



NORTH EAST SECRETARIAT ON HUMAN RIGHTS NESOHR

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The Protest Prayer March in Jaffna Stopped by the SLA Under Threat of Arrest

The hunger prayer campaign that was started by the Justice and peace commission of the Jaffna diocese entered into its third day today. It was started because though it is ten days now from his disappearance and in spite of many appeals made, so far no official reply has come from the Government.

Today (29-08-2006) the people of Allaipiddy and Mandaithevu who are living as displaced in Our Lady of refuge Church, Jaffna, went in procession carrying the pictures of the missing priest Fr. Jim Brown to participate in the hunger prayer campaign that is being held at St. Mary's Cathedral. They were stopped near the water tank in the main street, Jaffna, at about 10.15am and were told that under the emergency regulations it is unlawful to walk in such a procession and therefore if they do not get back immediately they will be arrested. Many priests rushed to the scene and tried to explain the purpose of the people's walk and asked the forces to understand the feelings of the people because the priest who is missing is their parish priest. But the forces persisted in their stand and threatened arrest. Finally on the request of the priests the people got back to their displaced camp and had a prayer service in despair. The participants including the negotiating priests were photographed which has caused further fear among the people.

NESOHR express its concern and fear that under emergency regulations and under another draconian law- "Prevention of terrorism act of 1978", more people who are in the Sri Lanka Army controlled area and who bring out the Human Rights violations can be silenced by the act of enforced disappearance with help of EPDP which is a ruthless terrorist armed group and the cause for enforced disappearance of several youths in Allaipiddy in the same St. Philip Neri's church in 1990 under the protection of Sri Lankan State

NESOHR urgently appeal to the world to urge the Sri Lankan Government to stop genocide of Tamils and observe all the Human Rights convention and covenants and Humanitarian laws.

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Chairperson,
NESOHR