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CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES
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மாற்றக் கொள்கைகளுக்கான நிலையம்

*Centre for
Policy
Alternatives*

Annual Report 2021

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Message from the Executive Director

The year 2021, like the year before it saw creeping authoritarianism and militarization in government underpinned by the two-thirds majority secured by the SLPP and its allies in the 2020 General Election. There were clear signs too of the political storm that was to break a year later with the constriction of the tax base, the move to organic fertilizer overnight and the burgeoning debt crisis.

The work of CPA continued to emphasize the primacy of democratic governance, in particular the rule of law, equality before the law and the separation of powers and the need to strengthen and consolidate it. CPA's work plan was delayed in implementation by the COVID 19 restrictions. However, CPA was able to accomplish work in a number of fields. Whilst public interest litigation was affected by COVID 19 restrictions, we were able to produce a number of policy briefs and publications. Topics included the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, the Presidential Commission on Political Victimization, The Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill – the latter being the subject of CPA public interest litigation with the government adhering to the Courts stipulation regarding the requirement of a special majority for some of its provisions, dropping these provisions in order to pass the Bill with a simple majority. Work on Constitutional and Legal Reform also continued through collaboration with the Centre for Constitutional Law at the University of Edinburgh and through a survey of opinion makers on perceptions of the performance of the 1978 constitution.

CPA's work also extended to the consequences of micro-finance and work with university students on the Prevention of Violent Extremism. The latter entailed the production of 14 short videos. Right to Information work which is pivotal to civil society empowerment continued with the establishment of a Right to Information Hotline and Help desk facilitating and building citizens capacity to access information in the public interest. The exhibition of photographs of life in the tea plantations by youth from the Upcountry Tamil community was developed into book form. Governance work in respect of greater female participation in electoral democracy was also engaged in. The Centre for Monitoring Election Violence focused on the issue of campaign finance – an issue on which it had done pioneering work in the 2020 General Election.

CPA's civic media continued to provide a platform for the counter-narrative and as the space for civil society shrank gained in relevance and importance.

- *Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu*

Introduction

Vision

A liberal, democratic Sri Lanka.

Mission

To strengthen the civil society contribution to public policymaking through programmes of research and advocacy in the areas of democratic governance and peace with human rights as an overarching priority.

About the Centre for Policy Alternatives

The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) was established in 1996 with the aim of strengthening institutions and capacity-building for good governance and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka. For over two decades, CPA has set the bar in Sri Lanka for how cutting-edge research and advocacy can be communicated through constructive dialogue and innovative content to address deficits in democracy and governance.

CPA works across four key units in three offices located in Colombo. The Research & Advocacy Team engages in the critique and advocacy of policy alternatives through comprehensive field-based and applied research outputs and also leads CPA's public interest litigation efforts. The Outreach Monitoring Team works with local government and community-based organisations on participatory governance, grassroots capacity building and service delivery, while working to generate mobilisation on social equality and reconciliation. Social Indicator is CPA's survey research unit and conducts public opinion polling on a wide range of social and political issues. The Civic Media Unit manages the award-winning civic media initiatives Maastram, Vikalpa and Groundviews which seek to amplify narratives by citizens otherwise marginal to and erased from mainstream media. In addition, CPA hosts the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), the leading election monitoring and electoral reform advocacy organisation in Sri Lanka which promotes free and fair elections and inclusive democratic participation.

CPA works with a wide range of actors across Sri Lanka, from civil society organisations and community-based activists to students and academics to provincial and local government officials. CPA also engages with numerous NGOs, civil society organisations and academics in the international sphere to share, collaborate on and learn from policy approaches to democratic governance and sustainable peace. CPA staff members are regularly quoted in media, both locally and internationally, for their expertise and insights. Institutional output in print and online in all three languages is regularly flagged and used in debates on domestic policy-making and international discourse. The year ended with 45 members of staff, an increase of 03 from the beginning of the year. An additional 08 joined and 05 left. Of the staff 04 are part-time, 22 are female and 23 are male.

Board of Directors

Professor Chandraguptha Thenuwara (Chairman) | Senior Lecturer



Chandraguptha Thenuwara (BFA/MFA/MPhil) was born in 1960, Sri Lanka. He is working as a Professor in the Department of History and Art Theory at the University of the Visual and Performing Arts, Colombo. In 1993, He founded the Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts (VAFA), an artist-run alternative art school. He studied painting at the Institute of Aesthetic Studies, University of Kelaniya (1978-1981) and Surikov State Art Institute, Moscow, Russia (1985-1992); MPhil at the Post Graduate Institute of Archeology (PGIAR), Kelaniya University (2006). Since 1978 he has exhibited widely in Sri Lanka and Abroad. Chandraguptha Thenuwara is a leading Sri Lankan Artist whose work focuses on issues surrounding the impact of war in Sri Lanka. In response to the overwhelming crisis, Thenuwara devised his stylistic formulation, which he called "Barrelism", in 1997. Then since 1997, he is having special solo exhibitions annually to commemorate un-commemorative 'Black July' and current socio-political issues. His recent annual exhibition was 'Ecce Homo', Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo (2022).

In addition, Chandraguptha Thenuwara has presented in many solo and group exhibitions. Among them, Frieze London (2022), Personal Structures, Palazzo Mora, Venice Biennale (2022), One Hundred Thousand Small Tales, MMCA, Colombo (2019), Glitch, Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo (2016), Beautification, Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo (2013), Barrelism & Other Works, The Heritage Gallery, Colombo (1997), Asia-Pacific Triennial, Queensland Art Gallery, Australia (2009), First Asian Triennial, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan (1999), Cities on the Move, Vienna Secession, Austria (1997), New Approaches in Contemporary Sri Lankan Art, The National Gallery, Colombo (1993). His works are also included in the collections such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Queensland Art Gallery Australia, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum Japan, John Moore's University Art Collection Liverpool and Fine Arts Museum of Udmurtia, Izhevsk, Russia. His public monuments include the monument to the Disappeared at Seeduwa, Monument to the Cardinal Cooray at the National Basilica, Thewattha and Monument to Neelan Thiruchelvam at Kinsey Terrace Colombo.

Mr. Aritha Wickremasinghe | Lawyer and Activist



Aritha is an international banking lawyer, a founding trustee of the global education initiative Think Equal and Equality Director at iProbono. Formerly a lawyer at prestigious international firms Clifford Chance and K&L Gates in London, he has advised on over 100 financial transactions, including multi-billion dollar projects involving the world's largest banking institutions in multiple jurisdictions. Prior to joining Clifford Chance in 2010, Aritha worked in the Chambers at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Tanzania, where he worked on the

Military 1 and Karera cases.

Aritha moved back to Sri Lanka in 2016 to set up Think Equal's Sri Lanka operations and iProbono's Equality Law division. In 2017 he was appointed as Head of Legal at the Ministry of Finance's National Agency for Public Private Partnerships.

Aritha is very active in the field of diversity and inclusion and has spearheaded various initiatives promoting equality and human rights. He has advised various Governments and UN agencies on education and economic reform and human rights. He has advised the British Government on how to use British business to promote human rights abroad and has challenged the British Government to recognise the identity of non-binary persons. He was instrumental in lobbying for the setting up of the Transgender Equality Inquiry by the Women and Equalities Committee at the British Parliament where all his submissions on behalf of his client on the recognition of non-binary identity were accepted by the Parliamentary Committee and included in its recommendations to the British Government.

A passionate and strategic campaigner for social reform, Aritha has successfully used his position in business to promote positive change for underrepresented groups and victims of injustice. He has been a guest speaker at the University of Oxford, London Business School, Kings College, London and the London School of Economics and Political Science where he has shared his experiences in law, campaigning and social reform. For his work, Aritha was ranked No.1 Future Leader by the Financial Times in their 2015 OUTstanding List alongside Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and Lloyds CEO, Inga Beale. In 2021, he was given the Young Role Model Award by Sri Lanka Unites and received Rotary Colombo's Award for Vocational Excellence

Aritha received a First Class Honours, BA in Political Science with Sociology from the University of Birmingham, U.K. in 2005 and a Commendation (Ranking 1) in the Graduate Diploma in Law from the University of Birmingham, U.K. in 2006. He also received a Master of Laws (LLM) from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), University of London in 2008 and is an English law qualified, practising Solicitor.

Mr. Chandana L. de Silva | Finance and Management Professional



Chandana de Silva worked in the UK for over twenty years and held financial and management positions including that of Chief Financial Officer of a former NASDAQ quoted company, (now called Lumen Technologies), for its European region as well as that of Head of Financial Planning for British Telecom PLC.

Since moving back to Sri Lanka in 2002 he worked at MAS Holdings in a variety of roles and established the group's Supply Chain Management function, coordinated the group's strategy development in 2005-06, set up the MAS training Centre and was the Chief Executive Officer of MAS' Investment division until December 2011. He now serves as a non-executive Director on the boards of Eureka Technologies (Private) Limited, 24/7 Techies (Pvt) Ltd, First Capital Holdings PLC and its subsidiaries.

In addition, he is Chairman of Janashakthi Limited, the holding company of the Janashakthi group of companies.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (in England & Wales as well as in Sri Lanka) and has a BSc. in Mathematics and Management from the University of London.

Ms. Minoli De Soysa | Editor/Writer



Minoli de Soysa is an experienced journalist, writer and editor who has worked at several national and international publications and NGOs. She started her career as a reporter for the Sun and the Island newspapers. She later joined the Reuters news agency as a Sri Lanka correspondent, where she covered political and economic issues as well as features and human interest stories. Before going overseas, Minoli worked for two years at the US embassy in Colombo as a political specialist. During her time abroad, she worked and volunteered with NGOs and organisations dealing with women's and children's issues.

She also worked for two years as Asian Regional Communications Manager for Muslim Aid Sri Lanka. She is currently the editor of Groundviews.

Minoli serves on the boards of Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere (PEaCE) Sri Lanka and the Ceylon Fellowship of Service Prithipura Home. She received a Master's degree in English and Journalism from New York University and a Bachelor's degree in English from the Western Australian Institute of Technology. She also has a diploma in Conflict and Peace Studies from the University of Colombo.

Dr. Dinusha Panditaratne | Lawyer



Dinusha Panditaratne is a specialist in governance, foreign policy and international law. She is currently Adviser and Head, Asia at the Commonwealth Secretariat. Prior to this, she was a Non-Executive Director at NDB, a leading bank in Sri Lanka. She also served as Executive Director and later a Non-resident Fellow of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI), the think tank of the foreign ministry of Sri Lanka.

Before her appointment at LKI, Dr. Panditaratne was an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a Visiting Fellow at the University of Hong Kong. She is an attorney admitted to practice in the State of New York and previously worked at Milbank LLP, a law firm on Wall Street.

Dr. Panditaratne is a member of the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN) headquartered in Seoul, and an Advisor to Verité Research. She has served several non-profit institutions, including on the board of the Centre for Equality and Justice, and as a member of the International Advisory Board of the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh.

Dr. Panditaratne received her initial degree in law with first-class honours from the University of Oxford, where she was a Markby Scholar at Balliol College. She received her master's and doctorate from Yale Law School, where her doctoral thesis focused on international human rights law.

Dr. Sukanya Devarajan | Former International Civil Servant



Sukanya Devarajan is a former International Civil Servant, who is a

Sukanya Devarajan is a former International Civil Servant, who is a senior institutional and organisational management specialist with over 38 years of experience in successfully designing and managing scientifically/technically-oriented development assistance programmes for international and national organisations; and in policy development and negotiations in a multi-stakeholder context. Extensive experience in inter-organisational cooperation, negotiation

and in strategic engagement with the UN family, representational delegations, civil society organisations, the private sector and the academic community. MA, Harvard University; PhD University of Sussex

Dr. Zameer Careem | Medical Doctor



Dr. Zameer Careem (b. 1992) is a medical doctor-Medical and diplomatic historian, a guest lecturer at local and international universities, an ethnologist, a published author, a freelance journalist, and a television broadcaster. He is the first Sri Lankan scholar to win the ICRO scholarship to Iran & the KATIP scholarship to Turkey. He is currently working as a Consultant (Humanities) for MTV Channels (PVT) Ltd while pursuing his MPhil in Medical History at the University of Colombo. He also serves as a resource person for the Television series “Lost and Forgotten”. His books are available at Stanford University, the University of Chicago, the New York Public Library, the National Libraries of Australia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka, as well as the National Archives of Indonesia. His commemorative poem for HM Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee was recited at the Jubilee service held at St Mary’s Church, United Kingdom. He is committed to raising awareness about ethnic minorities, promoting diversity, equity, reconciliation, and tolerance, as well as preserving history and heritage for posterity.

Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu | Executive Director



Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu is the founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). He was a member of the Foreign Policy Advisory Group and the Board of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International and Strategic Studies. He has presented papers on governance and peace in Sri Lanka at a number of international conferences and is widely quoted in the international and local media.

In 2010, Dr. Saravanamuttu was awarded the inaugural Citizens Peace Award by the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka and in September 2013, he was invited by President Obama to attend his “High Level Event On Civil Society“, in New York. In 2016, he was appointed, Secretary of the Task Force on Consultations on Mechanisms for Reconciliation and in 2017, short-listed for the Peace Prize awarded by the city of Ypres, Belgium. He is also a member of the Regional Advisory Group of Amnesty International for Asia.

Dr Saravanamuttu is a founder director of the Sri Lanka Chapter of Transparency International and a founding Co-Convener of the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), which has monitored all the major elections in Sri Lanka since 1997 and the civil society alliance the Platform for Freedom. In 2004 he was an Eisenhower Fellow (2004) and is currently Chairperson of the Eisenhower Fellows, Sri Lanka and a Member of the Gratiaen Trust.

Dr. Saravanamuttu received a BSc Econ, Upper Second Class Honours degree and Ph. D in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), University of London, in 1979 and 1986, respectively. He lectured in International Politics at the University of Southampton, UK, from 1984 – 92.

