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**REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS
IN THE JAFFNA DISTRICT 1998**

(Held on 29 January 1998)



Final Report

REFERENCE

By

**People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL)
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REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN THE JAFFNA DISTRICT

Introduction

When the government announced its decision to hold local government elections in the Jaffna and Kilinochchi Districts in January 1998, we as citizens' organisations which have been engaged in the monitoring of elections decided to make an effort to monitor the elections that were to be held. In principle, we supported the government's effort to reactivate the democratic process, but at the same time we expressed our serious concerns about the extent to which a free and fair election would be possible in the conditions that prevailed in these areas that were under military control.

PAFFREL and MFPE have normally organised its monitoring activities through the groups of concerned citizens who have volunteered to undertake these tasks at the community level. We realised that in the situation that existed in Jaffna we could not expect the active participation of citizens in the same manner. Given these constraints, first we had discussions with the Elections Commissioner and the political parties regarding the feasibility of monitoring the elections. Both the Elections Commissioner and the political parties strongly urged us to undertake the monitoring and offered their full support and co-operation. Encouraged by these responses, we decided to send a delegation to Jaffna to assess the situation and consider how the monitoring exercise should be organised.

We were able to make arrangements for a delegation of 6 persons to visit Jaffna and meet various leading citizens and officials. Thereafter a group of 22 persons went to Jaffna and were engaged in monitoring election activities from the 22nd to the 31st of January. Because of our own limitations and the practical problems we faced we were not able to monitor the Valikamam and Killinochchi Pradeshiya Sabha elections. We were able to monitor elections in the Jaffna Municipal area, Vadamarachchi, Point Pedro, Velvettihurai, Kayts and Chavakachcheri areas.

Before Election Day

In the first communique we issued when elections were announced, we drew attention to the restrictions that were imposed as a result of the security situation and the absence of some of the essential pre-conditions for a normal election. We also pointed out instances which may arise which would impair the freedom and fairness of the elections. These areas were still under military administration and the threat of infiltration by armed LTTE cadres into these areas was ever present. Consequently the candidates and the voters could be subjected to pressure from both sides.

The electoral Registers of 1986 which have been certified in 1996 were to be used for this election. From the information available it was clear that the revised registers contained a large number of voters who were not presently resident in these areas. (News report Annex I).

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The representatives of MFFE & PAFREL met the candidates of the different political parties which were representing the people. We asked them for their views regarding the government decision to hold the election, their reasons for coming forward to contest at this election and their own assessment of the extent to which the election would be free and fair. The majority view was that the conditions for a free and fair election did not exist as yet. Nevertheless they felt that they had to come forward to represent the people since the government decided to have the election and since the Commissioner of Elections called for nominations.

PAFREL/MFFE consulted the contesting parties on the feasibility of the parties agreeing on a code of conduct during the elections. The idea was unanimously supported by the parties. Thereafter, an agreement was drafted in consultation with the parties. The agreement specified the main elements in a code of conduct which contesting parties must observe to ensure a free and fair election. It was signed by all political parties contesting the election and issued to the media (Annexe II). The EPDP however signed the agreement after stating that the first part of the Agreement was not applicable.

From January 9th to 12th a group of 6 persons went to Jaffna and met community leaders in order to obtain their views of the election. Among whom they met were Christian and Catholic priests, leaders of Voluntary Organisations and other community Leaders. They also met groups of Fisherman, Farmers and Public Servants.

Almost all the persons interviewed expressed the following common views concerning the election:

- They were agreed and believed that this election will not solve the major problems they face and therefore this election was not appropriate and also that it was not based on any requests made by them.
- Apart from the parties and the leaders of the political groups they did not know the rest of the candidates.
- The electoral lists to be used for this election do not accurately reflect the actual population living in these areas. There were problems on the use of these lists, as impersonation was possible. A large number of voters whose names appear on these lists were residing outside the district, such as Killinochchi, Colombo or are abroad. Those who were registered whilst being in the district were not there now.

- When asked whether the Army would interfere with the election, they stated that in 1988 the Indian Peace keeping forces intimidated them to vote, but they did not think that the Army at present will interfere or influence the election.

A few essential matters which they thought should be settled without delay are stated below:

- The removal of land mines (In 1996, 324 persons were injured and 8 persons lost their limbs)
- The provision of Electricity (At present Electricity is given every other day and it is forbidden to use more than 3 Bulbs in a house.
- Transport and Communication difficulties.
- The difficulties faced by the Fisherman and Farmers.
- The inefficiency of bureaucrats.
- The need to start a discussion between the warring factions to bring about a peaceful solution.

A few of the people with whom we had discussions, said that even in a small way this could be the beginning of the democratic process and as such some shortcomings were inevitable.

Another section of the people whom we met vehemently stated that this election is being held not because the people wanted it, but to satisfy the government's political requirements and to appease the international community. They requested us to explain the real ground situation and ask the government to postpone the election.

Other aspects which came to our notice in the course of our work and which indicate the mood of the people and the political environment in which the election was taking place are mentioned below:

The government officials, the voters, the political organisations and the candidates that were contesting were aware that this election did not have the approval of the LTTE. All action taken by the government and citizens was always under tight scrutiny by the LTTE. The sense of insecurity and fear of the people were evident in their reluctance to speak freely on these matters. They were also uncertain how the LTTE would deal with those who participated in the elections and voted.

