



வடகிழக்கு மனித உரிமைகள் செயலகம்  
NORTH EAST SECRETARIAT ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
NESOHR

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**NESOHR Case Report issued on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006**

**Arbitrary Killing of Kanapathy Murugesu**

Name: Kanapathy Murugesu (Male)  
Age: 68  
Marital status: Married  
Address: Thunnalai Centre, Thunnalai, Karaveddy, Jaffna  
Occupation: Retired post-master

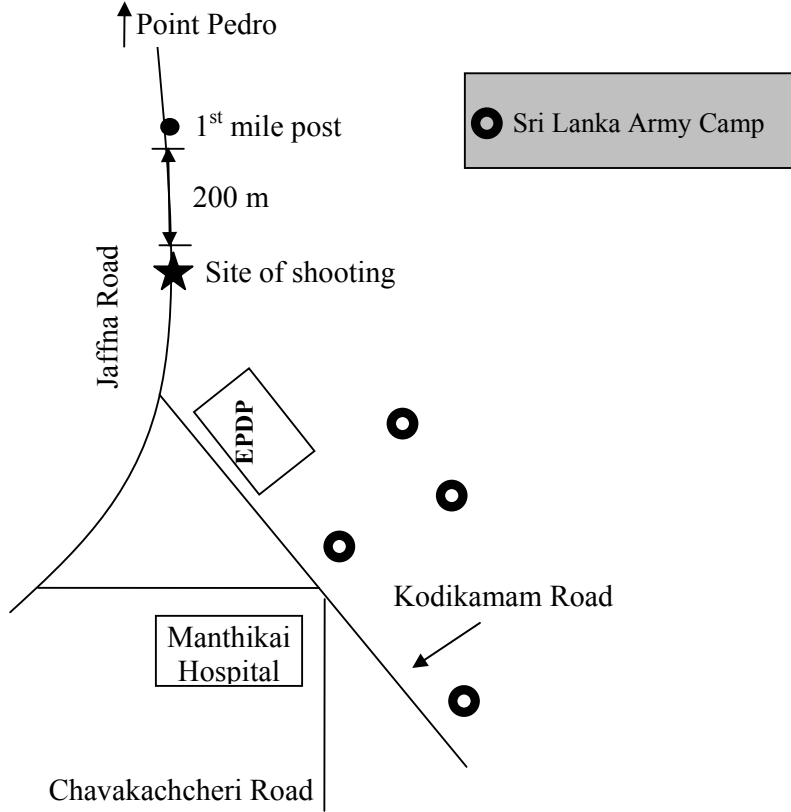
**The incident**

Murugesu was living with wife, his married daughter and her family. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, he rode his bicycle along the Jaffna road (see map) to his bank to collect his pension. A cyclist behind him saw Murugesu falling down and bleeding 200 metres from the 1<sup>st</sup> Mile Post. This cyclist said that this happened around 10.00 am. The cyclist tried to go towards Murugesu to assist him. Two Sri Lankan Army (SLA) soldiers, standing by the road side at the spot where Murugesu fell, prevented the cyclist from approaching Murugesu lying on the ground. The cyclist proceeded without any further comment because to do otherwise in the current climate of fear in Jaffna is unthinkable. Other passers by who tried to approach Murugesu were also not allowed to go near him.

SLA handed over the dead body of Murugesu to the Manthihai hospital located 2 km from the location of the incident at 1.00 pm. NESOHR has a copy of the letter issued by the District Medical Officer accepting the body of Murugesu at 1.00 pm at the Manthihai Hospital. Murugesu's family was informed of the incident at 1.30 pm. Family members who saw his body stated that he was shot just below his shoulder and the bullet has come out on the opposite side of his body.

**The inquest**

The police was told of the killing but they did not arrive for the inquest until midday on the following day. On the following day, before the magistrate arrived for the inquest, a group of SLA soldiers arrived and called for the family members of Murugesu. SLA instructed the family members to blame the shooting of Murugesu on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Family members informed the magistrate of this during the inquest and the magistrate noted it in his report.



SLA claimed that Murugesu was shot from behind. However the bullet wounds on Murugesu's body indicate that he was shot from the side. The wounds also indicate that he was shot at close range because the bullet has left the body on the opposite side. Witnesses added that there were five bullet marks on the wall on the side of the road opposite to where the SLA soldiers were standing at the spot where Murugesu was shot. These bullet marks on the wall could not have been made if Murugesu was shot from behind.

When Murugesu's family approached the people, living at the spot where Murugesu was shot, to ask if they had seen anything, they declined to make any comment. Such is the pervasive fear that prevails in Jaffna.

*Note by NESOHR: NESOHR is withholding the identities of the people who have provided us with information about the case for their own safety. NESOHR is ready to share more detailed information with any reputable international human rights organizations wishing to inquire into this case.*

Dr N Malathy  
(NESOHR Secretary)