RESEARCH & ADVOCACY

The year 2021 witnessed a spate of legal and policy developments with significant implications for democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Sri Lanka. The research and advocacy team monitored key developments including the introduction of proposed laws and regulations and the declaration of a state of emergency. The proposed legal framework for the establishment of the Colombo Port City Project witnessed CPA commenting on the legal and policy implications and challenging the bill in the Supreme Court. The year also witnessed other proposed laws and regulations including regulations issued under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) in March 2021 with serious implications for human rights and due processes safeguards. CPA's intervention on both these matters raised the profile of what was proposed, resulting in amendments to the legal framework of the Colombo Port City Project and the Supreme Court staying the operation of the PTA regulations. CPA also raised concerns on the implications with the declaration of the state of emergency in 2021 and critiqued the regulations that entrenched the use of security laws and militarization in governance in Sri Lanka. Further, another key issue that CPA critiqued in the year was the appointment of the One Country, One Law Task Force, raising questions of the appointment of yet another task force and its implications for governance, co-existence and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

These and other matters were monitored by the team during what was termed 'lockdowns' with CPA continuing to monitor the legal and policy implications of executive action and other issues. As done in previous years, the team was able to monitor, critique, and challenge a range of extra-legal measures introduced in the guise of the pandemic to restrict civil liberties and fundamental freedoms and an increase in the incidents of incitement and discriminatory policies. The team also monitored and engaged with other issues including heightened militarization with implications for governance and democracy in Sri Lanka. In addition, the team monitored events in the lead-up to and during the UN Human Rights Council session in February-March 2021 which resulted in the adoption of a new resolution that noted new areas of concern and the culture of impunity in Sri Lanka, with the novel step taken to establish an independent evidence-gathering mechanism.

Through its work of research, advocacy, and public interest litigation, the team was able to counter executive overreach and other arbitrary measures that eroded the rule of law, violated human rights, entrenched impunity, and threatened Sri Lanka's fragile democracy. CPA's work and the impact it had in 2021 is yet another reminder of the constant need for civil society vigilance and scrutiny, space for debate, and alternative ideas.

- *Bhavani Fonseka*

Public Interest Litigation

CPA advanced several Public Interest Litigation (PIL) cases in 2021 which were at the forefront of political governance in Sri Lanka. The objective was to strengthen the civil society contribution to democratic peace and governance through PIL, to uphold the supremacy of the constitution and reinforce the rights of citizens.

1. Challenging the decision to pardon Sunil Ratnayake. CPA also supported a victim to file a similar case challenging the pardon - SC FR 101 & 105/2020
2. Challenging the Presidential Pardon of Gnanasara Thero - SCFR 256/2019
3. Challenging the death penalty - SCFR 273/2019
4. Challenging prohibition of Sale of Alcohol to Women - SCFR 33 & 34/2018
5. Challenging some powers granted to the Commission of Inquiry appointed to probe political victimization - SCFR 32/2020
6. Challenging the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers to allow President Maithripala Sirisena the continuous use of the residence at Paget Road - SCFR 447/2019
7. Challenging the rehabilitation guidelines under the Prevention of Terrorism Act – SCFR 91/2021
8. Appeal against Judgement in Mirusuvil Land Writ - SC/SPL/LA/229/2019
9. Challenging the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill - SC SD 4/2021
10. Challenging the proposed Finance Bill - SC SD 28/2021
11. Land case in Batticaloa – CA (Writ) 36/2021
12. Case in the North – Kurunthoormalai temple in Jaffna – SC (FRA) 186/2021

Fundamental Rights Applications challenging the decision to pardon Sunil Ratnayake SC FR 101 & 105/2020

On 22 April 2020, The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) and its Executive Director, Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu filed Fundamental Rights applications challenging the decision of H.E the President to pardon Sunil Ratnayake, who was convicted for his role in the Mirusuvil Massacre which occurred in December 2000. CPA also supported a victim to file a similar case challenging the pardon. It was first reported that Ratnayake, who was on death row, had been pardoned by the President on the 26th of March 2020, while the country was grappling with the Covid-19 crisis.

The case was refixed for 8 February 2021 and parties were ordered to file amended caption within four weeks. This matter came up for support on 8 February 2021 and one of the judges recused himself, and several others who had heard the Trial-at-Bar case against Ratnayake from hearing this case. The matter was refixed for 5 July 2021. This matter came up on 5 July 2021 but on that day presiding Judge Justice Murdu Fernando recused herself from hearing the case as she was on the bench that convicted Ratnayake. The matter was refixed for 21 September 2021. Due to the lockdown, case was not taken up on 21 September 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/fundamental-rights-applications-challenging-the-decision-to-pardon-sunil-ratnayake/>

Challenging the Presidential Pardon of Gnanasara Thero

This matter came up for support on 19 February 2021 but was refixed as the caption needed to be amended. Refixed for support on 26 July 2021. This matter was scheduled for 4 October 2021 but was not taken up as courts were not fully operational due to Covid – 19.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-v-attorney-general-sc-fr-256-2019/>

Challenging the death penalty

This case was mentioned on 22 January 2021 in order to fix it for support on a date convenient to all counsel. Court ordered that it be mentioned again on 11 February before a bench of 5 judges in order to fix it for support. This case was called on 11 February 2021 and fixed for support on 6 September 2021, and the stay order on carrying out judicial executions granted in a connected case extended until that date. Counsel appearing for the state indicated that due to a change in policy of the new Rajapaksa Government, this case may be amicably settled, and undertook to inform court

of the Government's stance on the next date. Due to the lockdown, case was not taken up on 6 September 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-v-attorney-general-sc-fr-273-2019/>

Challenging prohibition of Sale of Alcohol to Women

This case came up for argument on 16 February 2021 but was refixed as the Attorney General had filed a motion in a connected case filed by another party asking for further time to file their objections. Case was refixed for argument on 30 July 2021. This case was listed for argument on 29 November 2021 but was not taken up on that day as counsel in two connected cases requested that the matter be refixed. The case was refixed for 12 May 2022.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/two-fundamental-rights-petitions-challenging-excise-notification-no-4-2018/>

Challenging some powers granted to the Commission of Inquiry appointed to probe political victimization

Due to the lockdown, the case was not taken up on 14 September 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-v-attorney-general-sc-fr-32-2020/>

Challenging the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers to allow President Maithripala Sirisena the continuous use of the residence at Paget Road

This case came up for support on 28 April 2021. The Counsel appearing for the former President however was not well and not present in court, and as such, the matter was postponed. Refixed for 29 June 2021. Courts did not sit (except for urgent matters) due to the spread of Covid-19 in Sri Lanka and travel restrictions imposed.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-v-attorney-general-sc-fr-449-2019/>

Challenging the rehabilitation guidelines under the Prevention of Terrorism Act

The Government of Sri Lanka issued new regulations under the Prevention of Terrorism Act on 12 March 2021 which are extremely worrying and can have significant implications for the rule of law and civil liberties in Sri Lanka. CPA filed a case challenging the said regulations on 3 April 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternativesv-attorney-general-sc-fra-91-2021/>

This case was fixed for the 20 May but was not taken up due to closure of Courts (due to the spread of Covid-19 in Sri Lanka and travel restrictions imposed). On 5 August, the Supreme Court issued a temporary stay on the operation of the regulations under the Prevention of Terrorism Act till the next court date. As the case could not be taken up due to lockdown, the court scheduled it for December 2021. However, due to the urgency of the application, a motion was filed and supported on 12 October 2021 and the date of the case was brought forward to 11 November 2021. This case was to be resumed on 11 November 2021 but the bench was not properly constituted as one of the judges who had previously heard the case was not present. Case to be resumed on 29 November 2021. This case was resumed on 29 November 2021 and submissions were heard. However there was no time to conclude submissions on that day and the case was to be heard again on 13 December 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-v-attorney-general-sc-fra-91-2021/>

Appeal against Judgement in Mirusvil Land Writ

Two cases were filed in the High Court in Trincomalee on 9 November 2020 and CPA is supporting affected parties to file action. There are 17 Petitioners in the first case from Thiriyai area, whose lands are to be illegally taken over by the Respondents (Commissioner General of Lands, Assistant Land Commissioner and the Director of Archaeology). Similarly, there are 3 Petitioners from the Thennanmaravadi in the second matter.

This case came up for Support on 12 March 2021 in the Supreme Court. The case was taken up and submissions were made on behalf of the Petitioners. The Additional Solicitor General appearing for the Attorney General commenced his submissions, but was not able to conclude due to time constraints. The matter was fixed to be resumed on 31 March 2021 and the Attorney General was directed to look into the possibility of allocating alternate lands to the Petitioners in the meantime. This case was resumed on 31 March 2021 and the Supreme Court granted leave to proceed in the matter. Case fixed for argument on 2 September 2021. Due to the lockdown matter was refixed for argument on 26 January 2022.

Challenging the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill

On 15 April 2021, CPA and its Executive Director filed a case in the Supreme Court requesting a Special Determination on the Constitutionality of the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill. Twenty petitions were taken up before a five-member bench however CPA and its Executive Director were the first petitioner in this matter. Counsel for CPA was heard on 19 April 2021.

For more info see link below.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/the-centre-for-policy-alternatives-guarantee-limited-and-dr-paikiasothy-saravanamuttu-vs-the-attorney-general-sc-sd-4-2021-in-re-the-colombo-port-city-economic-commission-bill/>

The Supreme Court concluded the consideration of petitions on 23 April. Port City Bill debate was originally scheduled to take place in Parliament on 5 May. Despite the concerns of Members of the Opposition, only one day was scheduled for the debate. Debate on the Bill was postponed as the Determination of the Supreme Court had not been received. The Determination was received on 5 May and was scheduled to be placed before Parliament on 18 May. The Supreme Court held that certain provisions of the Port City Bill are unconstitutional and would require a 2/3 majority vote in Parliament and a referendum in order to be passed. The Government agreed to incorporate all the changes suggested by the Supreme Court to bring the Bill in conformity with the Constitution, thereby requiring only a simple majority for the law to be passed. The Parliamentary debate on the Bill commenced on 19 May, and the Bill was passed on 20 May. The Speaker of Parliament signed the Bill on 27 May, and thus it officially entered into force.

On 21 May, the Senior Researcher of CPA and Attorney at law, Ms. Bhavani Fonseka in an interview, explained primary concerns regarding the Port City legislation.

See link below for more information.

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1396321110640128002>

Challenging the proposed Finance Bill

On 26th July 2021, The CPA and its Executive Director filed a Petition in the Supreme Court challenging the proposed Finance Bill, which was placed on the order paper of Parliament on 20 July 2021. The Bill seeks to provide an amnesty from tax, penalty or interest, or from any investigation or prosecution, to anyone who has not disclosed any taxable supply, income or asset which was required to be disclosed by law, provided that they invest an equivalent amount in the manner specified in the Bill.

For more info see link below.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/centre-for-policy-alternatives-files-petition-in-the-supreme-court-sc-sd-28-2021-against-proposed-finance-bill/>

Several parties challenged the Constitutionality of the Bill in court. Finance Bill No. 18 of 2021 was certified by the Hon. Speaker on 15 September 2021. The Bill was taken up for debate on 7 September and was passed in Parliament with amendments. 134 votes were cast in favour of the Bill and 44 votes were cast against the Bill. The vote took place as a division was called for by the Hon. Chief Opposition Whip Lakshman Kiriella during the second reading of the Finance Bill.

Case in the North – Kurudumale temple in Jaffna

It was listed for support on 23 August 2021 and was not taken up due to the closure of the courts, and got rescheduled to be taken up on 13 December 2021. However, the matter was taken up on 3 November 2021 as per the motion filed on 27 November 2021. Since the Attorney General failed to appear in courts, it was directed to be taken up on 11th November 2021. The above matter was taken up on 11 January 2022, Mr. Sumanthiran PC, appeared for the petitioners. The state filed its limited objections on August 2021 and when the matter was taken up on 8 December 2021, state wanted to file additional limited objections on behalf of the 5th Respondent and the courts requested them to file it officially with notice to the Petitioners. Three weeks' time have been given to the Petitioners to file the affidavit, before 24 February 2022.

Land case in Batticaloa - CA (Writ) 36/21

The matter was supported by the counsel on 23 February 2021 and the D.S.G appeared for the Respondents commended in his submission that the temporary permission granted to the farmers will lapse on 28 February 2021 and the matter was fixed to be resumed on 12 May, however, due to the closure of courts this matter will be taken up for further support on 1 December 2021. The matter was taken up on 1 December 2021, Mr. Sumanthiran PC, appeared for the Petitioner and made the application that still the residents are occupying the land, and the state informed the court that according to their information, the said people were asked to vacate the said land. However courts asked to provide evidence to show that the farmers are still occupying the said land. The matter will be taken up on 7 May 2022.

Future Work, Changes, and Challenges

Several public interest litigation cases that were listed to be taken up in May/June postponed due to closure of Courts (due to the spread of Covid-19 in Sri Lanka and travel restrictions imposed). Therefore, these challenges had impacted to proceed and follow up with the PIL cases in a timely manner. The pandemic has impacted access and meetings and with extra measures taken to navigate health challenges. Also the shrinking space for civil society - the civil society, lawyers and media are facing increasing obstacles with some facing surveillance, threats, visits by police and others to organizations etc.

CPA continued with its research, advocacy and public interest litigation despite the numerous setbacks/obstacles imposed in 2021 and was one of the few civil society organisations that continued to comment vigilantly on the numerous legal/policy developments. Most of the interventions were carried out in the midst of lockdowns, restrictions and the heightened surveillance in 2021.

Human Rights, Governance and Related Issues

CPA was active as in the past regarding UNHRC work and the Resolution that was adopted.

On February 26, 2021, the Executive Director of CPA, Dr. Saravanamuttu in an interview, spoke about the impact of the recent report on Sri Lanka by the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), the ongoing 46th UNHRC session in Geneva and the Resolution set to be brought against Sri Lanka to promote human rights, reconciliation and accountability for past abuses.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/interview-how-much-will-non-compliance-cost/>

Please see below the UNHRC-related tweets posted by CPA (these will include a link to the relevant news article as well).

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1376407418406498304>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1376404474462232577>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1374997523962548224>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1374953986118180865>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1366292272845778944>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1365515732172218371>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1364067697995096065>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1363723618803277824>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1363705720894447616>

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1362243602978463745>

Publications

Revisiting Ten Emblematic Cases in Sri Lanka: Why Justice Remains Elusive

CPA published this report in all three languages (English, Sinhala and Tamil). The English version was published in January 2021 and Sinhala and Tamil versions in March. In this report, CPA examines ten cases emblematic of the failings and inadequacies of the criminal justice system of Sri Lanka. CPA reiterates the urgent need for structural and legal reforms recommended in the present report as well as its previous report on the subject - The Need for Accountability in Sri Lanka's Criminal Justice System: A Glance at Seven Emblematic Cases. 150 reports in each language were printed and disseminated widely to universities, libraries, civil society, Members of Parliament, lawyers, judges, Attorney Generals' department, and diplomatic missions, the UN, NGOs and INGOs.