As these areas come under the military and as the day to day activities of the people were controlled by the military, they were careful in expressing their ideas about the military.

The fact that most of the parties who were contesting belonged to militant groups who carried arms was a cause of serious concern to most people. They feared that this might lead to violence during elections. They were also doubtful of the capacity of such groups to provide democratic leadership.

The people who were interviewed expressed their views freely about the government and its aims and objectives as perceived by them. What they desired most was an end to the present conflict through negotiations and the restoration of conditions in which they could lead their normal lives peacefully as unarmed civilians without being subject to any type of armed rule.

It was generally felt that all government officials who take part in election duties would be targeted by the LTTE and faced grave personal risk. Some of them had received threatening letters. Even so our monitors met officials who were not deterred by these threats and who were intent on performing their duties to the best of their ability.

Election Propaganda Activities

Generally speaking all contesting parties had equal opportunities for propaganda work but the opportunities to approach the voters were limited. The main avenue of propaganda work was through posters. These consisted mainly of two colours exhibiting the election symbols. The name or the number of the contestant was not shown. Apart from these, small hand bills were distributed from house to house by single individuals or in groups of two individuals. In the towns there were a few processions. In several areas small meetings were held inside buildings. Contesting parties had established election offices in Jaffna town and all of them were guarded by their own armed security personnel. The rejection of the TULF candidates list was contested in the courts. According to the ruling given by the courts their list was accepted but the time they had to engage in propaganda activities was less than what was available to the others. None of their posters or flags were seen until the election day. Their election offices were opened only during the last week.

Although the Army and the Police had banned the candidates or their supporters from carrying weapons, the general public believed that they were carrying weapons.

Even though they believed that the election was not timely, the officers on election duty stated that they would perform their duties.

Due to security reasons, the 424 polling stations were grouped into 118 clusters.

The voters list was the one that was prepared in 1986 and revised in 1996 by the addition of 23,000 Voters. It was alleged that a large number who became eligible through age qualification were not included in the lists.

Up to the 12th the Jaffna Police had received only 5 complaints. These were also minor offenses when compared with the Southern Province local government elections. This was a very satisfactory situation. Although most of the contesting parties had been engaged in armed campaigns in the past, in their discussions with us they said that they would set an example to the South by conducting an election that would be free of acts of violence and intimidation of voters by the contesting parties.

The public offices in Jaffna received instructions to be on election duty only about 2 to 3 days prior to the election.

We were not able to find out whether the LTTE had issued a statement explicitly calling upon the people to boycott the election. But as stated earlier, several groups informed us that the LTTE did not approve of the election. As a result people were afraid to participate openly in election activities. When questioned whether they would cast their votes even just 2 or 3 day prior to the election their reply was that the decision will be taken on election day. Some persons stated that the LTTE would not sabotage the election but would closely watch the peoples reactions.

In the Punkudutiya island, 2 EPDP candidates and 9 others were killed by an LTTE operation. But this did not seem to be part of a campaign to sabotage the election. Apart from this there was a vehicle procession in Jaffna Town organised by the EPDP. Some posters in this procession depicted the PLOTE leader on top of some human skulls and giving information to the Army.

On the 27th and 28th there was a marked decrease in the movement of people in Jaffna Town and increase in security checks. Many roads were closed for vehicular traffic. Some political parties complained that because of this their voters were afraid to vote and may not have come forward to cast their votes.

Buses transporting ballot boxes and election officials to various areas were proceeding under tight security on the 28th. On the 28th night there was an attack from the sea and one shell fell near the Jaffna Kacheheri.

Election Day January 29th

On the 29th from 1 a.m. onwards for a period of 3 hours there was incessant gun fire, and because the people were fearing an attack from the LTTE, it would have affected voter participation.

Although the outlying areas of Jaffna District commenced voting on time on the 29th, the Jaffna Municipal area started late because of the overnight disturbances.

The sections that follow are summaries of the reports of the groups who monitored the election.

Monitoring in Jaffna Municipal Area

Four groups of monitors were assigned to the Jaffna Municipal area. These groups monitored 29 polling booths in 19 clusters. In most booths there was a delay in the commencement of polling. Polling commenced between 7.30 a.m. to 10.00 a.m.

The arrival of voters was slow in the morning and in most stations only about 50 votes were cast during the first hour. By about 12.00 noon about 200 - 300 votes had been cast.

In every polling station there were about 8 or more election officers (Sinhala & Tamil) on duty. A majority of them were from outside areas. About 10 police officers were on duty in each polling station, inside and near the gates.

In some booths the G.N. was also present. Women PC's were deployed to search female voters. Army personnel did their duties in a manner that did not instil fear in the voters & created a suitable climate for the voters to take part in the election. No incidents of impersonation or acts of violence were reported. Propaganda posters were exhibited by all, except the TULF. The EDDP, TELCO and the EPRLF transported voters whilst the PLOTE distributed Key Tags.

Our Observations

- There were reports from all over that the youth voters have not been registered.
- The distribution of Polling Cards was very poor.
- On account of the gunfire on 28th voting was slow in the morning, but conditions improved significantly by afternoon.
- By the activity and the degree of voter participation as observed by us, we concluded that about 50% of the voter population resident in the Jaffna Municipal area would have voted, we could assume that about 50% had voted.

