



ශ්‍රී ලංකා මානව හිමිකම් කොමිෂන් සභාව
இலங்கை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SRI LANKA

මගේ අංකය }
எனது இல. }
My No. }

ඔබේ අංකය }
உமது இல. }
Your No. }

දිනය }
திகதி }
Date }

5 Dec 2020

Dr. W. A. M. Shelton Perera

BY EMAIL

Director

Colombo North Teaching Hospital,

Ragama

Dear Dr Perera

Re: Bodies of Remandees from Mahara prison

We were informed by the authorities that the bodies of the eleven people who were killed at Mahara Prison on 29/30 November were handed over to the Colombo North Teaching Hospital on 30 November and are now in your custody.

We note from media reports that 8 of the 11 people who were shot to death have been found to have been infected by the COVID-19 virus.

While we are aware of the regulations in relation to disposal of bodies of those infected by the virus, we write to remind you that these bodies form part of an investigation that has already commenced. Therefore, they should be preserved in a manner compatible with health requirements but not be cremated or destroyed in any other way until the autopsy proceedings in relation to their death is concluded. Further, where possible, external examination of the bodies such as photographs etc can be commenced and access should be provided to the forensic team for this purpose.

Our inquiries reveal that although your hospital lacks the facilities for performing autopsies on bodies of people who were infected with the virus, the mortuary at the Infectious Diseases Hospital at Kotikawatte does have the required facilities and permission should be sought from the Magistrate for seeking their expertise if required.

The HRCSL is specially required to ensure the welfare of those deprived of the liberty under Section 11(d) of the HRCSL Act No. 21 of 1996 and this letters is being written under the authority of the same.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,



Ramani Muttettuwegama

Commissioner in charge of Investigations and Inquiries

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

1. C. Wickremaratne
Inspector General of Police,
Police Headquarters
Colombo 01

2. Thushara Upuldeniya
Commissioner general of Prisons
Prison Headquarters
Colombo 9.

3. Prof. Anuruddhi Edirisinghe
Professor of Forensic Medicine,
Department of Forensic Medicine,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Kelaniya

4. Handun C. Wijewardena
Consultant Judicial Medical Officer
Judicial Medical Office
Colombo North Teaching Hospital,
Ragama