The report can be accessed here:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/revisiting-ten-emblematic-cases-in-sri-lanka-why-justice-remains-elusive/>

Sri Lanka's Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour: A Critique of Promises Made and Present Trends

CPA published this report in all three languages (English, Sinhala and Tamil). The English version was published in June and Sinhala and Tamil versions in July. In this report, CPA examines the varied challenges faced by Sri Lanka through the lens of governance, militarization, reconciliation and development. It provides a critique of Government policy, exploring how a lack of coherent and considered policy making, the adoption of ethno majoritarian political ideology and the implementation of militarized governance has resulted in adverse outcomes.

300 reports in English, 200 in Sinhala and 200 in Tamil were printed and disseminated widely to the universities, libraries, civil society, Members of Parliament, lawyers, judges, Attorney Generals' department, and diplomatic missions, the UN, NGOs and INGOs.

The report can be accessed here:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/sri-lankas-vistas-of-prosperity-and-splendour-a-critique-of-promisemade-and-present-trends/>

A Brief Guide to the 20th Amendment to the Constitution

In June 2021, CPA published the book “A Brief Guide to the 20th Amendment to the Constitution” in all three languages (English, Sinhala and Tamil). The Sri Lankan government enacted the 20th Amendment to the Constitution in October 2020. This publication captures the legal and political events surrounding the passing of this Constitutional Amendment. 350 reports in English, 300 in Sinhala and 200 in Tamil were printed and disseminated widely to the universities, libraries, civil society, Members of Parliament, lawyers, judges, Attorney Generals’ department, and diplomatic missions, the UN, NGOs and INGOs.

The publication can be accessed here:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/a-brief-guide-to-the-20th-amendment-to-the-constitution/>

A Commentary on the Presidential Commission of Inquiry and the Special Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Political Victimization

CPA published this report in all three languages in April 2021. The commentary provides a brief analysis of the Commission of Inquiry (CoI) on political victimization and the subsequent establishment of the Special Presidential Commission of Inquiry (SPCoI).

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/a-commentary-on-the-pcoi-and-the-special-pcoi-on-politicalvictimization/>

250 reports in English, 100 in Sinhala and 100 in Tamil were printed and disseminated widely to the Members of Parliament, lawyers, civil society, libraries, universities, and diplomatic missions, UN, NGOs and INGOs. The document was also made available on social media platforms.

Initial Concerns with the Report of the Commission of Inquiry to Investigate Allegations of Political Victimization and Subsequent Action

<https://www.cpalanka.org/initial-concerns-with-the-report-of-the-commission-of-inquiry-to-investigate-allegations-of-political-victimization-and-subsequent-action/>

Short Note on the Resolution Seeking Parliamentary Approval to Implement the Recommendations of the CoI on Political Victimization

<https://www.cpalanka.org/short-note-on-the-resolution-seeking-parliamentary-approval-toimplement-the-recommendations-of-the-coi-on-political-victimization/>

Commentary on the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill

In May 2021, in this brief commentary CPA raises the potential implications of the CPCEC Bill, and highlights some key concerns relating to the Bill, as was Gazetted on the 24th of March 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/cpa-commentary-on-the-port-city-bill/>

An Update on the Legal Framework to address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Sri Lanka

CPA was active in commenting on the legal and policy dimensions of the pandemic response during the lockdown period and after in 2021.

See link below.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/an-update-on-the-legal-framework-to-address-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-sri-lanka/>

Initial comment on the Declaration of a State of Emergency and Regulations for the Maintenance of Essential Supplies and Services

This comment briefly explains the legal basis for the declaration of a state of emergency and specifically Emergency (Provision of Essential Food) Regulation, No. 1 of 2021 published in Gazette 2243/3 dated 30th August 2021.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/initial-comment-on-the-declaration-of-a-state-of-emergency-and-regulations-for-the-maintenance-of-essential-supplies-and-services/>

Concerns relating to the recent regulations issued under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)

CPA is alarmed by the Prevention of Terrorism (De-radicalization from holding violent extremist religious ideology) Regulations No. 01 of 2021 (hereinafter the regulations) published on 12th of March 2021. CPA also noted that this is the latest attempt to instrumentalise and entrench the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), a law inconsistent with Sri Lanka's Constitution.

See link below for more information.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/concerns-relating-to-the-recent-regulations-issued-under-the-prevention-of-terrorism-act/>

Field Visits

Assessment on reconciliation in a pandemic setting

Senior Researcher and three researchers at the Research and Advocacy Team had discussions/meetings with different parties and stakeholders as per the following field visits scheduled from January to March 2021.

1. Trincomalee on 19 January 2021
2. Mannar, Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi from 25 to 27 January 2021
3. Batticaloa from 1 to 3 February 2021
4. Kandy on 22 February 2021
5. Trincomalee from 3 to 4 March 2021
6. Ampara from 15 to 17 March 2021

1. Trincomalee – 19 January

Areas of Research: Land issues, minority rights, interethnic tensions, and the intersection of these issues.

Research Activities: Conducted interviews with local politicians, individuals affected by land issues, members of civil society, and activists.

2. Mannar, Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi – 25 to 27 January

Areas of Research: Microfinance, women-headed households, land issues, illegal sand mining, labour, and livelihoods, shrinking of space for civil society, and the influence of inter-ethnic tensions on electoral politics.

Research Activities: Conducted interviews with local politicians, members of civil society, activists, journalists, religious leaders, and individuals affected by land issues.

Visited areas where land grabs occurred. Collected documentation pertaining to land issues (deeds, permits for land, etc.).

3. Batticaloa – 1 to 3 February

Areas of Research: Land issues, gender issues, labour issues, illegal sand mining, and the influence of interethnic tensions on electoral politics.

Research Activities: Conducted interviews with individuals affected by land issues, as well as religious leaders, members of civil society, and activists.

Visiting of sites subject to land grabs (primarily pasture lands).

Collected documentation pertaining to land issues.

4. Kandy – 22 February

Areas of Research: Interethnic tensions, issues faced by the Muslim community.

Research Activities: Interviews with members of Muslim civil society, religious leaders, and activists.

5. Trincomalee - 3 to 4 March

Areas of Research: Land issues, drivers of conflict within the Tamil community, militarisation, pandemic governance, public opinion on minority parties in parliament, public opinion on UNHRC resolution, environmental issues.

Research Activities: Interviews with local politicians, members of civil society, individuals affected by land issues and inter-ethnic tensions

Collected documentation pertaining to land issues

Visited and surveyed sites where ownership of land has been contested

6. Ampara - 15 to 17 March

Areas of Research: Land issues, drivers of conflict within the Muslim community, militarisation

Research Activities: Interviews with local politicians, members of civil society, lawyers and public servants working on cases with regard to land ownership, individuals affected by land issues and inter-ethnic tensions.

Collected documentation pertaining to land issues

Visited and surveyed sites where ownership of land has been contested.

Assessment on trends and dynamics related to human rights, governance and reconciliation in Sri Lanka

1. 25 to 29 Oct 2021 to Ampara

2. 22 to 24 Nov 2021 to North (covering Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Mannar & Killinochchi)

During the visits, interviews were conducted and meetings were held with residents and farmers representing minority communities, and activists operating in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Interviews and meetings conducted with stakeholders during field visits to the North and the East revealed a number of issues faced by the minority communities in the region. Chief among them were incidents of land grabs in the two provinces. The impediments faced by the farmers related to instituting legal action, delays related to on-going cases, and the involvement of and interactions with the military, law enforcement, local government authorities and the Buddhist clergy in relation to land grabs were discussed. Information related to incidents of land grabs and the relevant documentation were gathered during the course of the field visits, and basic legal information was relayed to the participants. The effects of the ban of chemical fertilizer on harvest and the livelihoods of farmers, and the long-term implications for food security in the country were emphasized. Surveillance and intimidation of civil society activists, protesters, as well as residents who have filed cases regarding the land grabs were also highlighted.

Secondary/desk research was conducted on thematic issues related to geopolitical relations, governance, reconciliation, the economy and the environment.

The final report will be published in February 2023.

Strategic Communications

I. Project Purpose

Strengthening the strategic communications capacity and capabilities of the Centre for Policy Alternatives.

II. Activity summary

In October and November 2021, CPA completed the production of six social media posts or infographics (with key information extracted from the Top line Report) along with three animated trailers in all three languages as the Campaign Part 1. These products were produced by a company named 'Not Another Agency (NAA). The posts and trailers will be linked to the Top line Report, directing the viewers to access and read it. The posts will also be sponsored with the target of reaching up to 250,000 - 500,000 people.

Campaign Part 1 – Final

Please download all the files from the links below.

- Posts/Infographics - All 3 languages for all platforms

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=1dydo8Ea0WHHH2mzbdNsd-OMGn0qHmC1G>

- Trailers - All 3 languages for all platforms

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ViZGO8TdH38zuQej-4SDi6hitcL7Zxtt?usp=sharing>

Constitutional Reforms and Democracy

I. Project Purpose

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen institutional resilience in Sri Lanka in the areas of devolution and national security consistently with the requirements of constitutional democracy.

II. Activity summary

- Presenting the completed draft constitution and draft bills to a wider group of colleagues within CPA prior to finalizing the drafts and presenting them to political parties and other stakeholders for feedback.
- Revision of the completed legislative draft outputs from the project following feedback from the review workshop.
- Completion of draft Bill and Explanatory Memorandum for the Regulation of Political Parties and Election Commission Bill.
- It was decided at the internal review workshop to expand the scope of the Transparency of Political Finances Bill to provide for a comprehensive framework for the regulation of political parties and the statutory empowerment of the Election Commission. The new bill is titled ‘The Regulation of Political Parties and Election Commission Bill’.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND OUTREACH

Magna Carta Project: Support to human right defenders and civil society to promote human rights and democratic values in Sri Lanka

The project titled *Support to human right defenders and civil society to promote human rights and democratic values in Sri Lanka* aimed to reinforce freedom of media, promote access to information and freedom of expression by strengthening journalist practices while also developing a sustainable shared platform. Civil society, media, regional and Colombo-based organizations and human rights defenders worked together to strengthen and leverage capacities towards creating alternative spaces for protection and inclusive political participation, and pushing for reversal of human rights violations, and threats to fundamental freedoms.

The project hosted 20+ online/physical training and Training of Trainers (ToT) on '*Digital and Physical Safety*' for provincial and national-level 250+ journalists/civil rights activists/CSOs/human rights defenders. Training included a component of the use of RTI Act for investigative journalism.

CPA developed and disseminated a 'Technical Tool Kit' to ensure 'Digital and Physical Safety' for journalists /CSOs/Human rights defenders. One project result was strengthened coordination among existing networks and solidarity campaigns between journalists/media, local minority community leaders/CSOs/human rights defenders provincially and island-wide

Provincial and island-wide issues of shrinking human rights freedoms were identified via 10 affiliated organizations and stakeholders and knowledge/communication and multimedia products on media freedom violations and 15+ articles on significant cases by journalists with training and tool kit were produced and disseminated. CPA and affiliated organisations filed cases appealing on Human Rights violations and threats to fundamental freedoms island-wide, to the relevant commissions.

Expert mentors were selected to lead the programme and the Online Technical Tool Kit was drafted with the aim of ensuring Digital and Physical Safety for the participants comprising provincial and national level 250+ journalists/civil rights activists/CSOs/ human rights defenders. Workshops were held through Zoom and in the project areas to train on 'Digital and Physical Safety' for provincial and national level 250+ journalists/civil rights activists/CSOs/ human rights defenders. Training included a component on the use of RTI Act for investigative journalist practices, and planning on how to achieve project objectives. The project outputs included knowledge/communication products such as handbills, booklets, toolkits, and multimedia (audio and video) products on recent examples of media freedom violations/ threats to HR defenders.

New networks were created and existing ones strengthened so that there is increased coordination and more solidarity between journalists/media, local minority community leaders/CSOs/human

rights defenders provincially and island-wide. The use of RTI-elicited information in news productions and training to enhance news literacy was promoted.

Provincial and island-wide issues of shrinking human rights freedoms have been identified via 10 affiliated organizations and stakeholders defenders provincially and island-wide and more than a dozen articles were drafted on significant cases by journalists, including their recommendations.

[Radio Programmes](#)

[Documentary](#)

[HRD Stories Database](#)

Strengthening Social and Economic Rights of Rural Women in Business Operations

CPA looked into the issues of rural women who have been caught in the **Microfinance debt trap** particularly in the post-Covid economic crisis situation. The project “*Strengthening Social and Economic Rights of Rural Women in Business Operations*” aims to contribute to safeguarding the social and economic rights of rural women subject to adverse human rights impacts within the context of business operations during the Covid pandemic.

The project worked to provide

- Enhanced opportunities and innovative solutions for recovery of rural women led-MSMEs affected by the pandemic to ensure resilience
- sustainable economic growth
- Improved awareness and advocacy of social and economic rights to which rural business women are entitled, including responses related to legal grievance redress.

In 2021 CPA, together with partner organization National Collaboration Development Foundation (NCDF) began collecting information from rural women engaged in small scale businesses in the target locations, Trincomalee and Kantalai, to better understand what consultancy and advocacy initiatives need to be conducted for the target beneficiaries. A format was created for the ease of information collection and this information was converted digitally into a database. A WhatsApp group was also created once all the information is collected to make communication more efficient, create a network between the female entrepreneurs to enable rapid updates, active engagement and a united response.

Issues surrounding unregulated microfinance services were identified, documented and shared. CPA and NCDF worked to mobilize affected communities to influence the Central Bank of Sri

Lanka and other policy-making bodies towards finding solutions to a range of challenging social and economic issues caused by the microcredit loan trap.

It was recognised as important to implement an effective and robust regulatory mechanism that meaningfully standardizes the functions of the microfinance sector in Sri Lanka. While taking steps to provide relief for borrowers as an immediate action, it was recommended that a credit regulatory law should be formulated and implemented as a long term solution.

Project activities included : Introduction of Self Employment Opportunities/Innovative Approaches of Business Recovery/ Legal Aid Programmes for women whose human rights were violated and preventing potential violation of human rights/ Forming and stronger networking between affected women and livelihood development programs of government institutions./Advocacy meetings for affected women linking District Secretaries and Divisional Secretaries of Trincomalee and Polonnaruwa districts./Training and sensitization sessions for journalists (both mainstream and new media).