Polling Stations Monitored

- Charles Maha Vidyalayam
- St. Mary's Convent
- Vembadi School
- Chundikuli Ladies College
- St. John's College

- Vembadi Convent
- Pasaiur College
- St. Rock College
- Navanturai College
- Hindu Ladies College
- Kantar Madam Sivaprakasha College
- Nayanmarkattu Maheshwara College
- Kanagaratnam College
- Ariyalai Training Centre
- St. John Bosco College
- St. Mary's College
- Mewadhishwara College - Wannarpanai
- Periyamulla College
- St. James College

Monitoring of election in the Vadamarachchi Area

To monitor elections in Point Pedro and Valvettithurai Municipal Council areas, and the Vadamarachchi Pradeshiya Sabha areas, 4 election monitors arrived at Point Pedro on the day before the election.

About half of the G.S. divisions in Vadamarachchi were not under the control of the military.

Due to security reasons a number of polling stations were in one cluster. Due to this reason the voters had to travel a considerable distance. It is not clear whether there was an arrangement to inform the voters in which cluster their polling station was situated. We received complaints saying that there were posters which had stated not to vote after 7 p.m. on the 28th. These were treated as LTTE posters. The PLOTE leader complained that such posters in the Rajagirana, Kattareli, Thunnalai, and Arsadi areas was the work of the EPDP. On this matter we were not able to obtain the views of the EPDP.

There was a rumour that a three wheeler went around the Pt. Pedro town saying that the TELO is supporting the LTTE.

Brigadier Wijeratne who was in charge of the Vadamarachchi area, stated at a discussion that he was confident that more than half the registered voters will go to the polls.

He had held a number of small meetings during the week preceding the election. These meetings were an attempt to foster a free election and to make voters conscious of their democratic right to exercise their vote; they help in dispelling fear and instilling a sense of confidence in the voters. On the 25th & 26th we were able to monitor such a meeting. A group of about 50-75 persons, consisting of males, females, youth and old people participated at this meeting. The notice of the meeting had been given by the Grama Sevaka. This meeting as an open and free forum for discussion of emerging problems and for keeping the

people informed. The Brigadier said that the present election reminded him of the way the people in the South faced elections in the late 1980s. He regarded the vote of the people as a vote for peace. Apart from facilitating the election and informing the voting public, he refrained from any activity to influence voters such as in their choice of candidates. The impression that we gathered was that the Brigadier was respected and liked by the people and that they felt that by voting they would win his approval.

Monitoring on Election Day

On the day of the election, our group visited the PLOTE office. We met the PLOTE Leader and group leader for the Valvettithurai area. On the office table, there were about 30 official Polling Cards. We were told that about 6 to 7 persons who were there had come to complain that they did not receive cards. They received a complaint at about 11 a.m. that the EPDP officials were going to vote accompanied by the Army. But we were not able to find any evidence to support this complaint.

In order to monitor the Municipal area and the areas belonging to the other two Pradeshiya areas, we divided our group into 2 sections.

The Pradeshiya Sabhas at Point Pedro and Vadamarachchi

A Christian priest guided our 2-member observations team. The cluster polling stations monitored, are as mentioned below :

- Karaitivu Maha Vidyalayam
- Uduppidi Ladies College
- Valvetti Tamil Mixed School
- Karaitivu Thamodaram Vidyalayam
- Nellyyadi Maha Vidyalayam
- Kuranalie Consnalar Vidyalayam
- Kattaveli Yakur Vinayagar Vidyalayam
- Vishveswaram Vidyalayam
- North-Central Ladies College

Except in one cluster polling booth, we spent about 20 to 30 minutes in the other booths on monitoring activities. There were about 2 to 6 cluster polling booths.

General observations applicable to all these places are given below

In each center, there were about 10 police Constables inclusive of W.P.C.'s. This group was led by a sub-Inspector. Those who came to vote were checked.

We inquired and found out that at each center there were the required number of election officials including those who knew Tamil and a few public officers from Jaffna. The total number of such persons at most centres exceeded 20. The G.S. wearing his official badge was also within the center. We were able to find out from the Police the number of votes polled. From the G.S. we were able to find out the following data :

- the total number of residents and the number of registered voters in the area
- the number who were over 18, but not eligible to vote
- the number who were eligible to vote but who were not resident in the area

Posters belonging to parties were pasted in the vicinity of the center. We observed a peaceful & orderly atmosphere and people were arriving briskly to cast their vote. From 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. at every center we visited, there were people coming to cast their vote.

About 150 to 200 meters away from the center there were army soldiers and a few male and female youth who identified themselves as Janasaviya Niyamakas. A large number of persons had not received their polling cards. They were able to establish their identity through identity cards issued by the army or any other acceptable identification they possessed. The G.S. checked with his list and certified the registered voters.

- Near the voting centres the shops were open and people were walking about normally and mobile Army patrols were also operating.
- According to information received every polling station was opened at the correct time and the election officials had arrived at these stations between 6.15 to 6.40 a.m.
- Two vehicles belonging to PLOTE were seen transporting voters.
- We did not see any attempts at impersonation or casting votes by force; nor did we receive any complaints about any such attempts.
- Three middle-aged men near the polling Booth at the Hindu mixed school at Valvettithurai, complained that army soldiers inquired from them whether they had casted their vote. One such person was questioned on the road and the other two were questioned in their homes. They were told that their fingers would be inspected in the evening. This action was considered by them as forcing them to vote. We were not in a position to verify this complaint. They made the complaint and went away without voting. We brought this to the notice of 2 officers on mobile patrol and also informed Brigadier Wimalaratne. In the areas we monitored, twice the number of persons resident in the area were registered as voters. A significant number of persons who were eligible to vote after the election in 1986 were not included in the electoral registers.

