



ශ්‍රී ලංකා මහලාභී නිලධාරී කොමිෂන් කොට්ඨාසය
நிலங்ககை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

“All relevant authorities shall take active measures to prevent torture”
Chairman, HRCSL

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June 2021

In December 1997, The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 26th June as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, to commemorate the historic day in 1987, in which the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the key international instrument against torture came into effect. It appeals to all member states to implement the Convention in full effect with the intention of eradicating torture in all its forms across the world. It also requests for support from all stakeholders, civil society and individuals to express solidarity with victims of torture and their families who have undergone the inhumane and brutal pain of torture.

Article 11 of the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka guaranteed the fundamental rights in all citizens, ensuring no person shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Furthermore, having ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment in January 1994, Sri Lanka enacted the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act No. 22 of 1994 recognizing torture and ill treatment as a serious crime in Sri Lanka. Notwithstanding the dedication of the Sri Lankan government to prevent torture and inhuman treatment, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) observed some significant number of incidents of torture and ill-treatment across the country. Therefore, the Commission with its two-pronged approach to eradicate torture in Sri Lanka, maintains a zero-tolerance policy for inquiring and taking firm action to protect the victims of torture and to strengthen the mechanism for the prevention of torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Commission has already launched an island wide Anti-Torture Campaign through ten Regional Offices of the Commission, under the theme of “Stop Torture”. This campaign will enhance the awareness of the general public on torture and inhuman treatment and thereby the Commission expects to obtain the people’s participation for the torture prevention activities and to provide proper guidance for the obliging behaviour pattern of the people.

In support of victims of torture, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka requests all relevant authorities, to take effective measures to prevent torture and ill-treatment in all levels without any exceptions and to protect all victims of torture and other forms of violence. The Commission currently involves in the process of preparing proper procedures and mechanism to protect victims of torture and to provide required psycho-social support for the victims to reintegrate them into the society.

On this very important day in Support of Victims of Torture, the Commission earnestly requests all stakeholders, civil society and individuals, to proactively organize awareness building programmes which will help to sustain the social environment protecting human rights and protecting victims of torture. The Commission strongly believes that the mission to eradicate torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is a collective mission in which all persons in society must actively take responsibility to respect the human dignity of one another.

Chairman

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

26th June 2021
At Colombo