NCDF and CPA held a press conference on this theme in front of the Human Rights Commission in December 2021, part of which can be viewed in the documentary on Microfinance Issues in the East available at <https://tinyurl.com/37x9ajub>

CPAs programme on microfinance issues succeeded in Introducing innovative livelihood approaches, improving knowledge and understanding on the significance of human rights and suggesting project interventions ensured enhanced women’s economic and social security

Using the Community led advocacy approach women participants were also capacitated in understanding violence and harassment against women and stronger networks of women began raising united voices with mandated state institutions, e.g. the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, to find effective solutions for their individual grievances and also to agitate en masse to regulate microfinance services.

Representatives of women trapped in unregulated Microfinance loans, making submissions to the Central Bank found the opening to initiate dialogue with companies alleged to have violated rights of these victims, to come up with reasonable arrangements to settle their unpaid or defaulted loans.

Another result of the project was the Improved, effective and increased use of Right to Information (RTI) combined with women’s knowledge of human rights in the context of business operations and networked women groups, in collaboration with NCDF and under the guidance of CPA, have started establishing their own ‘Women’s Societies’ at local levels and a community based fund

with their own contributions to face the financial needs to initiate and sustain livelihood options in the existing and forthcoming economic crisis.

A number of challenges were identified during this project in 2021:

- Travel restrictions imposed due to lockdowns initially and the economic and political crisis
- Mobilizing communities, particularly affected women, in an environment in which people were struggling to ensure their basic needs for survival.
- Lack of legal experts willing to support the affected women in managing litigation related matters.
- Increased costs of living including the price hikes of transportation, refreshments, accommodation and other logistics
- Reluctance or apathy on the part of district and divisional administrations of respective project areas and also on the part of the Central Bank.
- The lack of documentation and records as evidence with the women whose rights have been violated became a serious challenge in countering the institutions alleged to have violated human rights.
- Absence of documents related to micro-credit loans, repayments, notices of defaulting were among the core challenges in making robust counter arguments. Lack of knowledge and understanding by affected women on financial management, record keeping, business management and contractual obligations were identified as challenges in introducing innovative business recovery approaches.

Work on this project continues even though the funding period has ended as at Dec 2021 and a request was made for a no cost extension. Effective interventions are made possible through synergies with other advocacy work carried out by CPA. Affected women with whom this project engaged are to be linked with the second phase of the project scheduled for 2022 and thus they are currently being capacitated to access to referral systems (Central Bank/Human Rights Commission etc.) to find legal and other solutions to injustices they faced due to the COVID pandemic and economic crisis.

Links:

For social media links of the video documentary (Sinhala and Tamil languages) and short video clips:

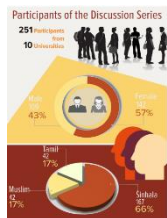
Main video Sinhala Link 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItVWedUytSQ>

Main video Tamil Link 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ft8N3f4SACY>

Link to the Kadapatha [Radio Program](#) December 2021

Playlist [Unregulated Microfinance Services in Sri Lanka](#)

Promoting Tolerance and Respect for Diversity



As part of a project titled *Preventing Violent Extremism through Promoting Tolerance and Respect for Diversity* CPA worked on building capacities of state institutions at youth level to prevent violent extremism by transferring knowledge and support in the development and application of rule of law, respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity and the promotion of social cohesion.

In collaboration with academics and students of respective universities, CPA facilitated discussions creating an unrestricted space for more than 300 undergraduates from all parts of the country, to express their opinions on issues, challenges and recommendations with regard to preventing violent extremism in Sri Lanka. This is not an exhaustive analysis on the issue of “Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)” but a compilation of views of university undergraduates representing the youth of the country on the topic of violent extremism, and resulted in a paper that contributes to the ongoing debate on combating violent extremism in Sri Lanka. The policy paper was finalized with feedback from university undergraduates, scholars, academics and university lecturers. The platform encouraged students to develop strategies for preventing youth radicalization in educational settings and to create alternative narratives

For the purpose of creating a dialogue around PVE and for mass outreach, CPA also compiled [14 short videos](#), each with a duration of 3-4 minutes which will include a brief introduction to the concept of PVE with an introduction into the initiative with the university students and the importance of youth in PVE followed by the suggestions and opinions of the students.

<https://www.cpalanka.org/policy-recommendations-on-preventing-violent-extremism-in-sri-lanka/>

https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PVE-Eng_webfile.pdf

Photojournalism in the Estate Sector

Thè Kahata – Giving Voice to the Untold Stories of Sri Lanka’s Plantation Sector

The project aimed to increase the capacities of young photographers from the plantation sector to become socially responsible photographers and to train them to use photography as a creative strategy for their own community’s transformation.

Sri Lanka takes pride in her tea industry, and for many years the name Ceylon was synonymous with tea. However, behind the celebratory rhetoric and good wishes was and still continues to be the stark reality of the living conditions of the people who have plucked the “gold” of Sri Lanka for over a century.

It is sad but true that in certain cases living conditions have not changed for over a hundred years and that wages lag far behind what is adequate and just. For Sri Lanka to move ahead as a country made up of many peoples and in which there is Unity in Diversity, serious attention should and must be paid to the living conditions of the workers on estates.

CPA involved the young people of the community in this exhibition as they were considered the best to understand and record for posterity the daily reality of life on the tea estates. It is hoped that the exhibition will spark off a much needed conversation and spur political commitment to improve the lives of the community and that opinion and decision makers will place human dignity above else as the motivating force of their efforts. Thè Kahata Photojournal and virtual exhibition of photography by members of the Up Country Tamil community bears witness to the everyday hardships and privation of their lives.

Project Background



This project aims to strengthen the voice of plantation communities presenting an alternative narrative of the plantation sector through the media of creative photo voice. These creations are to be presented to relevant stakeholders supporting engagement in advocacy for social justice and equality. The initiative utilizes photography as a tool of assessment that focuses on highlighting the narratives of the plantation sector through visual images captured by selected skilled youth

belonging to plantation families who have the least access to develop knowledge and technical skills on photography. In addition, the endeavour will provide an eye-opening opportunity for youth to sharpen their hidden talents and discover their passion for creative expressions and introduce an innovative medium for communicating their issues. Field visits and linkages they develop during photo shooting sessions will further deepen their understanding of historical roots they belong to and thereby inculcate a sense of responsibility, empathy and to recognize

themselves as dignified citizens of the country through careful civic engagement with one's own community. By extension, they will also gain opportunities to learn how to incorporate ethical practices/ code of conduct that need to be followed in the process of creating successful photo voices.

The project supported the design of a virtual exhibition for the creative works produced by the youth photographers and also gave them the opportunity to train in various subsidiary areas related to photojournalism. Furthermore, discussions also proceeded to what initiatives can the youth independently undertake in order to enact change in their communities, what strengths lie within them to implement them and our contribution towards these initiatives. Accordingly, the youth brought forward a number of proposals such as the use of RTI to address their issues and find solutions, forming a structured team to work together to voice and raise inequalities, rights violations, injustices, political, social and economic exploitations that exist within their communities via an online platform such as through a Facebook Page, publishing photographers that depict issues etc. We observed solid improvements in the youth's leadership skills, their need to address their issues and take the role of socially responsible photographers.

A Photobook was also printed which catalogues all photographs captured by the youth, their profiles and experiences in the process and reviews of CPA and PO representatives, scholars, academics, and artists on the initiative. It is available in all three languages (Sinhala, English and Tamil) and will serve as an added value and benefit in the long-term for both audiences locally and abroad to be utilized as a reference for any research or advocacy initiative. CPA intends to print 500 books in each language which will be made available online and disseminated to Ministries, policy makers, CSOs, civic activists, artists, photography associations and cultural institutes, plantation community leaders, tea estate managers, tea boards and trade unions and other interested individuals.

The The Kahata Exhibition series is part of CPAs ongoing work to highlight the injustices meted to plantation sector communities during 150 years of Ceylon tea.

<https://groundviews.org/category/150-years-of-ceylon-tea/>

Virtual exhibition: <https://kahata.citizenslanka.org/>

<https://groundviews.org/2020/09/11/the-kahata-exhibitions-discovering-the-creative-expression-of-plantation-youth/>

Strengthening the Use of RTI among Journalists and Civil Society

Strengthening the Right to Information Act

CPA has been at the forefront of advocacy for the Right to Information (RTI) for over 15 years, helping draft earlier versions of RTI legislation and being involved in advocacy and public awareness efforts for the current RTI Act which was passed in 2016 and came into operation in early 2017.

The project, *Strengthening the Use of RTI among Journalists and Civil Society to Promote a Transparent, Efficient and Inclusive Governance* commenced 01 March 2021 aimed to evaluate the extent to which the RTI been influential in addressing the local issues of the public in Sri Lanka and to empower citizens island wide to engage with their RTI as well as ensure that the general public are able to utilize RTI as a tool in seeking justice.

CPA conducted workshops in each province, targeting especially rural, and low-income populations in addition to government officers including Information Officers, Municipal Council members, Pradeshiya Sabha Members, Divisional Secretariat officers, media and other civil organizations. The primary objective was to increase awareness among diverse stakeholders on CPA's engagement on RTI initiatives through expert panel discussion, to ensure that wider audience acknowledges clearly challenges, loopholes in the current RTI provision and how various stakeholders could engage in strengthening the RTI as a tool to ensure that Right to Information Act prevails and more importantly sustains in seeking justice in future. _

Despite the covid19 pandemic, CPA's partner organization, National Collaboration Development Foundation (NCDF) was able to successfully conduct a number of physical workshops with close consideration to all health and safety guidelines around Kantalai and Trincomalee targeting grassroots citizens while encouraging them to file RTI requests for a number of their issues.

RTI workshops were also conducted for more than 100 journalists online to strengthen investigative and accountable reporting using RTI-elicited information. Drawn from past experiences, these extensive workshops detailed the participants on how to exactly request information from government officers, tactics of asking the right questions, and the right way to fill forms and procedures in terms of appealing when needed. Based on the feedback, the workshops are very successful as they not only fully educate journalists on how to request for the right information but also encourage them to draft investigative articles using RTI-elicited information for which they will be recognized.

The project also enabled 15 established journalists to join an initiative that developing unique research-based articles on a particular issue area, identified using RTI-elicited information. CPA had been broadcasting RTI-related programs on community radio programs since 2020 and conducted an analytical study on the effectiveness of these programs using the feedback received from listeners, questions asked during the radio programs and the level of

engagement of listeners geographically. [A publication](#) was issued including an analytical report on the successfulness of RTI radio programs (15 page) and the 15 research-based articles

Weekly Radio broadcasts To benefit local communities without access to online resources, CPA also worked with Uva Provincial Community radio channels (Sinhala and Tamil) and Rangiri Dambulu Radio Stations and recorded key discussion points of each workshop inclusive of the contextual issues that were brought up and recommendations to resolve these issues; this involves issues raised by Public, government officers and other participants in addition to the issues discussed during the workshop which were broadcast on a weekly basis via the 3 community radio channels.

The [Citizens Lanka website](#) is aimed at addressing injustice, corruption, poverty and intolerance, and the social ills of this nation. It includes our work on language rights, citizens councils, gazettes and parliamentary reports related to governance issues, and much more. So far, the RTI Help Desk has received 300+ calls and complaints from the public island-wide.

RTI Citizens Hotline

Strengthening the Help Desk Facility maintained at CPA to Empower Citizens Engagement on RTI Application RTI Helpdesk Hotline **0113-030-463**

To further empower citizens, CPA Outreach has introduced a help desk (Contact no: 0113030463) to ensure that citizens are further guided and provided assistance on how they could file cases, draft their concerns, resolve their inquiries and ambiguities with regard to the RTI complaints, on day-to-day basis. Two personnel are assigned: An employee who attends to inquiries in Tamil during office hours and an officer (attorney at law) with a sound background in the area of RTI, placed to respond in Sinhala and duly maintain a database of complaints and to follow up with responses and feedback received by the relevant parties.

The Right to Information and Media Practice

Investigative journalism is one of the key contributions that strengthen democracy and accountability, and RTI can be considered a potent weapon of investigative journalism. In January 2021, CPA launched “*The Right to Information and Media Practice*” and the Research report on the ‘*Responsiveness of Public Authorities to Right to Information Applications submitted via Email*’. The first publication is a collection of news articles and success stories derived through RTI elicited information by prolific journalists and RTI users who have worked closely with CPA. It aims to empower journalists and the public to utilize RTI legislation to secure documentary proof they need to add credibility to their stories and report in a more balanced and responsible

manner. So the launch of this publication will benefit in the long-term towards bolstering investigative journalism while strengthening democracy, fair governance, and accountability and popularizing the use of RTI amongst the Sri Lankan media and the civil society. ‘

The Right to Information and Media Practice’ is available for reading in [English](#), [Sinhala](#), and [Tamil](#).

The research study aims at assessing the responsiveness of public authorities to requests for information made via emails. Emphasizing the importance of the use of electronic media in requesting information in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, requests for information were sent by email in Sinhala and Tamil, to the official email addresses of 695 public authorities. Recommendations include the need to replace functioning email addresses of all public authorities in relevant websites, to widen public awareness about the implementation of the right to information using electronic means and for authorities to support and respond to information requests through electronic means as the best alternative to the direct exercise of the right to information amid the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The report can be read and downloaded in [English](#), [Sinhala](#), and [Tamil](#)

Right to Information: Issues and Challenges of Policy and Implementation

December 2021,

This report is an analysis of the recent use of the RTI Act by journalists. The publication includes hitherto unpublished case studies of RTI being used as an effective tool to raise concerns on a range of policy positions, and their implementation, and highlights the paradox between policies in theory and experiences in practice. Journalists have presented their personal opinions and views based on their analysis of various social issues, some relating to a particular area or community. The report also contains a summarized analysis of the public calls to CPA’s RTI 113-030-463 hotline during 2021.

A long-standing struggle and sustained advocacy of various human rights actors has led to the landmark decision to introduce the Right to Information (RTI) as an integral part of the Fundamental Rights chapter of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. This publication, supported by FNF, follows from more than a decade of advocacy by CPA to promote the Right to Information in Sri Lanka and then to support the effective use of this right by journalists and activists, in the public interest.

