55_-06-07-22/play.html?1

20. A Travel Ban for Six (06) Activists Of The Struggle

On July 25, the Colombo Fort Magistrate's Court imposed a travel ban on six front-line activists of the struggle on the basis of damaging public property during a demonstration held in front

of the police headquarters on June 09. However, on July 1, the same court granted bail to seven activists who were arrested in connection with the protest, admitting that the charges of damaging public property presented by the police against them were false. The said travel ban was imposed against the activists named below;

- I. Wasantha Mudalige
- II. Lahiru Weerasekera
- III. Father Amila Jivantha Piris
- IV. Eranga Gunasekara
- V. Rangana Lakmal Deshapriya
- VI. Joseph Stalin

<https://counterpoint.lk/twenty-one-galle-face-protestors-banned-leaving-country/>

21. Arrest Of Danish Ali Whilst He Was on Board A Plane

The arrest of activist Danish Ali on June 26 is a notable incident. The traffic police arrested him while he was on board on a plane to go abroad. The police officers who illegally entered the plane failed to give reasons for arresting Danish Ali. There was neither a warrant nor a travel ban against him, and it was clearly an illegal arrest. Later, Danish Ali, who was produced before the court, was remanded in custody.



<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/lanka-crisis-activist-danish-ali-arrest-in-flight-when-attempting-to-travel-to-dubai/videoshow/93151542.cms>

22. Arrest of freelance journalist Veranga Pushpika

Veranga Pushpika, who works as a freelance journalist, was arrested on July 27. He was returning after participating in a protest against the repression in the Colombo Fort area. The bus he was traveling in was stopped by a group dressed in plainclothes (not police uniforms) who claimed to be police officers and beat him up and took him away and it was not revealed in which police station he was being detained until that night. He was then brought before the court by the Fort Police and remanded in custody.



JDS @JDSLanka · 2h
BREAKING: Veranga Pushpika, a student of Ruhuna Uni. & @IUSFSL activist, forced out of a bus & whisked away by plain clothes men near #Colombo Fort Railway Station a short while ago, after taking part in a protest organised by Coalition of Trade Unions & Mass Organisations. #Lka



<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/27/sri-lankas-parliament-extends-state-of-emergency-amid-crackdown>

23. On July 27, The Fort Magistrate's Court Imposed a Travel Ban On 13 Activists Involved in The Struggle.

24. Warrants To Another Group of Protestors

Warrants were issued for the arrest of Lahiru Weerasekara, the National Organizer of the Change of Youth Organization (Wenasaka Tharunya), and Tampitiye Sugathananda Thero, the Secretary of the United Health Workers Union, claiming that there were old legal cases against them.

25. Police Raid Registered Political Party Offices

A police team in civil dress (not in uniforms) raided the Nugegoda office of a political party, registered at the Election Commission, in the early hours of July 29 without any permission and did not reveal their identity or give reasons for the search. Shortly after they left, another group of officers from the Mirihana Police Station came to the office and a search was conducted again, saying that they were looking for the Convener of the Inter University Student Union, Wasantha Mudalige.

<https://www.hirunews.lk/english/311264/nugegoda-office-of-the-front-line-socialist-party-searched-by-the-police>

26. A University Student Is Kidnapped in A White Van.

On July 31, a fourth year student of Kelaniya University was abducted by a group of civilians in a white van on Wewelduwa road near the university. For more than three hours, he was detained and interrogated under various pressures and threatened to be jailed with a case related to heroin or ice drugs. He has been pressured to reveal their whereabouts by showing the photos of the student leaders including the Convener of the Inter University Student Union. After about three hours, he was left near the university and so far no one has taken responsibility for this abduction. However, according to the facts revealed, it is clear that this was a kidnapping carried out by the state security forces, and in the next few days, military

personnel stayed near the university checking the students and vehicles coming to the university.

27. Arrest of Ceylon Teachers Union Secretary Joseph Stalin

Previously, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Tampitiye Sugathananda Thero, a trade union leader, and Joseph Stalin, the general secretary of the Ceylon Teachers' Union, was banned from traveling abroad.

Joseph Stalin was arrested by a group of about 50 policemen who stormed the Ceylon Teachers' Association office at around 6:00 pm on August 3rd for holding a demonstration on May 28th. The court remanded Joseph Stalin in jail until August 12 for holding a demonstration.



