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Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Message of the Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June 2026

Today, on the **International Day in Support of Victims of Torture**, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) joins the international community in reaffirming its unwavering commitment to the eradication of torture and all forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Torture is an unacceptable violation of human dignity and a grave infringement of fundamental human rights. Every individual, regardless of their background or circumstances, has the right to be treated with dignity, humanity, and respect. On this significant day, we remember the survivors of torture, honour their courage and resilience, and reaffirm our responsibility to ensure justice, accountability, and effective remedies for victims.

This year's observance places special emphasis on the **National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)**, recognizing the critical role of preventive measures in eliminating torture before it occurs. As Sri Lanka's National Preventive Mechanism, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka is entrusted with conducting regular visits to places of deprivation of liberty, identifying risks, engaging with relevant authorities, and making recommendations to improve conditions and strengthen safeguards against torture.

In line with this year's focus, the Commission officially launched its **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the National Preventive Mechanism** and the **Progress Report on the National Preventive Mechanism (2022-2025)** on **11 June 2026**. These important milestones reflect the Commission's commitment to strengthening the effectiveness, consistency, and transparency of its preventive monitoring work. The SOP provides clear guidance for carrying out visits to places of detention in accordance with international human rights standards, while the Progress Report highlights key observations, recommendations, and progress in promoting the rights of persons deprived of their liberty.

The Commission believes that preventing torture requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, prison authorities, healthcare professionals, judicial officers, civil society organizations, and the public. Building a culture of prevention, accountability, and respect for human rights is essential to ensuring that torture has no place in our society.

On this important day, I call upon all institutions and individuals to work together to uphold the absolute prohibition of torture, strengthen preventive mechanisms, and ensure that the rights and dignity of every person are protected without discrimination.

Let us reaffirm our shared commitment to a Sri Lanka where justice, accountability, and respect for human dignity prevail, and where every person can live free from torture and ill-treatment.

Justice LTB Dehideniya
Chairperson
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Colombo

26 June 2026