More information on CPAs RTI Hotline: <https://www.cpalanka.org/rti-help-desk-at-cpa-information-and-posters/>

Other RTI related publications by CPA include:

- Information about the Right to Information (Sinhala and Tamil language)
- [Study on Information Requests Submitted to Public Authorities and Responses Received under the Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016](#)

Media Cover

<https://www.ft.lk/news/RTI-and-media-practice/56-713467>

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/videos/1039537583225044/>

CAPACITY BUILDING AND OUTREACH - GOVERNANCE

Safeguarding, Stabling Women’s Political Quota and Ensuring Political Rights of Local Women

Focusing on three project locations; Southern [Galle, Matara, Hambantota], Central [Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya] and Uva [Badulla, Monaragala] Provinces

01st November 2021 – 31st January 2023

Purpose: To create an enabling institutional environment while safeguarding, stabilizing, supporting and mentoring women leaders to become successful in their leadership roles in politics.

Message: An all-inclusive updating systemic approach beyond mere representation is necessary to strengthen women’s leadership and their active and interactive engagements in Political governance.

Pillar Objectives and later final outcomes that the project is hoping to achieve before their next CANDIDACY

- OBJ I) To strengthen the political carrier of women members who will be elected to the local councils to better prepare them for the councils and in the long term to contest in the Local, Provincial and National Level Elections.
- OBJ ii) To enhance the awareness and importance of female participation in the political process among District organizers, Political Party Leaders and thereby encouraging political party leaders to build a strong platform that would provide equal access for women to contest in the upcoming elections.
- OBJ iii) To direct the Quota outlook towards Gender Equality impression to sense the idea that female representation is an essential segment to the Political Decision Making process of the country.

The target of the project is to conduct 50 experience-based confabs with 1256 expected beneficiaries in Central, Southern and Uva provinces. In detail, 687 female members , 246 executive members (Chairman, Vice-Chairman only) and 123 related officials from the divisional administration layer as participants are 1056 and 200 district political organizers are participants.

Project Activities:

- Activity 01 Conduct Positional Reviews through Pre Visits to Project Locations –
- Activity 02 Conduct Encouraging and motivational knowledge conclaves divisional members and attached officials
- Activity 03 Conduct stimulating and sensitizing confabs for district political organizers
- Activity 04 Conduct district level motivational publicity campaigns before the proposed local government election
- Activity 05 Research Publication – Observational and lessons review and Launch

Existing Nature of the project is in the process of implementing and only ACTIVITY 1 and two have been completed so far.

SOCIAL INDICATOR

Brief Introduction of Social Indicator

Right after the COVID pandemic, with the adoption of alternative research methods instead of traditional, SI initiated an island-wide poll, ‘Socio-economic Index in the face of covid-19’ to assess the views of the public and understand to what extent the pandemic affected their lives, health, education, and social relations. The findings of the survey encouraged a deeper dive into many of the themes within, leading to the idea of an edited research volume, named ‘Is the cure worse than the disease? Reflections on COVID governance in Sri Lanka’. This was its first kind in Sri Lanka, examined the impacts of the covid-19 pandemic on the political, economic, and social life of the Sri Lankan society and its transformational effect on the political culture of the country.

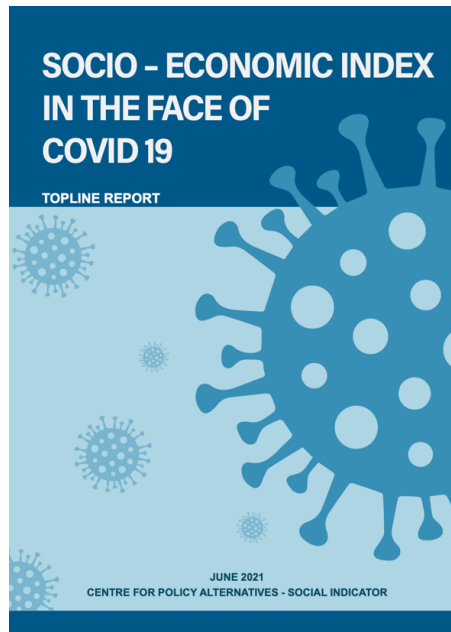
Further, SI, conducted a study, Constitutional Performance Assessment of the 1978 Sri Lankan Constitution, The objective of undertaking a Constitutional Performance Assessment to generate a systematically rigorous, evidence-based, analytical, and recommendatory report that has the potential to reframe the constitutional reform debate, traditionally deeply divided along ideological and ethnic cleavages, towards a more constructive discourse of democratic agreement (and disagreement). This study has two major parts, one was with opinion leaders, where, the CPA-SI was in partnership with International IDEA and the Edinburgh Centre for Constitutional Law (ECCL), and the other poll was with the general public, which was supported by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

The above study was the first of that kind for SI and in Sri Lanka as well.

- *M. Krishnamoorthy*

Assessing Challenges and Identifying Strategies amidst a Pandemic in Sri Lanka (January 2021 to July 2021)

1. Topline report



The survey was conducted by Social Indicator, the survey research arm of CPA using a semi-structured questionnaire and was administered through face-to-face interviews with 1000 respondents from 4 main ethnic communities representing both the rural and urban population across the 25 districts.

The purpose of this study is to assess the views of the public and understand to what extent the pandemic affected their lives, health, education and social relations. Further, the current situation increased the need for the state to promote and protect rights based on socioeconomic factors, and therefore it is crucial to understand the perception of the public in this regard.

To test the clarity of the language, sequence effect of the questions and relevance of the answer categories, a group of senior field supervisors carried out a pre-test. The pre-test was administered among respondents from the Sinhala and Tamil speaking communities. Later, these findings were used to develop the questionnaire further.

A Large-N study was carried out, where the interviews were conducted in the first language of both the respondent and the field enumerator.

The field enumerators who helped to carry out the study were given extensive training on the study, the research instrument, and the field techniques before commencing field work.

To ensure the quality of the data collected, accompanied visits and back-checks were done during and after field work.

The Project report in English, Sinhala and Tamil can be accessed via the links given below.

English report:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/socio-economic-index-in-the-face-of-covid-19/>

Sinhala report:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SOCIO-ECONOMIC-INDEX-Sinhala-F-I-N-A-L.pdf>

Tamil report:

https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Socio-Economic-Index-in-the-Face-of-Covid-19_Tamil-topline_-F-I-N-A-L.pdf

For a larger coverage information from the report were published on CPA’s Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages:

Twitter-

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1418935571850924037>

Instagram-

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CRtiUJaBU2o/>

Facebook:

Tamil-

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/photos/4148457198543521>

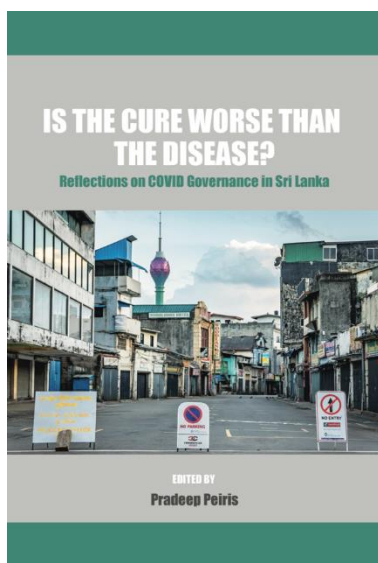
Sinhala-

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/photos/4148360745219833>

English-

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/photos/4081252698597305>

2. An in depth edited volume



It was after the ‘Socio-economic Index in the face of covid-19’ - an island wide opinion poll which aimed to capture the experiences and perceptions of Sri Lankans during the first and second waves of the covid-19 pandemic that this volume came to be. The findings of the survey encouraged a deeper dive into many of the themes within, leading to the idea of a research volume to spring to the minds of the project team. This led to the initiative by the Social Indicator which was named ‘Is the cure worse than the disease? Reflections if COVID governance in Sri Lanka’.

Thereby, this book project intended to examine the impacts of the covid-19 pandemic on the political, economic and social life of the Sri Lankan society and its transformational effect on the political culture of the country. For example, the chapters of the volume

discuss topics such as strategies and policies adopted by the government to fight the pandemic and how the policies impacted the delivery of governance, health and education fairly across all communities.

The edited volume has been published in all three languages and can be accessed through the links given below:

English report:

https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Is-the-cure-worse-than-the-disease_SI.pdf

Sinhala report:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Sinhala-Report.pdf>

Tamil report:

https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/tamil_final_complete-book_-09.01.2022.pdf

For a larger reach, the **edited volume** was shared on various social media platforms:

Twitter

Sinhala-

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1466313690097995780>

Tamil-

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1481817178416504835>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CShHBIOh9tY/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/photos/a.322236821165597/4207031812686059>

Constitutional Performance Assessment in Sri Lanka (Constitution of 1978);

Perception of opinion leaders

(01st October 2020 to 31st March 2021)



The Scope and the Content of the Sri Lankan Constitution: Perspectives of Opinion Leaders

Summary of Findings



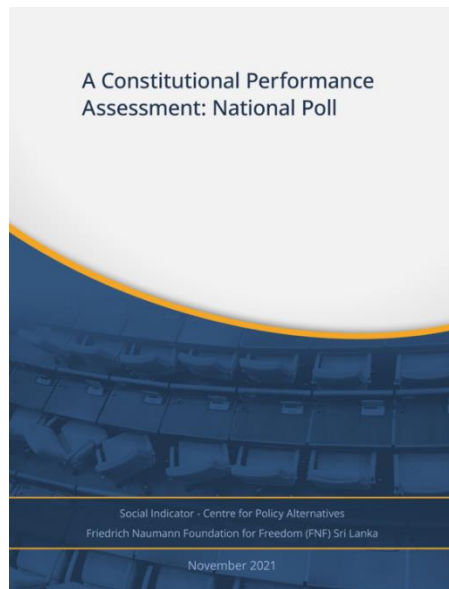
The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) in partnership with International IDEA and the Edinburgh Centre for Constitutional Law (ECCL) initiated a Constitutional Performance Assessment of the 1978 Sri Lankan Constitution. The objective of undertaking a Constitutional Performance Assessment using the IDEA methodology in Sri Lanka is to generate a systematically rigorous, evidence-based, analytical and recommendatory report that has the potential to reframe the constitutional reform debate, traditionally deeply divided along ideological and ethnic cleavages, towards a more constructive discourse of democratic agreement (and disagreement). The report (and other derivative content to be generated) will be oriented to multiple: uses and users: from civil society, academia, and media, to policy-makers and political actors.

The survey was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews with 400 opinion leaders from the four main ethnic communities (Sinhala, Tamil, Up Country Tamil, and Muslim) across all 25 districts of the country. For each ethnicity within each district, the selected sample respondents were persons above the age of 40 years, and comprised religious leaders, government officials, and office bearers of community-based organisations, teachers, and school principals, who are actively involved in the community. The field enumerators were given an extensive training on the study, the research instrument, and field techniques prior to the commencement of field work. A pre-test of the research instrument was held on 21 December 2020 in both Sinhala and Tamil languages with 10 respondents.

Field briefings for the large-N study were conducted on 22-23 December 2020 with both Sinhala and Tamil enumerators. A total of 64 field enumerators, both male and female and from all ethnic communities, participated in this study. Field work commenced on 24th December 2020.

Constitutional Performance Assessment in Sri Lanka (Constitution of 1978); National poll

(31st March 2021 to 30th November 2021)



The survey was conducted by Social Indicator, the survey research arm of CPA using a semi-structured questionnaire and was administered through face-to-face interviews with respondents from the 4 main ethnic communities across all 25 districts of the country.

This was carried out giving regard to the government's plans for further constitutional change. The purpose of the survey was to assess the knowledge, attitudes and opinions of the general public in relation to the current constitution, nature of politics, the presidency, and the nature of the economy, human rights and the judiciary.

SI virtually supervised the face-to-face training given to field enumerators by senior field supervisors. The field enumerators were trained extensively on the study, the research instruments and field techniques before the commencement of field work.

To ensure the quality of the data collected, a minimum of 10% of the total sample population were quality checked. The data set was then weighted in order to reflect the actual district and ethnic proportion of the population.

The survey overview and topline report were published. The survey results were also shared graphically through CPA's website and other media platforms.

The report can be accessed through the links attached below.

English report:

https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ENGLISH-SURVEY-REPORT_-A-CONSTITUTIONAL-PERFORMANCE-ASSESSMENT-NOVEMBER-2021.pdf

The Summaries of the report were published in Sinhala and Tamil as well.

Sinhala report:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Summary-of-Report-in-SINHALA.pdf>

Tamil report:

<https://www.cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Summary-of-Report-in-TAMIL.pdf>

For a wider coverage of the report it was also published on CPA's Twitter, Instagram and Facebook pages:

Twitter -

<https://twitter.com/CPASL/status/1460157648549122049>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CWTPZ6OomNL/>

Facebook-

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASL/posts/4495102163879021>

CIVIC MEDIA

The year 2020 flowed into 2021 with a continued air of uncertainty due to the unrelenting spread of the COVID-19 pandemic as the Civic Media team comprising three media platforms – Groundviews, Vikalpa and Maatram - continued their work highlighting under reported issues concerning human rights, governance, democracy and reconciliation as well as environmental and social matters. Political analysts, authors, activists, human rights defenders and environmental experts contributed regularly to the three sites.

The third wave of Covid-19 saw cases and deaths rise exponentially, taking the country's healthcare sector to the brink of collapse. The army administered vaccine drive began in earnest during the latter part of the year. The year also saw the culture of militarisation, impunity and authoritarianism being firmly entrenched in the post 20th Amendment political system. Another highly questionable presidential pardon was granted to a political ally while crackdown on dissent in both the online and offline environments intensified. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's ill-advised, overnight ban on chemical fertilizers severely affected the country's harvesting seasons and patterns, pushing the country into a food crisis. The Central Bank, struggling with the looming foreign exchange crisis, printed a record Rs. 213 billion in a single day. The burning of the X-Press Pearl off the coast of Colombo, continued deforestation around the Sinharaja rainforest and the re-enabling of the elephant slave trade accelerated environmental and climate concerns. Plantation workers campaign for a minimum wage of Rs. 1,000 and the Colombo Port City controversy were also covered by the three platforms.

Groundviews, Vikalpa and Maatram were able to attract a wide range of contributors writing on a variety of topics as well as to generate their own content for the website and social media platforms. The Civic Media Team concentrated on increasing its social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with video interviews, infographics and photo stories. In addition to human rights and politics, the three platforms focused on the degradation of the environment, women's rights and the fallout of the pandemic.