<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka-arrests-protest-leader-joseph-stalin>

28. Trade Union Hunt Continued

On the evening of August 03, Palitha Atampawala, the former president of the Bank of Ceylon Employees' Association, and Dhananjaya Siriwardena, the secretary of the Bank of Ceylon Branch Association, were arrested. Alleging that they participated in the demonstration that entered the Presidential Office on July 9.

29. Continued Arrests of Activists in The Struggle

Over the past period, a repressive agenda aimed at the activists who were involved in the protests against the anti-people government across the country is going on in a very planned manner. There is no clear legal basis for arrests across the country, leaving aside even the right of the people to protest. Some of these arrests are made by civilians arriving in white vans. In addition to this, illegal actions such as threats to residents, kidnappings etc. are also common.

30. The Attack on IUSF Peaceful Protest on The 18th of August

The protest march organized by the Inter-University Student Union (IUSF) on August 18 started from the Lipton Roundabout and expected to hold a rally in front of the Colombo Fort railway station. In addition to university students, a large number of people including trade unions, mass organizations, artists, civil activists participated in the protest march. The slogans of the protest were as follows.

01. *Abolish executive presidency!*
02. *Let's fight for a new constitution that empowers the people!*
03. *Debt Justice – No more debt! Give our stolen money back!*
04. *Cost of living and the weight of debt is unbearable – Give relief!*
05. *Immediately open the schools and universities that have been closed for 3 years!*
06. *Chase Ranil – Rajapaksha junta away!*
07. *Stop the repression and immediately release all the arrested protestors of the People's Struggle!*
08. *Let's build the People's Council to ensure victory for the people!*

The protest march was conducted peacefully and the protestors did not have any clash with the security forces or the police. But as the march reached the Lipton Roundabout and passed by Ward's Place and moved forward for about 500 meters, suddenly a large police force of more than a thousand approached the march, crossed the road, attacked and dispersed the peaceful, unarmed protestors. The protestors were dispersed by using tear gas, high pressure water cannons, in addition to chasing unarmed, nonviolent civilians by hitting them with batons. The list of the 21 protestors arrested during the protest is below,

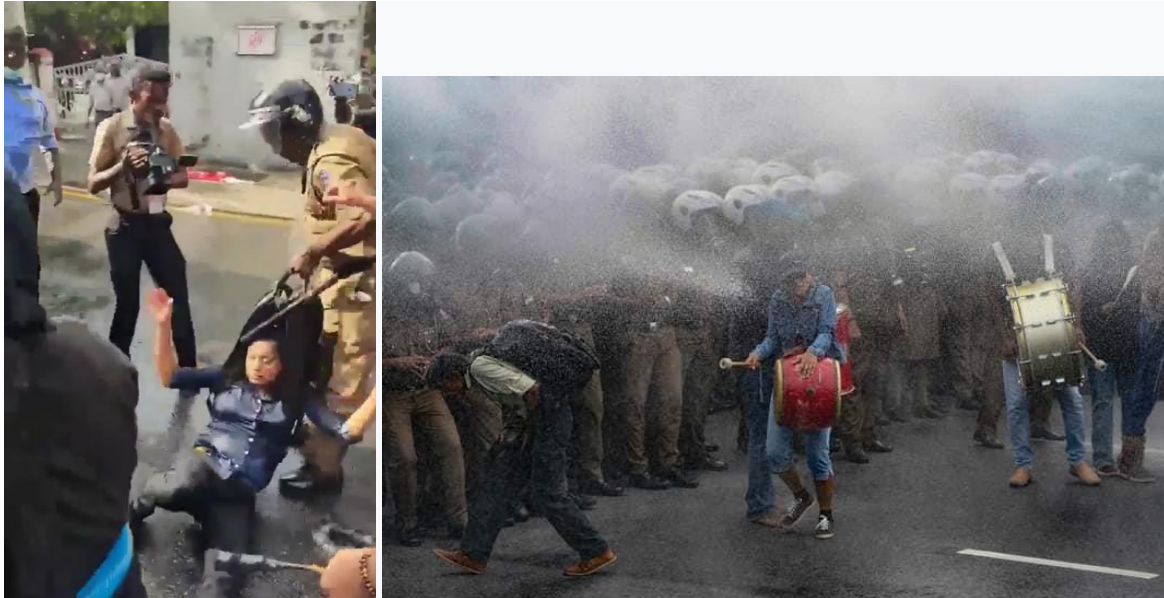
1. Mudalige Wasantha Kumara, Convener of The Inter-University Student Federation (IUSF)
2. Convener Of the Inter-University Monks Federation - Galvewa Siridhamma Thero
3. Chinthaka Rajapaksa - The Operator of The Land and Agriculture Reform Movement
4. Mohammad Kamaldeen Dilshan - A University Student
5. Tharindu Milan - University Student
6. Nuwan Darshana Ekanayake - University Student
7. Lakshita Sanjeeva - University Student
8. Rifat Mohammed - University Student
9. Pokunuvita Piyasoma Thero - University Student
10. Thilina Madhuranga - University Student
11. Hashan Jeevantha - University Student, Is Alive
12. Lahiru Nuwan - University Student
13. Puliyankulame Sunilangana
14. Suriyavewe Sugathadasa Thero - University Student
15. Thalagola Dhammarathana Thero - University Student
16. Asanka Lahiru - University Student
17. Kavinda Deshan Dayaratne - University Student
18. Prasanna Sanjeeva - University Student
19. Pasindu Rangana - University Student
20. Tarindu Dilshan - University Student

