



Networking for Rights

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உரிமைகளுக்கான வலையமைப்பு

Exile network for media and human rights in Sri Lanka

NfR press release/04 Nov 2010

Printer Mr. Bulathsinhala's mother harassed and house searched

NfR, *Net working for Rights in Sri Lanka* is shocked to hear that the mother of Mr. Jayampathi Bulathsinhala, a printer and human rights activist, who was arrested two months ago over printing of an opposition political poster, has been harassed by group in civilian cloths and a group in police uniform. The group in police uniform had arrived at her home in Bamunakotuwa, Wariyapola on 22nd October and searched the whole house without producing and search warrant. None of the groups have identified themselves before searching and questioning his mother. His mother, Mrs. M. Bandara Menika who had experienced a mental shock as a result of the harassment was admitted to the Wariyapola government hospital from where she had been discharged after four days of treatment.

On 8th August 2010 the Mirihana police had arrested Mr. Bulathsinhala's wife Kumuduni Wijewardana and her two brothers and had detained them as hostages. They were later produced in courts and released on bail. NfR views this continued harassment of Mr. Bulathsinhala's family as clear violation of their human rights as enshrined in the Constitution of Sri Lanka.

The Mirihana Police has filed a case at the Magistrate's Court of Nugegoda against Mr. Jayampathi Bulathsinhala and 8 workers of the Sarala Graphics for printing the political poster. Mr. Bulathsinhala and his wife Mrs.Wijewardana have filed two separate fundamental rights cases in the Supreme Court against their unlawful arrests.

While speaking about this incident, Mr. Bulathsinhala told the media that he has left his family home a decade ago and his mother has nothing to do with his work as a printer or his human rights activism. According to him, there is no reason for the police to question his mother and search the house in a threatening manner.

Harassment of families of suspects and taking them as hostages by personnel of the State security forces have been practiced widely during the North East war in Sri Lanka and NfR fears that this unlawful practice is being revived to suppress dissent in the South of Sri Lanka as well.

- Issued by Steering Committee, NfR Sri Lanka

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