- *Minoli de Soysa*

While covering issues not tackled in depth by the mainstream media relating to human rights, governance, democracy and reconciliation as well as environmental and social matters, the media platforms that form CPA's Civic Media Team - Groundviews in English, Vikalpa in Sinhala and Maatram in Tamil - increased their social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with video interviews, infographics and photo stories. In 2021, Groundviews Twitter had 64,000 followers, Facebook 37,000 followers and Instagram 3,800 followers while Vikalpa Twitter had 16,100 followers, Facebook 17,000 followers and YouTube 8,600 subscribers with 1,035 videos. Maatram Facebook had 13,020, Twitter had 3,680, followers, and Instagram had 877 followers and Maatram Youtube 379 followers.

Some of the critical issues covered by Groundviews, Vikalpa and Maatram were:

Groundviews

The hardships faced both by people in Sri Lanka and migrant workers abroad due to Covid-19. The issue of vaccine inequality.

<https://groundviews.org/2021/01/29/bringing-them-home-the-need-of-the-hour-for-migrant-workers/>

The continuing use of the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act despite international and national calas for it to be repealed

<https://groundviews.org/2021/01/17/not-all-detainees-are-equal-class-ethnicity-and-the-prevention-of-terrorism-act/>

The intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders, especially in the north and east, and the targeting of media and social media personnel.

The continuing discrimination in forcing cremations of Muslims who died of Covid despite scientific evidence that burials were safe.

The stories of families hunting for their disappeared relatives

<https://groundviews.org/2021/02/27/for-families-of-the-disappeared-the-international-community-is-their-last-hope/>

The precarious situation of human rights defenders and media personnel in the north and east as they face intimidation and threats

<https://groundviews.org/2021/02/27/for-families-of-the-disappeared-the-international-community-is-their-last-hope/>

The many act of ecocide destroying the country's flora and fauna to benefit corrupt politicians and big business

<https://groundviews.org/2021/02/13/committing-ecocide-the-desecration-of-a-green-and-pleasant-land/>

Giving voice to those demanding justice for the Easter Sunday attacks in 2019

<https://groundviews.org/2021/04/21/two-years-on-they-are-still-asking-for-answers/>

The woes of rural women trapped in a never ending debt cycle

<https://groundviews.org/2021/04/06/drowning-in-debt-women-farmers-take-a-firm-stand/>

The looming threat to the agricultural sector and food security with the overnight chemical fertilizer ban

<https://groundviews.org/2021/05/09/ban-on-chemical-fertilizer-a-threat-to-food-security/>

The lasting consequences of the worst maritime disaster faced by the country

<https://groundviews.org/2021/06/06/an-avoidable-environmental-catastrophe-where-did-it-go-wrong/>

Charting the first signs of economic collapse

<https://groundviews.org/2021/08/05/lost-and-confused-an-economic-policy-in-shambles/>


The ongoing violence and sexual abuse of women and children

<https://groundviews.org/2021/11/25/public-awareness-key-to-ending-gender-based-violence/>

Harassment of the LGBTIQI community and their fight for rights


<https://groundviews.org/2021/12/11/proving-minister-keheliya-rambukwella-wrong-about-lgbt-rights/>

Coping with Dementia No issue detected

 **Citizen** · last year K*****@gmail.com · *****217

Thank you for exposing the silent and unnoticed epidemic in a country like ours and this has not received the attention of the policy makers in deserves as in developed countries. However, there is another area that needs urgent attention of the authorities. Autism or Attention Deficit Syndrome (ADHD) among young people is increasing exponentially. Food and lifestyle, genetics etc., are attributed to this condition. It would be an eye-opener if an article exposing the gravity of this condition be published.

[less](#)



GROUNDVIEWS.ORG

Fifteen Years On No Justice for Massacre of Muttur Aid Workers

7 1 Comment 2 shares

Like Comment Share

Most relevant ▾

Write a comment...

Kailainathan Kandiah Top fan

In the country of ours successive governments since independence failed to protect citizens, failed deliver justice ,initiated, sponsored and assisted violence attacks against fellow citizens.also many times after the end of the war . The government must end the policy of impunity to wrong doers and punish all the culprits. Then only we can have the guaranty of non reoccurrence in the future.



GROUNDVIEWS.ORG

Is There a Credible Political Alternative for Sri Lanka?

Photo courtesy of BBC Why do Sri Lankan voters elect and re-elect...

4 1 Comment 1 Share

Like Comment Share

Most relevant ▾

Write a comment...

Kailainathan Kandiah Top fan

Yes true the general public voted you a fresher to be our president,it's you selected the same corrupt politicians mainly from your family , friends & armed forces and the advisory from the Buddhist clergy.select new/better people ,truth cannot be hidden you have three more years to correct your self fir the betterment of our country.

Like Reply 1v

Vikalpa

Photo Story

“1347 වෙනි දවසටත් උපවාස කරන අපි කන්තේ දවසටම එක වේලක්. අපේ දරුවෝ හොයා ගන්නකන් අපි බඩගින්නේ හරි උපවාස කරනවා”

<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39044>

#ENDImpunity | යුක්තිය නැතිව!!

<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39064>

Special Video

The aristocracy will remain in power, as long as there are slaves | Ranjith Henayake Arachchi

[‘ගැත්තන්’ සිටිනනාක් ‘රදලයින්’ පාලන බලයේ ඉඳිවි | රංජිත් හේනායක ආරච්චි\] VIDEO\] – Vikalpa](#)

How January turned black and why Black January? ‘ජනවාරිය’ කළු වූ හැටි සහ ‘කළු ජනවාරිය’ ක් ඇයි? <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39655>

11 years since Prageeth's disappearance [Sandhya's memory!] ජර්ගීන් අතුරුදහන් කර වසර 11යි [සන්ධියාගේ මතකය!] ‘සත්ය’ සහ ‘යුක්තිය’ වෙනුවෙන් LAST WORDS <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39625>

COVID, Police, Media, the Apparel industry and Plantations කොවිඩ් පොලිස්, මාධ්‍ය සහ ඇඟලුම් වතුකරය <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/38828>

Death in the time of COVID; a threat and a dilemma for Muslims. මුස්ලිම්වරුන්ට අවධානමක් වූ කොරොනා කාලයේ මරණය <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39135>

12 years since Lasantha Wickrematunge was assassinated! Assassins at large. ලසන්ත වික්රමතුංග ඝාතනය කර වසර 12! ඝාතකයින් නිදැල්ලේ <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39533>

Visual Publications

Gamane ya or Corona with Big Brothers. [දෘශ්‍ය ප්රකාශන] “ගමනේ යා නොහොත් CORONA WITH BIG BROTHERS” Corona With Big Brothers <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/38694>

“තවත් වසර 50 ජීවත්ව තිබීම ම පුදුමයකි.” [71 අරගලයට වසර 50ක් සපිරීම නිමිත්තෙනි] <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40125>

යාපනයේ බුද්ධිමය පූජා භූමියට ගිණි තබා වසර 40යි <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40358>

ප්ලාටානි රාසික් පැහැරගෙන ගොස් ඝාතනය කිරීම: යුක්තිය නැතිව වසර 11ක්!
<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39823>

‘සිහිවටන’ මතින් ‘ඩෝසර්’ ගමන් කළ නවත් කාලයක මතක (2)
<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39687>

‘අපි අද සටන් කරන එක කවද හරි දවසක වෙනත් ගැහැනියකට හයිසක් වේවි කියලා මම හිතනවා..’ | නොකියු කතාන්දර [Photo Story 01] <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40095>

‘අපි අබාධිත බව දැන දැනම අපිව මේ වගේ නැතක ගෙනත් අතැරලා’ | නොකියු කතාන්දර [Photo Story 02] <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40205>

Infographics:

#WPF2021 ‘COVID19 වසංගතයට මුඛා වී අදහස් ජරකාශ කිරීමේ නිදහස පාලනය කිරීමට ඉඩ නොතැබිය යුතුය’ [Info-graphics] <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40256>

රොගේන් වානක ඝාතනය කර වසර 10යි. | යුක්තිය ඉටුනොවූ දස වසරක්!
<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40370>

‘කදවුරේ අය දන්නෙත් නෑ අපි කවුද කියලා, කවුද අපේ ජීවිතවලට වග කියන්නේ?’ ජොසප් ස්ටාලින් [VIDEO] <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40499>

අන්තාල් ජසීම් අන්අඩංගුවට ගැනීම: [CASE Timeline | Infographics]
<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40584>

Sexuality and [Pahanthudawa] sexuality in the media. [පහන්තුඩාව] මාධ්‍ය තුළ නිරූපිත ලිංගිකත්වය සහ ලිංගිකත්වය <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40663>

7 years since Black June in Aluthgama. Criminals still at large? අලුත්ගම ‘කලු ජූනියක්’ කර වසර 7යි! අපරාධකරුවන් නිදැල්ලේ? <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40416>

ජාතික (අනා)රක්ෂිතභාවය ඇති කිරීම : ත්රස්තවාදය වැළැක්වීමේ පනත සහ මරණ දඬුවම
Creating National (IN) Security: The Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Death Penalty.
<https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40848>

“හැමෝම ඔබ දිහා බලා ඉන්නවා, ඒත් කවුරුවත් ඔබව අල්ලන්නේ නෑ” COVID19 අත්දැකීමක් දෙස හැරී බැලීමක්.. “Everyone will look at you but no one will touch” A look back at the COVID 19 experience. <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40745>

‘දණ්ඩ මුක්ති සම්ප්‍රදායේ’ ගමනගමන The Journey of the Penalty. <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40897>

#ENDImpunity | යුක්තිය නැතිව!!! Without justice!!! <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/40851>

I will shave my head for Prageeth from today until

[‘අද පටන් යුක්තිය ලැබෙන තෙක්, ජර්ගීන් වෙනුවෙන් හිස මුඩුකර පේ වෙනවා – ‘සන්ධියා එක්තැලිගොඩ\[VIDEO/PHOTOS\] – Vikalpa](#)

‘පුතාට වෙඩි උණ්ඩ 5 ක් එල්ලකර තිබුණා’ | ‘යුක්තිය නැතිව’ ශිෂ්‍ය ඝාතනයට වසර 16යි. Five bullets were shot at my son | 16 years since the lack of justice for the student murders. <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/41039>

Vikalpa launched a campaign on the missing in January as Awasan mathaka (Final Memories) <https://www.vikalpa.org/article/39625> It contributed to online discussions on the current status of media, technology and human rights. It highlighted and compiled several stories of Covid-19, which were missed by media in the South. The Vikalpa cartoon is based on an important current issue of the day/week.

Maatram

MMDA

MMDA: Psychological effects on children - [\(VIDEO\) | MMDA: பிள்ளைகள் மீதான உளவியல் பாதிப்புகள்](#)

MMDA: Propaganda and Hypocrisy - [MMDA: பிரச்சாரங்களும் பாசாங்குகளும்](#)

Easter Sunday Attacks

#EasterSundayAttacks: I am living with his memories - [\(VIDEO\) | #EasterSundayAttacks: “அவருடைய நினைவுகளோடு வாழ்கிறேன்”](#)

Depicting a society as dehumanizing and denying justice to victims - [ஒரு சமூகத்தை மனிதத் தன்மையற்றதாக சித்தரித்தலும் பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களுக்கு நீதியை மறுத்தலும்](#)

Justice for the Easter Sunday attack, Navali church bombing and other crimes - [உயிர்த்த ஞாயிறு தாக்குதல், நவாலி தேவாலயக் குண்டு வீச்சு மற்றும் ஏனைய குற்றங்களுக்கான நீதி](#)

Hill Country Tamil

The Olten incident: “Listen to our story too...” - [\(VIDEO\) ஒல்டன் விவகாரம் : “எங்களுடைய கதையையும் கேளுங்கள்...”](#)

"Beyond the wage struggle, it should become a struggle for the existence of the hill community" - Gautaman Balachandran- [VIDEO | “சம்பளப் போராட்டத்தையும் தாண்டி மலையக சமூகத்தின் இருப்புக்கான போராட்டமாக மாறவேண்டும்” – கௌதமன் பாலசந்திரன்](#)

[குக்கூ ...குக்கூ முதல் உரிமையை மீட்போம் வரை : அறிவு அடித்தளமிடக்கூடிய அகலத்திரை](#)

VIDEO | "Unions wage struggle should take political shape" - [VIDEO | “தொழிற்சங்கங்களின் சம்பளப் போராட்டம் அரசியல் வடிவம் பெறவேண்டும்”](#)

Land ownership and home ownership of the stateless – landless – powerless Sri Lankan plantation community - [நாடற்ற –நிலமற்ற –அதிகாரமற்ற இலங்கை பெருந்தோட்ட சமூகத்தின் காணி உரிமையும் வீட்டுரிமையும்](#)

(VIDEO) Life of the Silenced Northern Malayaha Tamil People – Akilan Kadirgamar - [\(VIDEO\) மெளனிக்கப்பட்டுள்ள வடக்கு வாழ் மலையக மக்களின் வாழ்வியல் –அகிலன் கதிர்காமர்](#)

(VIDEO) Plantation restructuring against the President's policy and practice [\(VIDEO\) ஜனாதிபதியின் கொள்கை முன்வைப்புக்கும் நடைமுறைக்கும் ஒவ்வாத பெருந்தோட்ட மறுசீரமைப்பு –ம .திலகராஜ்](#)

Covid-19

The Politics and Racism of Covid-19 bodies [கொவிட்-19 சடலங்களின் அரசியலும் இனவாதமும்](#)

“Everyone is looking at you, but no one is touching you” – Reliving the Covid 19 experience - [“எல்லோரும் உங்களைப் பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். ஆனால் யாரும் உங்களைத் தொடுவதில்லை –”கொவிட் 19 அனுபவத்தை மீட்டிப் பார்த்தல்](#)

PTA

PTA: Permits Prolonged Detention of Innocents - [பயங்கரவாதத் தடைச் சட்டம் : அப்பாவினை நீண்டகாலமாக தடுத்து வைப்பதற்கான அனுமதிப்பத்திரம்](#)

PTA, Prisons and Accountability Issues - [பயங்கரவாதத் தடைச் சட்டம், சிறைச்சாலைகள் மற்றும் பொறுப்புக்கூறல் பிரச்சினைகள்](#)

All Prisoners Are Not Equal: Class Violence, Ethnicity, and PTA - [சகல கைதிகளும் சமமானவர்கள் அல்ல :வர்க்கபேதம், இனத்துவம் மற்றும் பயங்கரவாத தடைச்சட்டம்](#)

Dad hasn't come yet... - [அப்பா இன்னும் வரவில்லை...](#)

The militarizing and marketizing KNDU Act is the death knell for higher education in this country - [இராணுவமயமாக்கும் சந்தைமயமாக்கும் KNDU சட்டமூலம் இந்நாட்டு உயர்கல்விக்கு சாவுமணி](#)

Livelihood challenges of the resettled Sonakatheru Muslim women! - [மீள்குடிதிரும்பிய சோனகத்தெரு முஸ்லிம் பெண்களின் வாழ்வாதாரம்சார் சவால்கள்!](#)

Toxic Ship: What's the Cost of Environmental Disaster? - [நச்சுக் கப்பல் :சூழல் பேரழிவின் பெறுமதி என்ன?](#)

Centre Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV)

Preventing electoral violence in Sri Lanka by advancing core electoral reform issues and strengthening the integrity of the public discourse

(1 January 2020 to 31 October 2021)



The project implemented by Centre for Monitoring Election Violence-CMEV, titled “Preventing electoral violence in Sri Lanka by advancing core electoral reform issues and strengthening the integrity of the public discourse” in participation with The Democracy Reporting International-DRI from January 2020 to August 2021.