These people were detained at Fort, Kollupitiya, Kompanja Street, Borella, Peliyagoda, Bambalapitiya and Thalagama police stations and on the August 19th, 18 of them were presented to the Alutkade court. Wasantha Mudalige, Galvewa Siridhamma Thero and Hashan Jeevantha were not presented before the court. Out of the 18 who appeared before the court, Chinthaka Rajapaksa was remanded until August 26 and 17 were granted bail.

Some of the peaceful protestors who were arrested were badly assaulted. Some of the youth and the monks were missing for several hours without a trace. When the lawyers visited the Slave Island police station to inquire about the missing persons and the monks, they have answered that there were no monks, but one of the monks who were arrested was later found there. The Police had not

informed the protestors why they were arrested. The Salve Island Police station refused to tell even lawyers who visited the police station the reason for the arrests of the protestors.

The police were also seen chasing down unarmed civilians and hitting them with batons and taking them in to custody. The journalists who were reporting the incident was harassed as well.



<https://www.ft.lk/columns/Immorality-of-attack-on-university-students/4-738939>

<https://www.facebook.com/melanirgunathilaka/posts/pfbid02f766pUScYjFXvbGoaX282jCgiqtQTfz5m5VuFUyY5Y6qKFck2PBtCvcMKSobfHFI>

<https://www.facebook.com/uduwaragedara/videos/593508888942044/>

<https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2022/08/19/gvix-a19.html>

31. Issuing Detention Orders (DO) For Three Student Activists Including the Convener Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act

Out of the group arrested on the 18th August, the police did not present Wasantha Mudalige, Galwewa Siridhamma Thero and Hashan Jeevantha before the court on the 19th of August. They were accused of plotting against the state and placed in 72-hour police custody under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. No one was allowed to meet them and later only the lawyers were allowed to meet them.

On the same day, media organizations supporting the government publicized that these three were ordered to be detained for 90 days, and the government did not issue any statements correcting that. Despite of the strong public disapproval, the government is attempting to give detention orders of 90 days under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Even though the 72-hour detention period ended on August 21, they are still being detained without being produced to the court. The authorities are saying that investigations are being conducted to see if they have committed anti-state conspiracies.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act is an extremely undemocratic and disgraceful act and the people of Sri Lanka have been demanding its repeal since many years and international human rights organizations have also recommended that this act be repealed. The Anti-Democracy Prevention of Terrorism Act, which exceeded the general law of the country, caused a large number of serious fundamental rights violations in the past civil wars. Now this act is being used to suppress general agitation and there is no state of war or armed activity against the government in the country. Suppressing people's protests using the Prevention of Terrorism Act is a serious anti-democratic practice and it takes away the fundamental right of the people to protest.

Several representatives of international human rights organizations, ambassadors and delegates have issued statements condemning the acts of the government of Sri Lanka and the use of PTA on civilians exercising their right to protest. Many civil society organizations & trade unions including Federation of University Teachers Association (FUTA) & the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) condemn the use of PTA on protesters & issued statements saying it is deeply concerned at the use of the provisions of the PTA to arrest and detain persons who have been involved in protests against the Government.

A Fundamental Rights petition has filed in the Supreme Court challenging the legality of the detention order issued against Mudalige under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)





https://www.dailymirror.lk/front_page/Detention-of-Wasantha-Mudalige-under-PTA-challenged-in-Supreme-Court/238-243798

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article63789>

<https://groundviews.org/2022/08/23/widespread-condemnation-for-detention-of-protesters-under-pta/>