



July 12, 2006

Appeal for Protection

Victims: Family of Mr. Somanathar Kumarathasan

Address: Thunnalai North, Thunnalai [Jaffna]

Age: 51

Occupation: Teacher (14 years)

Office address: Sacred Heart College, Karaveddy

Family details: Wife and two sons. Eldest son following a computer course in Colombo. Second son, named Sabesan, born on 01.08.1987. Just sat the A/L examination, waiting for results.

Remarks: Mr.Kumarathasan owns a carpentry workshop at home

Date of incident: 28th June 2006-Wednesday

Early in the morning the Sri Lankan Army surrounded the village, entered every house, did a thorough search, confiscated the identity cards of some and asked them to come to their camp at 11.00 am. About 11.30 am nearly 25 soldiers, all of whom had covered their faces with black clothes, came to Kumarathasan's house on field motorbikes. They ransacked the house, dragged Kumarathasan out of his house and questioned him about the LTTE's presence in that village. Kumarathasan said that he was not aware of that. The soldiers threatened him that they would kill him and the interrogation went on more than an hour.

Meanwhile the second son of Mr. Kumarathasan, Sabesan, was dragged into their garage by the soldiers and beaten severely. The parents shouted and pleaded with the Army not to do harm to their innocent student son.

Then the Army took Sabesan to a vacant abandoned house in the neighborhood, a hundred meters away, tied his hands behind, hung him on the roof and attacked him. Severe blows were given on Sabesan's chest and penis with sticks and rods. They squeezed his penis and testicles. They tried to attack Mr. Kumarathasan also. While Sabesan was being tortured very severely, he was repeatedly asked by the soldiers to tell the whereabouts of the LTTE. Since he had no knowledge of the LTTE, he gave no answer. Angered soldiers did more torture to Sabesan. Sabesan was finally brought home and the soldiers threatened him that they were going to kill him.

The Grame Sevaka [a local government official], who is brother of Mr. Kumarathasan intervened and brought the torture incident to an end.

This family has not gone to anybody to complain due to life threat of the Army and to fear of future harassment. Now Sabesan is in Point Pedro Base Hospital for treatment, is unable to pass urine and suffers severe pain in his abdomen. He is in trauma.

Mr. Kumarathasan undergoes psychological disorder and shows signs of suicidal tendency.

There are many witnesses to this incident. They are afraid to give wider publicity due to the fear of life safety of this family.

We earnestly appeal to ensure protection to this family.

Please send a fact-finding mission about this incident and other incidents in Jaffna. If life safety is assured, this family is ready to come forward to complain.