This project intends to raise awareness on the importance of Regulating Election Campaign Finance amongst the general public and to empower citizens to engage in dialog and discussion to create further awareness and also to Increase awareness amongst election stakeholders to act proactively to work on electoral reforms.

The project activities commenced after the 2020-parliamentary election.

The project focused on advocating for campaign finance regulation. It sought to do this through educating, advocating and creating awareness among the public on the need for such regulations. The target group for the above discussions consist of Political party representatives, Public sector representatives, Youth Club members, Women Activist, Community leaders, Civil Society members, Religious leaders.



In total 18 awareness raising discussions were conducted in the Districts of Jaffna, Killinochci, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Kegalle, Badulla, Matara, Ratnapura and Puttlam.

In total 400 participated across 09 districts. The Ratnapura and Puttlam District discussions were conducted via zoom due to the COVID 19 quarantine curfew.

No	Date	Districts /Location
1	3/9/2020	Jaffna – Katchari (District Secretariat)
2	3/9/2020	Vallanai DS Office
3	4/9/2020	Jaffna – Chavakachchari
4.	4/9/2020	Point Pedro - DS Office
5.	5/9/2020	Killinochchi DS training center
6.	5/9/2020	Poonagari - DS Office
7.	18/09/2020	Kegalle - Tholangamuwa Training Centre
8.	22/09/2020	Badulla Passara PS hall
9.	22/09/2020	Badulla – Mudulsima
10.	29/09/2020	Batticaloa - Public Library
11.	29/09/2020	Batticaloa Valaichchenai
12.	30/09/2020	Batticaloa – Chenkaladi
13.	30/09/2020	Trincomalee – Muttur
14.	01/10/2020	Trincomalee Town
16.	22/04/2021	Matara District (Akurassa)
17.	05/06/2021	Ratnapura (Via Zoom))
18.	17/07/2021	Puttalam (Via Zoom)

Due to a second wave of COVID-19 many districts were locked down and under quarantine curfews with restrictions on travel and gatherings from the month of October 2020 to December 2020. Therefore, remaining discussions had to be conducted via Zoom Technology. Alternative activities such as webinars were conducted by CMEV.

- Webinars were conducted as part of the awareness raising programs during the month of December 2020, two webinars were conducted on the theme “Importance of Regulating Election Campaign Finances to Create a Level Playing Field in Elections in Sri Lanka” in Tamil language with the participation of Parliamentarians and prominent political women activist.

<https://cmev.org/#:~:text=https%3A//fb.watch/28XaRTFyx1/>

<https://cmev.org/2020/11/28/are-elections-held-in-an-unlevel-playing-field-is-free-fair/>

- The third webinar was on the theme “Importance of Regulating Election Campaign Finances to Create a Level Playing Field in Elections in Sri Lanka”. The webinar panel consist of emerging young politicians, representing recognize political parties. This webinar was in Sinhala language, the webinar focused on discussing the challenges faced by the emerging young politicians due to unregulated and unlimited election campaign finances.

[මිලඟ පරමිපරාවේ මැතිවරණ සංස්කෘතිය: සජීවී සංවාදය දැන් නරඹන්න - YouTube](#)

<https://cmev.org/2020/12/29/the-challenge-of-regulating-election-campaign-expenditure-why-is-sri-lankas-youth-generation-silent/>

- The fourth webinar was on the theme “Are the Sri Lankas are not entitled to use Alternative Voting(Advance Voting) Methods” This webinar was in Sinhala language, the webinar focused on discussing the introduction of alternative / advance voting methods for voting is one of the few immediate electoral reforms that should not be unaddressed.

<https://cmev.org/2021/02/04/four-million-voters-who-could-not-exercise-their-sovereignty/>



Political in person briefings conducted, out of which 6 Political in person briefings conducted in the North with Tamil Political party leaders. The object of this in- person briefing was to brief on the impacts of unregulated an unlimited Campaign Finance, aspects of disadvantage for candidates and political parties to compete on an unequal level playing field that's created due to the absence of a regulation or ceiling amount. Further briefed on the challenges faced by women and youth

competing on an unequal level playing field due to the absence of campaign finance regulation. Briefing was conducted with prominent politicians and political party leaders. Recommendations and suggestions made by the particular Political party leaders also noted.

- 23/01/2021 - Ms. Ananthi Sasitharan - Leader - Eela Thamilar Suyatchchi Kazhagam.
- 24/01/2021 -Hon.C.V Wigneswaran - M.P - Tamil Makkal Thesiya Kuttani -(TMTK)
- 25/01/2021 - Mr. Mavai Senathirajah - Leader Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK), Member of Tamil National Alliance (TNA)
- 25/01/2021 - Hon. Mano Ganesan - Leader of Democratic People's Front and Tamil Progressive Alliance.
- 26/01/2021 - Mr. Sirithunga Jayasuriya - Leader of United Socialist Party.
- 26/01/2021 -Hon.Gajendrakumar Poonambalam- Leader of All Ceylon Tamil Congress/ Tamil National People's Front (TNPF)
- 27/01/2021- Hon. Dharmalingam Siddarthan - Leader of People's Liberation Organization Tamil Eelam (PLOT)
- 26/02/2021 -Hon. Geetha Kumarasinghe- Member of Parliament
- 11/03/2021 - Mr. V. Anandasangaree - Leader Tamil United Liberation Front.

- 12/03//2021- Hon. Shanakiyan R.Ramsamanickam – Member of Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK), Member of Tamil National Alliance (TNA)

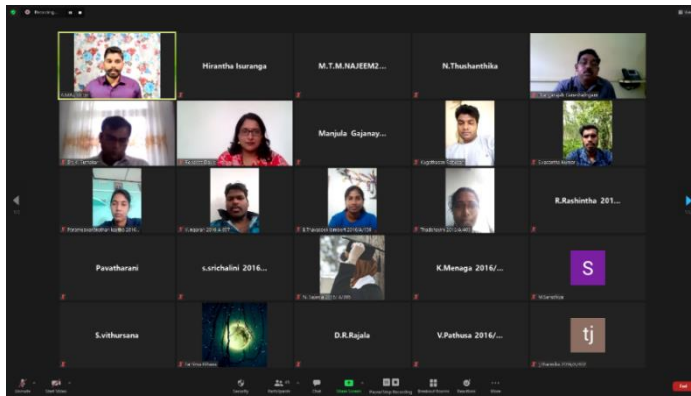


Conducted Religious leaders in person briefing in North and East on the themes campaign Finance. The reason for briefing religious leaders was decided as religious leaders played a vital role in shaping devotees thinking and their choice in electing political leaders. Religious leaders briefing was conducted amongst prominent leaders belonging to Buddhist, Hindu, Catholic, Christian and Muslim religion. In total briefed 8 prominent religious leaders.

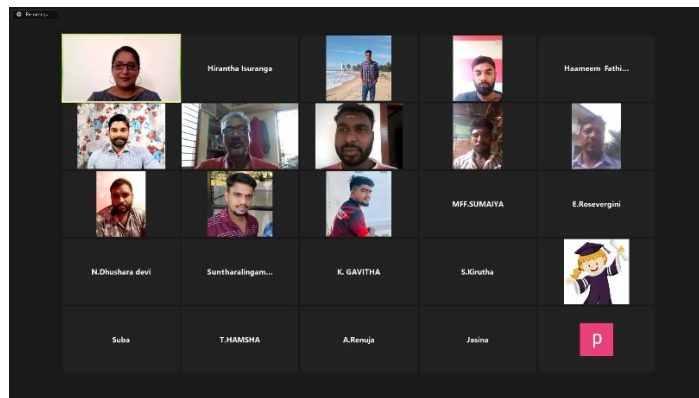
- 02/03/2021 -Meeting with Rt. Rev. Dr. Noel Immanuel- Bishop of Trincomalee Diocese.
- 04/03/2021 -Meeting with Assis Moulavi.
- 05/03/2021 -In person briefing Meeting with Vellan Swami.
- 05/03/2021 - Meeting - Head of Nallai Adheenam Sri La Sri Somasunthara Gnanasampantha Paramachariya Swamiga.
- 10/3/2021 – Meeting with Rt.Rev.Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapragasam - Bishop of Jaffna Diocese.
- 8/3/2021 - In person briefing meeting with Rev. Meegahajandure Siri Wimala Thero - incumbent of the Naga vihara temple.
- 12/3/2021 - Meeting with Rt. Rev. Dr. Daniel Thiagarajah - Bishop of Jaffna (Church of South India-CSI).

Conducted 3 Awareness Raising online discussions (Half Day discussion on electoral legal frameworks) for 3 Universities. These programs were conducted for Students from Jaffna University, Eastern University and South Eastern University. This series was conducted in Tamil. The objective of this series was to impart knowledge and create more awareness amongst university students on the thematic areas “Need for campaign finance regulation, Advance voting methods and increasing women representation in politics. In total 120 students participated.

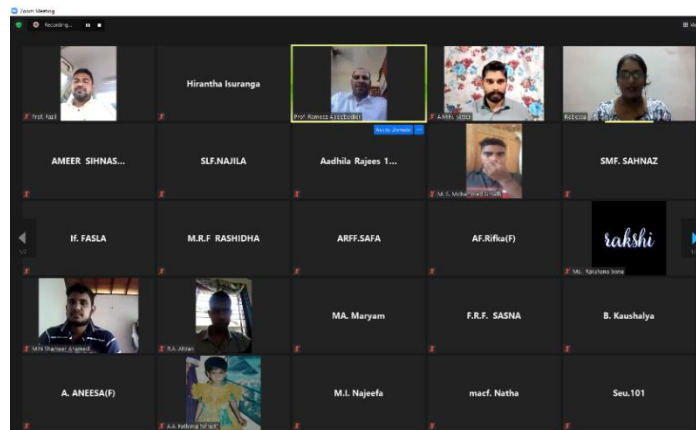
- 27/06/2021- University of Jaffna



- 22/07/2021- Eastern University



- 26/07/202 - South Eastern University -Oluvil

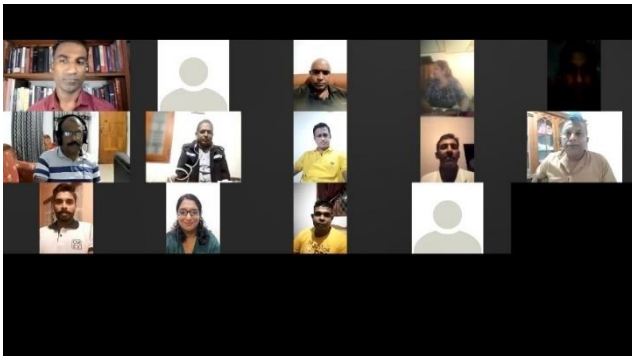


CMEV conducted Awareness Raising Online Discussion on the importance of regulating campaign finance in Sri Lanka for Journalists via Zoom.

- 06/06/2021 – Virtual Discussion for Journalist from Jaffna Journalist Forum and freelance Journalists from the North. This Discussion was held in Tamil.

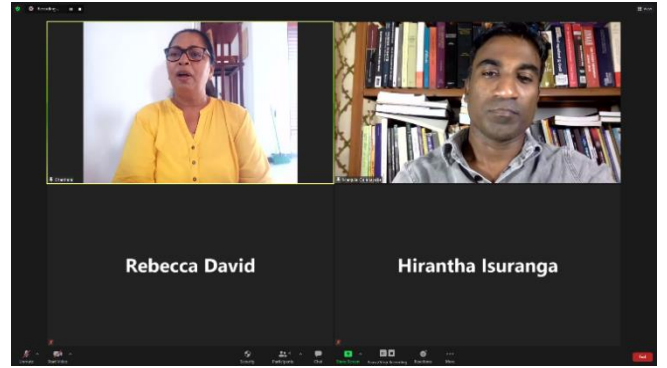
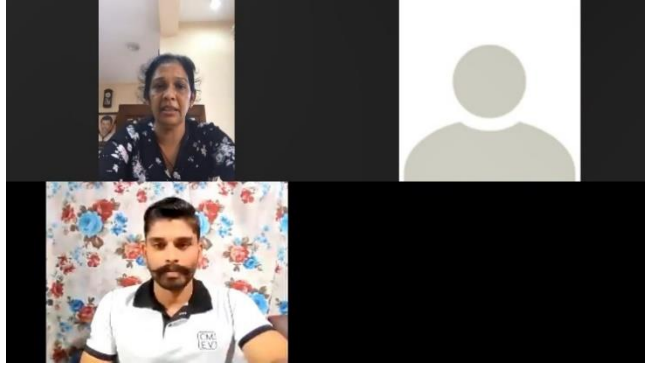


- 18/07/2021- Virtual Discussion for Sinhala Speaking Journalists, this webinar was conducted Sinhalese.



CMEV conducted one-on-one Interviews with female politicians on the topic ‘Importance of Increasing women’s representation’ via Zoom.

- 21/06/2021 - Virtual Interview with Hon. Rohini Kavirathne.
- 24/06/2021 - Virtual Interview with Ms. Vijayakala.
- 26/06/2021 - Virtual Interview with Ms. Shanthini Kongahage.



CMEV organized series of online discussions titled “Competing on an uneven platform.”