Out of the registered voters living in the area it is our belief that about 50% did cast their votes.

The distribution of polling cards did not meet with much success because at about 1 p.m. on election day we met a postal peon delivering polling cards.

An S.P.O. complained to us that as he was not able to apply in time for postal voting, he could not cast his vote. Some others did not apply thinking that they could be identified in the process.

Those who came to vote mentioned various reasons as to why they were motivated to come and vote. Among the reasons given were the desire to avoid unnecessary trouble, to help restore peace, to exercise their right and as a protest against armed politics.

Valvettithurai and Point Pedro Town Council Area

A Principal of a school acted as interpreter and guide to a team of 2 monitors in this area. Seven polling stations were monitored as stated below.

- Velayuthan Maha Vidyalayam - Point Pedro (5 Polling stations were clustered together)
- Kalladi Roman Catholic School
- Saivapragasa College - Mukupuloli
- Hindu Tamil Mixed School - Polikandi
- Veerakkathipillai Maha Vidyalayam - Thondamanar
- Valvetti Hindu College

We spent about one hour at cluster booths and about half an hour at other places.

Velayuthan Maha Vidyalayam - Point Pedro

This was a cluster center consisting of 5 polling centres. Voting had commenced by 7 a.m. All election officials had turned up for duty. We noticed a large number of voters coming towards the center. Especially the womenfolk showed a greater interest to cast their votes. By 9.30 a.m. over 200 votes had been cast. Two vehicles belonging to the PLOTE & EPDP were seen loaded with people going here and there. We suspected that they were transporting voters.

We had discussions with several old and young voters. According to them about 25% of the voters in their area have not received their polling cards and about 50% of the voters were not there. They are people who like to lead a free life and that is the reason they came to vote to protect democracy which is their right.

Roman Catholic School - Kulladi

Polling began at the scheduled time. A large number of voters were coming to vote. Most of them were women. There were two polling stations at this venue. By 10.30 a.m. about 150 voters had come.

From discussions with the voters it was revealed that about 50% of the registered voters had left for places like Colombo, Kandy and overseas and some had not received their polling cards. They had come to vote because they wanted to lead a free life. They had not received any threats from anyone to vote or to desist from voting.

Saivaprakasha College - Mulaipuloli

Two polling booths were clustered at this venue. A majority of the voters had not received their polling cards as told to us by those who came to vote. At about 11 a.m. we met a postal peon who was delivering polling cards. When we questioned him he stated that the addresses given on polling cards were incomplete and as such distribution became very difficult. The number of displaced voters amounted to over 50%. All those with whom we had discussions stated that they want to lead a free life.

Hindu Tamil Mixed School - Polikandi

Two polling stations were clustered at this venue. According to the police officials on duty about 400 persons had cast their vote by 12 noon. According to the villagers about 75% of the voters were displaced. Some have gone to Colombo or abroad and some were living in the jungles of Vavuniya. A large number of youth did not have a vote. Most of the persons who came to vote were old persons. Even a person who could not walk was brought to the polling station on a bicycle. Normally bicycles were not allowed close to the booth, but on this occasion a sympathetic soldier allowed this bicycle to go near the booth.

Veerakathipillai Maha Vidyalyam

There were 3 polling booths. There was a large crowd to cast their vote. A member of a citizens committee was seen urging the voters to vote for any party. Hereto most of the voters had not received their official polling cards. The Army Brigadier had organised meetings and informed the people about how voting is done.

Velveti Hindu Tamil Mixed School

We observed voters going to vote in an enthusiastic manner. We observed that the voting was divided according to caste. Hereto we observed a postal peon distributing polling cards. We came to know that a large number of persons had been displaced.

General Observations

In general the voting was peaceful. From early morning people flocked near the polling booths. Because of the cluster system people had to walk long distances or cycle to the voting center. About half the number of registered voters have left their places of residence and about half the number now living in these areas has not been registered.

There were a number of youths who had become eligible to vote for the first time in this election. Some of them had applied in 1996-97 to the respective G.N. to have their names registered, but still they did not get their official polling cards and so they obtained the registered number from the G.N. and came to vote.

Monitoring in the Kayts and Velani PSS Areas

A group consisting of 4 persons monitored these areas. The areas covered were :

Kayts PSS

- Karainagar Hindu College
- Karainagar Yaltau College
- Analaitivu Island Polling Station

Velani PSS

- Nainativu Polling Station

The few centres monitored were located in 3 Islands. Travel by sea to these islands was arranged by the Navy. The Navy also arranged the land transport. We had to resort to this method in order to save and make maximum use of time available. But on first appearances, it is possible that we were not seen as independent observers. But under the circumstances, the group had no other alternative.

Karainagar Dr. Thiagarajah Madhaya Maha Vidyalayam (Hindu College) Polling Centre

The monitoring team approached this center at about 12.05 p.m. Mr. Paramayathi Uruthramurti (40) a candidate of the PL.OTE complained that amongst the polling Agents of the EPDP there was one of their own candidates and that later the officials removed him. There had been no polling Agent on behalf of this candidate. The reason for this was that the Party Secretary had not issued the required letter.

