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NESOHR case report issued on 19th April 2006

Arbitrary killing of Sakilan on 17th April 2006

Name: Ramalingam Sakilan (30) (Male); Occupation: Shop owner
Address: Puthoor Junction, Jaffna

Sakilan owns and runs a shop at the Puthoor junction in Jaffna. He is a good businessman who has been doing well in his business of running the shop.

Incident

On Monday 17 April at 11.30 am, uniformed men on motorbike shot and killed Sakilan who was inside his shop. Following this shooting, eyewitnesses on the road saw the following.

Sri Lankan Army were seen coming out of Sakilan's shop. Customers were later seen leaving the shop with blood stained clothes. There were about 15 Sri Lankan Army persons standing on the road near the shop. One eyewitness who heard the gunshots as he was traveling on the road immediately stopped his motorbike because he thought the shots were aimed at him. Immediately an SLA person approached him and asked why he stopped his motorbike. He was then hurried along by the SLA person. Eyewitnesses said that all the fear stricken civilians on the road were running away from the scene and no one dared to stop to investigate what has happened.

Eyewitnesses also commented that none of the SLA men at the scene appeared agitated and hurried about the shooting that has just occurred. Rather they seem more bent on shooing away all civilians from the scene.

When asked why Sakilan may have been shot by SLA, civilians speculated that since Sakilan is not a LTTE supporter he may have been killed for failing to give protection money to SLA.

It is worth reflecting

It is worth reflecting why ordinary civilians run away from such a tragedy that has befallen their community shop owner.

It is also worth thinking about why none of the international human rights organizations has yet seen this situation in Jaffna as, "Living in Fear", "Climate of Fear", or "SLA intimidation and extortion in Tamil community.

NESOHR is with holding 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)