- 09th September 2021- This discussion was in Sinhala language.
<https://www.facebook.com/cmevsl/posts/10158004884985426>
<https://fb.watch/gv6OajU2Rt/>
- 10th September 2021- This discussion was in Tamil language.
<https://www.facebook.com/cmevsl/posts/10158006748070426>
<https://fb.watch/gv6LP7bd7b/>
- 17th September 2021- This discussion was in Tamil language.
<https://www.facebook.com/cmevsl/posts/10158018497345426>
<https://fb.watch/gv6VXwETQ8/>
- 18th September 2021- This discussion was in Sinhala language.
<https://fb.watch/gv6YrOhkSp/>
<https://www.facebook.com/cmevsl/posts/10158018904825426>
- 24th September 2021 - This discussion was in Tamil language.
https://fb.watch/gIDM_vkECD/
- 25th September 2021- This discussion was in Sinhala language.
<https://www.facebook.com/cmevsl/posts/10158030693865426>
<https://fb.watch/gv79f1iVIs/>

CMEV organized another Series of online discussions titled “The Electoral Reform Debate in Sri Lanka; Perspectives from Young Politicians.”

- 16th October 2021, This Discussion was in Sinhala language
<https://fb.watch/gIfBNCe6OK/>
- 18th October 2021, This Discussion was in Tamil language
<https://fb.watch/gIfFnN2iWw/>

As the final activity of the project CMEV hosted a virtual symposium titled “Universal Franchise, Sri Lanka's 90 Year Journey” on 09th October 2021.

Panellists: Prof. Jayadeva Uyangoda, Dr. Sakuntala Kadirgamar, Mr. Nizam Kariapper (Attorney at Law), Ms. Chulani Kodikara, and Dr. Ramesh Ramasamy.

Moderated by: Mr. Luwie Ganeshathasan (Attorney at Law), | <https://fb.watch/glfqz6A3jm/>

Common Activities

29th September 2020

CMEV Election Observation Report – Parliamentary Election 2020

CMEV is pleased to present its final Election Observation Report for the 2020 Parliamentary Election. The report provides an overview of the election overall; key election features and trends; a summation of CMEV’s election observation activities; trends in election violations it finds notable; and recommendations for all election stakeholders to strengthen and improve the election process in Sri Lanka.

It also provides detail, data and tabulations on election violations observed and recorded by CMEV during the pre-election, Election Day and post-election periods; as well as the communiqués and materials CMEV published throughout the election period.

<https://cmev.org/2020/09/29/cmev-election-observation-report-parliamentary-election-2020/>

30th September 2020

Final Report on Estimated Election Cost Monitoring: Parliamentary Election 2020

We are pleased to present you the final report prepared by the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) on estimated election campaign costs of the Parliamentary.

CMEV has stated from the outset that one of the urgent electoral reforms in the country should be to set up a legal mechanism to regulate election-related expenditure in the country. To this end, one of the decisive factors that must necessarily be there is the relevant evidence-based data.

Accordingly, for the first time in the electoral history of the country, CMEV has released a detailed report on the estimated election campaign cost incurred by candidates, political parties and independent groups contested the Parliamentary Election 2020.

<https://cmev.org/2020/09/30/final-report-on-estimated-election-cost-monitoring-parliamentary-election-2020/>

5th October 2020

The media is a stakeholder that can never be excluded in any country in which democratic elections are conducted. Regardless of whether the media entity is conventional and mainstream or alternative and new, media behavior indisputably affects the integrity of any election. Continued election observation undertaken by the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) over several decades in Sri Lanka has strongly proven that the role of the media in the electoral process in the country is decisive.

<https://cmev.org/2020/10/05/parliamentary-election-2020-media-coverage-on-cmev-election-observation-process/>

26th October 2020

History of the Institute of Election Management in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has a distinguished history of election management. The number of national and local level elections held so far since the country gained universal suffrage is about 74. Until 2015, the Department of Elections was the authority to hold elections in this country. The Election Commission was then established. The said Election Commission is due to end its term on November 13, 2020. Therefore, here is an Infographic compiled by the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) showing the tenure of the officials responsible for the conduct of the elections from the time of the commencement of the formal elections in the country to the present day.

<https://cmev.org/2020/10/26/history-of-the-institute-of-election-management-in-sri-lanka/>

22nd June 2021

Consultation Zoom Discussion (Closed door discussion)

Consultation for CMEV's Parliamentary Select Committee Submission - North Central Province
LG women members

27th June 2021

Consultation Zoom Discussion (Closed door discussion)

Consultation for CMEV's Parliamentary Select Committee submission - North & East Academics
& Civil Society Actors

02nd July 2021

FGD Zoom Discussion

Focused Group Discussion-FGD with North & East Local Governance women representatives- on
the topic Importance of Increasing women representation

02nd July 2021

FGD Zoom Discussion

FGD with North Central, UVA & Sothern Province Women representatives- on the topic
Importance of Increasing women representation

Increased capacity and awareness on electoral and constitutional reform

(01st August 2021 to 31st July 2022)



The main objective of the project is to contribute towards good democratic practice among citizens of Sri Lanka.

Main project-activities.

- Capacity building on Election dispute resolution-EDR mechanism(Series of workshops-covering 25 districts)
- Publishing a Monograph on Universal franchise
- Producing short video series

Activity Summary

Capacity building on Election dispute resolution-EDR mechanism (Series of workshops) Workshop participants will get a comprehensive understanding of the existing legal framework and developing areas of the Election Dispute Resolution(EDR) system of Sri Lanka, Constitutional amendments affecting the EDR system, and the present administrative mechanism established by the Election Commission.

The activity was inaugurated on December 04, 2021, at the auditorium of the Jaffna District Secretariat with the participation of the chairman and members of the Election Commission. The higher level of commitment given by police officers for the training program as a key stakeholder group in electoral dispute resolution was a significant observation of these programs.

The Second training workshop conducted at Divisional Secretariat, Hambantota. A total of 1961 participants received training across 22 districts in 16 capacity-building workshops. Senior staff of the Election Commission, Deputy Inspector General (Election) of Police, and CMEV coordinators contributed as resource persons for the training.

Overall Challenge:

The challenge was the covid19 pandemic which made it difficult to start physical workshops on time.

Future Work:

As future activities, CMEV has planned to create wider advocacy campaign for introducing campaign finance regulations prior to the next election. It will be involved in increasing public awareness through a series of workshops and public advocacy events.

Donor List 2021

OSF/FOSI - Foundation Open society Institute

ICSC- International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

TAF - The Asia Foundation

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP)

FNF - Friedrich Naumann Foundation

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

United Nations Development Programme

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)

USIP- United State Institute of Peace

British High Commission

Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands

NED - National Endowment for Democracy

Financials

mgikalrupasinghe & co.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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Kirulapone, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka
Telephone : +94 11 2813655, 5768667, 5768697
Fax : +94 11 2199819 Web : www.mgikalrupco.com
E mail : kalrupco@mgikalrupco.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTER FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES (GUARANTEE) LTD

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Center for Policy Alternative (Guarantee) Ltd, ("The Organization") which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2021, and the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Changes in Reserve and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, so far as appears from our examination, Center for Policy Alternative (Guarantee) Ltd maintained proper accounting records for the year ended 31 December 2021 and the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Center for Policy Alternative (Guarantee) Ltd state of affairs as at 31 December 2021, and its surplus of Income over Expenditure and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards and Sri Lanka Statement of Recommended Practice for Not-For-Profit Organizations (Including Non-Governmental Organization) (SL SoRP-NPO's [including NGO's]) issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards (SLAuSs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Code of Ethics issued by CA Sri Lanka that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code of Ethics. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Board and those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Board of Directors ("The Board") is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards and Sri Lanka Statement of Recommended Practice for Not-For-Profit Organizations (Including Non-Governmental Organization) (SL SoRP-NPO's [including NGO's]) issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, and for such internal control as Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, Board is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless Board either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.



(Contd....)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTD.....)

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with SLAuSs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the SLAuSs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to that date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



(Contd...)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTD.....)

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by section 163 (2) of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007, we have obtained all the information and explanations that were required for the audit and, as far as appears from our examination, proper accounting records have been kept by the Company.

Mgr Kal Rupasinghe

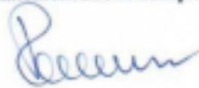
MGI KAL Rupasinghe & Co.
Chartered Accountants
Colombo
01st November 2022



Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at 31st December 2021

	Notes	2021 Rs.	2020 Rs.
ASSETS			
Non Current Assets			
Property Plant and Equipment	6	7,827,580	6,699,846
		<u>7,827,580</u>	<u>6,699,846</u>
Current Assets			
Receivables	7	11,094,947	8,795,935
Short Term Investments	8	56,625,718	44,366,807
Cash & Cash Equivalents	9	7,929,227	2,682,850
		<u>75,649,892</u>	<u>55,845,593</u>
Total Assets		<u>83,477,472</u>	<u>62,545,439</u>
FUNDING AND LIABILITIES			
Accumulated Funds			
Unrestricted Funds	11	(15,321,281)	(14,602,488)
Restricted Funds	12	53,821,798	31,111,785
Capital Reserve		7,086,154	6,865,253
		<u>45,586,671</u>	<u>23,374,549</u>
Non Current Liabilities			
Retirement Benefit Liability	13	16,871,826	14,320,675
Canada Fund Payable-due more than one year		15,238,381	16,588,381
		<u>32,110,207</u>	<u>30,909,056</u>
Current Liabilities			
Payables	10	3,616,842	4,902,363
Bank Overdrafts	9	2,163,751	3,359,471
		<u>5,780,594</u>	<u>8,261,834</u>
Total Equity & Liabilities		<u>83,477,472</u>	<u>62,545,439</u>

These Financial Statement are in compliance with the requirements of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007.



Finance Manager

The Board of Directors are responsible for these Financial Statements. Signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



Director



Director

The accounting policies and notes on pages 05 through 19 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

Colombo
01st October 2022



Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
For the year ended 31st December 2021

	Notes	2021 Rs.	2020 Rs.
Income Resources	3	<u>126,704,064</u>	<u>137,133,136</u>
Project Expenditure	4		
Staff Costs		(49,343,914)	(48,737,175)
Other Direct Costs		(44,491,905)	(45,648,501)
Other Indirect Expenditure		(31,868,246)	(41,747,459)
Total Project Cost		<u>(125,704,064)</u>	<u>(136,133,136)</u>
Net Surplus on Projects		1,000,000	1,000,000
Revenue Earned from Other Activities	14	10,061,031	8,407,516
Administrative Expenses	15	<u>(12,609,245)</u>	<u>(24,925,758)</u>
		(1,548,214)	(15,518,242)
Finance Cost	16	-	(15,116)
Net Deficit Before Tax		<u>(1,548,214)</u>	<u>(15,533,358)</u>
Income Tax Expenses	17	-	-
Net Deficit for the Year		<u>(1,548,214)</u>	<u>(15,533,358)</u>
Other Comprehensive Income / (Deficit) for the Year		-	-
Total Comprehensive Deficit for the Year		<u>(1,548,214)</u>	<u>(15,533,358)</u>

The accounting policies and notes on pages 05 through 19 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

Colombo
01st October 2022



Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN RESERVES
For the year ended 31st December 2021

	Unrestricted Funds Rs.	Restricted Funds Rs.	Capital Reserve Rs.	Total Rs.
Balance As At 31 December 2019	930,870	25,682,309	2,918,135	29,531,314
Additional Funds Received During the Year	-	141,835,303	-	141,835,303
Funds Transferred to Statement of Comprehensive Income	-	(136,133,136)	-	(136,133,136)
Project Assets Capitalized through Capital Reserve	-	-	5,383,976	5,383,976
Funds Returned to Donor	-	(272,692)	-	(272,692)
Amortization of Capital Reserve	-	-	(1,436,858)	(1,436,858)
Net Deficit for the Year	(15,533,358)	-	-	(15,533,358)
Balance As At 31 December 2020	(14,602,488)	31,111,785	6,865,253	23,374,549
Prior Period Adjustment	829,421	-	359,000	1,188,421
Additional Funds Received During the Year	-	149,702,652	-	149,702,652
Funds Transferred to Statement of Comprehensive Income	-	(125,704,064)	-	(125,704,064)
Project Assets Capitalized through Capital Reserve	-	-	2,765,775	2,765,775
Funds Returned to Donor	-	(1,288,575)	-	(1,288,575)
Amortization of Capital Reserve	-	-	(2,903,874)	(2,903,874)
Net Deficit for the Year	(1,548,214)	-	-	(1,548,214)
Balance As At 31 December 2021	(15,321,281)	53,821,798	7,086,154	45,586,671

The accounting policies and notes on pages 05 through 19 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

Colombo
01st October 2022



Centre for Policy Alternatives (Guarantee) Ltd
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
For the year ended 31st December 2021

Cash Flow Generated From / (Used in) Operating Activities	Notes	2021 Rs.	2020 Rs.
Net Deficit Before Tax		(1,548,214)	(15,533,358)
Adjustments for;			
Depreciation	6	2,826,462	2,382,516
Provision for Defined Benefit Plans	13	4,668,251	1,384,042
Finance Cost	16	-	15,116
Interest Earned	14	(3,190,604)	(2,583,268)
Provision for Canada Fund Repayment		-	19,288,381
Amortization of Project Assets Capitalized Through Capital Reserve		(2,903,874)	(1,436,858)
Operating (Deficit)/Surplus before Working Capital Changes		(147,979)	3,516,570
Working Capital Changes;			
(Increase) / Decrease in Receivables		(2,299,012)	5,738,780
Increase / (Decrease) in Payables		(1,285,520)	438,685
Cash Generated From / (Used In) Operations		(3,732,512)	9,694,035
Finance Costs Paid		-	(15,116)
Canada fund repaid		(1,350,000)	(1,350,000)
Defined Benefit Plan Costs Paid	13	(2,117,100)	(4,672,025)
Net Cash Flow (Used In)/Generated From Operating Activities		(7,199,612)	3,656,894
Cash Flow Generated From / (Used in) Investing Activities			
Acquisition of Property, Plant & Equipment		-	(85,764)
Sale Proceeds from Property, Plant & Equipment		-	62,520
Net Investment in Government Securities and Fixed Deposits		(12,258,910)	(25,926,769)
Interest Earned		3,190,604	2,583,268
Net Cash Flow Used In Investing Activities		(9,068,307)	(23,366,745)
Cash Flow Generated From / (Used in) Financing Activities			
Excess Fund inflow for Project Activities		22,710,014	5,429,476
Net Cash Flow Generated From Financing Activities		22,710,014	5,429,476
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		6,442,095	(14,280,375)
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the period		(676,621)	13,603,755
Cash & Cash Equivalents at the End of the Period	9	5,765,475	(676,621)

The accounting policies and notes on pages 05 through 19 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

Colombo
01st October 2022



END OF REPORT