This centre was a cluster consisting of 7 polling booths. There were police officers on duty but there was no Tamil officer among them. Women police constables were on duty. The Navy provided security outside the polling centre. We came to know that there were Tamil

election officials on duty. In the entire island there were only two polling centres and as such the voters had transport difficulties. Voters were travelling in groups in C.T.B Buses. By about 12.15 p.m. about 300 votes had been cast.

Special mention must be made of the fact that members of the Karainagar Citizens committee like former Chairman Kandiah (76) Sinderam Selladurai and another person, were voluntarily carrying out monitoring activities near the polling station. When we questioned them on this matter they stated that during the parliamentary election of 1994 fraudulent voting took place and in order to prevent these they were performing these duties. Mr. Kandiah was happy that people come to vote and also about the number of votes cast. One other person remarked that armed political groups engaged in corrupt activities were harassing the people in the Island and as such this election should be taken as an opportunity to register their protest against such activities.

Voting began at about 8 a.m. There were shortcomings in the distribution of polling cards. Even if they did not have this card or their identity card, they could make use of the identity issued by the Navy to establish their identity in order to cast their vote. Although there were no election meetings, posters were exhibited by the EPDP, PLOTE, TELLO and the EPRLF. Posters were seen even near the polling station. The EPDP had carried out a house to house election campaign.

Yariton College Polling Station, Karainagar

There were 3 polling centres at this venue. By about 1 p.m. about 600 had cast their votes. Posters of the EPDP & PLOTE were seen near the polling station. One Mr. Ganesh who was near the polling station remarked that out of all the candidates, the people of the area knew only 4 of them. Out of this 3 were from the EPDP and one from PLOTE. Most of the youth had no vote.

Analaivay Island Polling Station

We travelled for about 1/2 an hour in a motor powered boat and arrived at the island centre at about 2.55 p.m. We travelled from the Jetty to the polling station in a hand tractor belonging to the Navy. By this time about 613 votes had been cast. Although there were 2050 registered voters actually there were only 850 living in the island, stated the Grama Niladari. Although the highest percentage of votes cast was in this area yet we did not observe the exhibition of any election symbols or of any intimidation of voters. The election officials and the police performed their duties whilst the Navy provided security from outside. The only reported incident was when two underage children were sent to the polling station to impersonate another voter.

Mr. T. Nsadarasingamani (No. 7 on the list) who was an EPDP Candidate stated that he received a letter from the LTTE threatening him with death on the 16th instant.

Expressing his views on this election an EPDP supporter stated that this was an opportunity to appoint candidates for them to develop the area.

Nainativu Island Voting Centre

By the time the monitoring group arrived at this centre the Voting time was over. The security arrangements were as mentioned earlier. About 15 persons who came to vote after the ballot-boxes were sealed were not able to vote.

Although there was no house to house canvassing propaganda work has been done by using posters. Posters of the EPDP and an Independent group (Fish symbol) were seen.

One Sannathambi Rasiah (72) stated that in order to work and communicate with the government this election was useful. Another voter remarked that the preference vote system was a little confusing when marking the ballot papers.

The total registered voters in this Island was 3689. A total of 921 had cast their vote.

General Observations

Although the people had feared that because armed political groups were contesting the elections there might be some use of force, there was no indication that this had happened. It would appear that the tight security arrangements made by the Navy created the conditions which enable the people to vote freely and without fear. But these conditions may have also induced some people who did not expect to vote, to come forward and vote.

Given below are some observations made by the monitoring group after discussions with a cross section of the people who they were able to interview.

- Those persons who had definite political ideas did not use their vote. They stated that this was because there were no suitable candidates.
- This was the first local government election in which the youth groups participated. People were not made aware of the procedure to vote, especially regarding the preferential voting system and this created some difficulties for them at voting time.
- The absence of candidates known to them created a problem for some.
- The majority of voters were women and old people.

Monitoring at the Kayts & Velanai P.S. Areas

A group of 3 persons left Jaffna at about 9.30 a.m. to monitor these areas. The following centres were monitored:

- St. Mary's College
- Karampon Shanmuganatha College
- Velanai Sir Vaithilingam Kumaraswamy College
- Karampon Tamil Mixed School
- Velanai East University College
- Ganesh Junior School - Punkuduthivu Island
- Punkuduthivu Maha Vidyalayam

In the above areas voting had commenced at 8.30 a.m. The Polling booths were in clusters. There were police officers at the entrance and inside the booth. About 200 meters away, army personnel were stationed. People who came to vote at polling booth were checked by the police personnel. It was reported that the required number of election officials were present at the polling booths. The Grama Niladaris were also present. Only the EPDP had Polling Agents.

An independent candidate by the name of Gunaseelan and the EPDP were seen distributing polling cards and encouraging the people to vote. Supporters of the EPDP stated that the Polling Cards that were not distributed by the postal authorities were distributed by them. They had in their possession telephones communication instruments and polling cards.

At the Karampon Shanmuganathan College, polling had commenced after 8 a.m. A large number of people were waiting in queues. The majority amongst them were women.

Near the Karampon Tamil mixed school there were about 200 people waiting to vote. Here we met some supporters of the EPDP whom we met earlier near St. Mary's College. They were serving soft drinks to the voters and election officials.

We came to know that at the Sir Vaithilingam Kumaraswamy College by about 1.20 p.m. about 200 votes had been polled. We saw EPDP supporters being transported in a small lorry bearing No. 30-6474. One Mr. Ramamurthi also complained about this. It was alleged that they were taking about 30 to 35 persons from booth to booth for the purpose of impersonating.

We met these persons again near the Punkuduthivu Maha Vidyalayam. Here whilst one police officer was trying to prevent them entering the booth, another officer was trying to send them away. At the end two security persons of the EPDP entered the polling booth and allowed these persons to enter.

General Observations

- Some enthusiasm was shown by the people to vote
- There was a complaint to say that the Police Officers of Kayts took part in a social event organised by the EPDP on the day before the elections.
- There was a large number of persons who were keen to vote but they had no vote.
- A greater interest to vote was shown by the female voters.
- The most active party in these areas was the EPDP; the other parties appeared to have a much lower profile.
- From the responses we received we noted that they welcomed the opportunity to exercise their right to vote and were pleased that a group from the South had come to the area and shown concern for their election. They appeared to be well disposed to the armed forces. From their answers we gathered they had little knowledge of the devolution package. They all expressed their keen desire to see an end to the present war and a return to a peaceful life.

Monitoring in the Chavakachcheri Town Council Area

A group of 2 persons were engaged in monitoring this area in the afternoon.

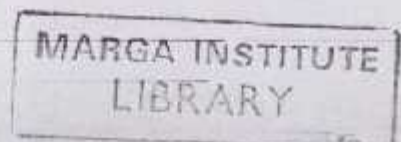
The following polling booths (clusters) were monitored.

- Amirkai Maha Vidyalayam
- Driberg College
- Chavakachcheri Hindu College

At about 2.10 p.m. we noticed a vehicle No. 9 Sri 5100 and a motor cycle parked near the Chundikuli Girls College. We noticed that the supporters of the EPDP had used these vehicles to transport voters.

Chavakachcheri Amirkai College Polling Station Numbers 6, 7 & 8

There were about 10 Police Officers here. The Army personnel were outside the booths. Voting commenced at about 7.10 a.m. and by about 2.45 p.m. the number of votes cast was 760.



- Driberg College
- Chavakachcheri Hindu College

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Chavakachcheri Amirnakai College Polling Station Numbers 6, 7 & 8

There were about 10 Police Officers here. The Army personnel were outside the booths. Voting commenced at about 7.10 a.m. and by about 2.45 p.m. the number of votes cast was 760.

Chavakachcheri Driberg College polling station numbers 9 & 10

There were 1681 registered voters at the No.9 station and by about 3.00 p.m. the number of votes cast was 364. The Polling Agents were present.

At the No:10 booth the number of registered voters was 1249 and by about 3.10 p.m. the number of votes cast was 203. There were 4 Polling Agents and 8 election officials. There were 10 police personnel near the entrance and the Army personnel were stationed away from the booth.

Chavakachcheri Hindu College Polling Station Numbers 3, 4, 5 & 11

The number registered in this area as a whole was 4436 and by about 3.30 p.m. about 725 had cast their votes. The required number of election officials were present. There were about 8 - 10 police officials and polling agents who represented 4 political parties. Two Grama Niladharis and one lady officer were seen encouraging and helping the voters.

About half the number of election officials were from Jaffna & the rest were from the Anuradhapura, Ampara & Vavuniya Districts.

General Observations

At all these polling stations the number of voters we observed were aged and women. They comprised about 80% of those who came to vote. The participation of youth was low whilst the females participation was very noticeable.

From Chavakachcheri to Jaffna the road was guarded by the security forces. By about 4.45 p.m. the ballot boxes were transported to Jaffna.

The Army, Navy & Police officers and their supporting staff were immensely supportive and helpful, especially Brigadier Mendis, Brigadier Wijeratne, Capt. Kulasooriya and Mr. Ranasinghe of the Navy. All the security personal the Grama Niladaris in the areas in which we worked gave us their unstinted cooperation.

We are also grateful to all those who provided us with food and accommodation and other facilities such as Telephones & Translators.

Above all, the monitoring group felt that the co-operation and friendliness with which they were received by the people in these areas was itself a rewarding experience and that they would be able to take back with them this positive message to the citizens in other areas.

Jaffna Local Government Elections held on 29. 01. 98

Councils	Number of Registered Voters	No. of Polling Stations for Elections Held in 1988	No. of Polling Stations For 1998 Local Elections
Jaffna MC	82,667	57	19
Velvettiturai UC	11,128	08	04
Point pedro UC	12,721	09	03
Chavakachcheri UC	14,802	11	03
Kayts PS	30,340	23	07
Delft PS	4,209	03	03
Veinal PS	31,199	24	07
Valigamam West PS	37,746	27	05
Valigamam North PS	53,697	40	08
Valigamam South-west PS	41,856	32	06
Valigamam South PS	41,444	29	08
Valigamam East PS	54,386	41	10
Valigamam West PS	45,214	34	09
Chavakachcheri PS	39,871	33	09
Nallur PS	32,814	19	06
Point Pedro PS	29,924	26	06
Pachilalpalli PS	7,463	08	03
Total	571,486	424	116

No. of registered voters 571, 486 (according to 1986 up-dated voters register
Present population: Families - 140,222 Population - 470, 186

February-June 1998 POST-ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS (Based on newspaper reports)

February 19	Representatives of local bodies forbidden from carrying arms.
March 11	Sarojini Yogeswaran sworn in as Mayor of Jaffna.
April 17	Rs. 42.25 million granted for local bodies in Jaffna Peninsula.
April 24	Jaffna MC meeting after 15 years with 23 members. EPDP didn't take oaths, among other reasons due to lack of funds.
May 3rd	LTTE prohibition of rehabilitation work in Jaffna.
May 14th	Assassination of Brigadier Larry Wijeratne.
May 18th	Assassination of Sarojini Yogeswaran in Point Pedro. A week before her death, Ms Yogeswaran expresses her disappointment, in an interview with a Tamil newspaper, about the government's failure to keep promises of further funding.
May 19	Sangilian Force acknowledges assassination of Ms. Yogeswaran.
May 21	P. Sivapalan new Mayor designate of Jaffna.
May 22	LTTE demands resignation of all northern local authority members.
May 30	Resignation of S. Namasivayam, Vice President of the TULF in Jaffna.
Early June	Letter by S. Sri Bhaskaran, Chairman, Valikamam-North Pradeshiya Sabha to M Sivasithamparam, Chairman, TULF, stating that all elected representatives of the party should resign if the Government does not deliver on the political package.
June 03	Acting Mayor Jaffna, T.Thirunavukarasu resigns as Mayor and as TULF member. In his resignation letter, he states that he supports the liberation struggle of the Tamil people and is ready to give up his posts and comforts for the cause.
June 04	Assassination of Namasivayam for organizing hartal in sympathy of Ms. Yogeswaran's murder. TULF Vice President Anandasangari says "I do not believe this to be the work of the LTTE or the affiliated Sangilian Force. It was someone else".
June 04	Doneta Devial, TULF Municipal Councilor, resigns.
June 07	Resignation of TULF Municipal Council member C. Gauridasan. Five TULF vacancies in Jaffna Municipal Council.
June 08	All courts in the Jaffna peninsula (Jaffna, Point Pedro, Kayts, Chavakachcheri) put up notices signed by respective Registrars informing of the closure of court houses following threats made by the LTTE.
June 08	Tigers attack PLOTE Wannu MP Vythilingam Balachandran's residence in Vavuniya. Police sentry on duty killed.
June 10	TULF states that the five TULF resignations were not due to LTTE threats, but due to threats from another organization.
June 15	LTTE threatens Jaffna Magistrate not to attend court sessions.
June 18	104 EPDP Councilors considered as having vacated their posts as they hadn't taken oaths by the designated date -- Mar 18.
June 19	TULF-controlled Valikamam-North Pradeshiya Sabha decides to cease functioning until normalcy returns. Motion by Chairman S Sri Bhaskaran to this effect. (Valikamam North - only 15 of the 45 Grama Sevaka Divisions within the Pradeshiya Sabha are populated and functioning. Bulk of original residents displaced.)
June 24	Assassination of SLFP Secretary in Jaffna S.A Oswald.
June 29	Sivapalan takes oaths as Mayor of Jaffna. Five nominations to fill TULF vacancies in Jaffna Municipal Council.

ANNEXURE B (I)

GENERAL ELECTION TO ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN JAFFNA DISTRICT AND PACHCHILAIPALLI
PRADESHIYA SABHA IN KILINOCHCHI DISTRICT

JANUARY 29TH, 1998

COMPOSITION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACCORDING TO POLITICAL PARTIES

Name of Local Authority	EPDP	EPRLF	TELO	TULF	DPLF	IND. GROUP	TOTAL
Jaffna Municipal Council	6	2	0	9	6	0	23
Velvettiturai Urban Council	2	0	6	0	1	0	9
Point Pedro Urban Council	2	0	1	0	6	0	9
Chavakachcheri Urban Council	2	3	0	0	6	0	11
Kayts Pradeshiya Sabha	9	0	0	0	1	1	11
Delft Pradeshiya Sabha	8	0	0	0	1	0	9
Velanai Pradeshiya Sabha	8	0	0	0	1	2	11
Valikamam West Pradeshiya Sabha	8	1	1	0	4	0	14
Valikamam North Pradeshiya Sabha	6	2	0	11	2	0	21
Valikamam South Pradeshiya Sabha	10	1	2	0	3	0	16
Valikamam East Pradeshiya Sabha	8	2	1	0	5	0	16
Valikamam South West Pradeshiya Sabha	9	5	2	0	5	0	21
Vadamarachchi South West Pradeshiya Sabha	4	3	1	0	7	0	15
Chavakachcheri Pradeshiya Sabha	7	2	1	0	2	0	12
Nailur Pradeshiya Sabha	5	2	1	0	1	0	9
Point Pedro Pradeshiya Sabha	2	2	0	0	5	0	9
Pachchilalpali Pradeshiya Sabha	105	26	18	20	62	3	234

Source: Report of the Commissioner of Elections

1998 Local Government Elections: Jaffna Peninsula

ANNEXURE B (II)

Name of the Local Authority	Number of Electors	Number of Votes polled								Total	Rejected	Grand Total
		E.P.D.P.	E.P.R.L.F.	T.E.L.O.	T.U.L.F.	D.P.L.F.	IND.					
Jaffna M.C.	82667	2963	943	162	3540	3182			10790	907	11697	
Velvettithurai U.C.	11128	283	54	736		151			1224	255	1479	
Point Pedro U.C.	12721	650	128	157		1301			2236	374	2610	
Chavakachcheri U.C.	14802	680	835	99		1146			2760	527	3287	
Kayts P.S.	30340	2771	51	57		536	411		3826	269	4095	
Delft P.S.	4209	1484	13	10		293			1800	125	1925	
Velanai P.S.	31199	1715	58	56		255	508		2592	284	2876	
Vaikamam West P.S.	37746	3146	327	494		2358			5325	1307	7632	
Vaikamam North P.S.	53697	1799	816	144	2821	528			6108	469	6577	
Vaikamam South West P.S.	41856	4069	573	815		1281			6743	1213	7956	
Vaikamam South P.S.	41444	3542	1121	496		2659			7818	939	8757	
Vaikamam East P.S.	54386	3978	2909	752		2875			10614	1711	12325	
Vadamarachchi South West	45214	3888	554	1236		2940			8518	1858	10486	
Point Pedro P.S.	29929	2208	1459	549		859			5075	1177	6252	
Chavakachcheri P.S.	39871	3103	2091	742		3460			9396	2504	11900	
Nallur P.S.	32814	2064	847	417		921			4249	554	4803	
Pachchilaipalli P.S.	7463	377	114	114		731			1584	385	1969	
Total	571486	38720	12898	7036	6361	25576	919		91758	14868	106626	

Source: Report of the Commissioner of Elections

1998 Local Government Elections: Jaffna Peninsula

ANNEXURE B (III)

POLITICAL PARTY THAT OBTAINED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOTES IN EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

Name of the Local Authority	Political Party			
	TE.L.O.			T.U.L.F.
Jaffna M.C.				
Velvetthirai U.C.				
Pointpedro U.C.				
Chavakachcheri U.C.				D.P.L.F. D.P.L.F.
Kayts P.S.				
Delft P.S.				
Valanai P.S.				
Delft P.S.				
Velanai P.S.				
Valikamam West P.S.				
Valikamam North P.S.				
Valikamam South West P.S.				T.U.L.F.
Valikamam South P.S.				
Valikamam East P.S.				
Vadamarachchi-South West				
Pointpedro P.S.				
Chavakachcheri P.S.				
Nallur P.S.				
Pachchilappalli P.S.				
Total		1		2
	10			4

Source: Report of the Commissioner of Elections

1998 Local Government Elections: Jaffna Peninsula

ANNEXURE B (IV)

PARTICULARS OF ELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES IN THE JAFFNA PENINSULA

Name of Local Authority	Whether elected council functioning	Total no. of members	No. of elected members taken oaths	No. of elected members assumed office	No. of members resigned	No. of vacated posts refilled	Comments
Jaffna MC	Yes	23	18	18	9	9	3 TULF, 3 EPDP, 1 EPRLF resigned
Valvettithurai UC	No	9	-	-	-	-	
Point Pedro UC	No	9	5	5	1	-	1 EPDP resigned
Chavakachcheri UC	No	11	6	6	3	1	3 DPLF resigned
Point Pedro PS	No	9	2	-	2	-	2 EPRLF resigned
Chavakachcheri PS	Yes	15	10	10	3	3	EPDP, TELO not assumed office
Naiur PS	No	12	3	3	1	1	1 EPRLF resigned
Valikamam East PS	No	21	4	4	2	2	2 EPRLF resigned
Valikaman South PS	No	16	3	3	1	1	
Valikaman South West PS	No	16	1	1	-	-	
Valikaman North PS	No	21	12	12	7	5	5 TULF resigned
Vadamarachchi South West	No	18	5	5	2	-	2 EPDP resigned
Delft PS	No	9	4	4	3	-	3 EPDP resigned
Valanai PS	No	11	5	5	-	-	
Valikamam West PS	No	14	3	3	1	-	1 EPRLF resigned
Kayts PS	No	11	10	10	-	-	
Pachchilaipalli PS	No	9	6	6	1	-	1 DPLF resigned

Source: Based on information from North-East Province
Chief Secretary's Secretariat (as of 15th July, 1998)

1998 Local Government Elections: Jaffna Peninsula

**ELECTION OBSERVERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN JAFFNA
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 1998**

1. Mr. Wimal Fernando (National Coordinator , MFFE)
2. Mr. Udaya Kalupathirana - Jaffna
3. Ms. Sunila Abeysekera - Jaffna
4. Mr. T. P. Murugiah
5. Mr. K. Adhavan - M.D.D.R.
6. Mr. S. G. Punchihewa - M.D.D.R.
7. Ms. Sumana Ariyadasa - M.D.D.R.
8. Mr. P. S. Gunawardana - H.D.B.D.
9. Mr. K. M. Gunarathna - H.R.O. - Monaragala
10. Mr. S. Sunil Shantha - Organizational & administrative work - Jaffna
11. Mr. R. B. Herath Banda - H.R.O. - Monaragala
12. Mr. S. H. Y. De Silva - Human Rights Defense Comm. Organizational - Jaffna
13. Mr. D. Gamini De Silva - Peoples Forum - Panadura
14. Mr. N. A. Cyril - U.C. J.C. - Battulla
15. Ms. W. M. Anita Fernando - Community Education Centre
16. Mr. W. R. D. Jinasena - C.S.R.
17. Mr. Alloy Devasagayam - C.S.R.
18. Mr. A. M. Macan Marcar - PAFFREL
19. Mr. S. Patuwana Vithana - Peoples Right Committee - Monaragala
20. Mr. Piyasoma Bentota - " " "
21. Mr. Lakshan Dias - Secy. - Colombo
22. Mr. M. B. Senevirathna - Battulla Passara

Centre Director -

Colombo Office :- Mr. Kingsley Rodrigo (Executive - Director , PAFFREL)