

Further letters demanding investigation into disappearance of Sri Lankan SEP member

Our correspondent
1 May 2007

The Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka) has received further letters demanding the Sri Lankan authorities instigate an urgent inquiry to locate party member Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and his friend Sivanathan Mathivathanan who have been missing since March 22.

All of the evidence collected by the SEP points to the involvement of the security forces in the disappearance. The two men were last seen at the navy checkpoint on Punguduthivu Island heading onto a long causeway connected to Kayts Island where they both live. The naval commander on Punguduthivu confirmed from the logs at the checkpoint that Wimalaswaran and Mathivathanan passed through at 6.30 p.m.

The pair has not been seen since. Unlike his counterpart on Punguduthivu, the naval commander at the Velanai camp, which is responsible for the checkpoint at the Kayts end of the causeway, has denied all knowledge of the two men. Locals saw Wimalaswaran and Mathivathanan being questioned and body searched by two plain clothes officers connected to the navy at the checkpoint at about 5.30 p.m. as they headed towards Punguduthivu.

Despite numerous phone calls to the defence ministry and the police, the authorities have yet to confirm or deny having arrested Wimalaswaran and Mathivathanan. Last Wednesday, five weeks after the two men disappeared, additional defence ministry secretary H. K. Balasooriya again declared she was still waiting on a police report. She said that she had spoken to the director of the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID), Chandra Vakishta, but he had refused to provide any information. The TID is the police branch responsible for detaining, questioning and holding so-called terrorist suspects.

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL)—the official body responsible for investigating human rights abuses—had previously told the SEP that it had given the authorities until April 23 to reply to the SEP's complaint. Lieutenant A.I. Karunaratne from the navy's legal section wrote to the HRCSL requesting another month, as the navy had yet to obtain reports from its camps on Velanai and Punguduthivu. Far from insisting on the deadline, the HRCSL rubberstamped the delay.

Hundreds of civilians have been abducted or killed by the military and associated paramilitaries since President Mahinda

Rajapakse won the November 2005 election and plunged the island back to war. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 58 people have been abducted throughout the country since March 22. Others have been rounded up and detained without charge under the country's draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act which was reimposed late last year.

The SEP calls on its supporters and *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) readers to continue to demand an urgent investigation into the disappearance of Wimalaswaran and Mathivathanan. Letters can be sent to:

Gotabhaya Rajapakse,
Secretary of Ministry of Defence,
15/5 Baladaksha Mawatha, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka
Fax: 009411 2541529
Email: secretary@defence.lk

N. G. Punchihewa
Director of Complaints and Inquiries,
Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission,
No. 36, Kinsey Road,
Colombo 8, Sri Lanka
Fax: 009411 2694924

Copies should be sent to the Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka) and the *World Socialist Web Site*.

Socialist Equality Party, P.O. Box 1270, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
Email: wswscmb@sltnet.lk

To send letters to the WSWS editorial board please use this online form.

Below is a further selection of the letters recently received.

Dear Sir,

On the disappearance of an SEP member.

The international media of the Socialist Equality Party, *World Socialist Web Site* (wsws.org), reported on March 26, 2007, that Nadarajah Wimalaswaran, a member of Sri Lankan SEP and his friend Sivanathan Mathivathanan disappeared mysteriously while traveling along the causeway linking Kayts and Punguduthivu islands on March 22.

I think that Sri Lankan government is directly responsible for this disappearance because it happened under conditions where Navy controls both ends of the said causeway. Moreover, wsws.org has already revealed sufficient facts to suspect that

they were subjected to such a fate because of their opinion against the war.

Therefore I urge you to hold a proper investigation to bring those who are responsible for the incident to the book.

Yours truly,
MF, Sri Lanka
Dear Sir,

The disappearance of SEP member Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and Sivanathan Mathivathanan.

SEP member Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and his friend Sivanathan Mathivathanan have disappeared since March 22. After finishing their day's fishing they went to Madathuveli village in Punguduthivu island for a personal need and did not return to their homes. I urge you to hold a proper investigation into this incident.

And also I urge you to inform us of the progress of the investigation into the murder of Sivapragasam Mariyadas, a supporter of the SEP. This person was killed by a gunman at his home at Mullipothana in eastern Trincomalee district on August 8, 2006.

Yours,
TE, Sri Lanka
Dear Sir,

On the disappearance of an SEP member and another person.

Nadarajah Wimalaswaran of Kayts island is a member of the Socialist Equality Party. He and his friend Sivanathan Mathivathanan disappeared while traveling from Punguduthivu island to Kayts in the evening of March 22. This disappearance happened between two military road blocks set up at both ends of a causeway.

Therefore I urge you to hold an immediate and fair investigation into this disappearance.

Yours,
SG, Sri Lanka
To Whom It May Concern,

The purpose of this letter is to address the recent disappearances of Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and Sivanathan Mathivathanan. As you are aware, these men disappeared on March 22, 2007 under very suspicious circumstances while visiting the village of Madathuveli on Punguduthivu Island in the war-ravaged north. The virtual indifference of the Sri Lankan government to date amounts to nothing short of criminal indifference. Full transparency and immediate action are imperative to bring about a timely resolution of this matter. The working people of the world stand in unity with the Sri Lankan SEP and the working people of Sri Lanka and we will not relent until closure is brought to the case at hand.

I respectfully implore you to use the full resources of your respective agencies to fully and immediately investigate the disappearances of Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and Sivanathan Mathivathanan.

Sincerely,
MB

USA
Sir,

The disappearance of Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and Sivanathan Mathivathanan is alarming and deeply disturbing. I can just imagine how their families and friends are feeling at this moment.

While you might not agree with the politics of Wimalaswaran, is it impossible to expect even a bit of common decency from you?

I join the demand of the Socialist Equality Party that an immediate investigation be conducted on their disappearance. If you or any other security forces are holding these two men, as evidence seems to bear out, present them to their families immediately, bring them to court if you have any evidence of any criminal wrongdoing or release them.

Regards,
VP
Philippines
Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing to express my concern over the disappearance of Nadarajah Wimalaswaran and Sivanathan Mathivathanan. These men were apparently last seen in the northern Jaffna islands on March 22, 2007.

Their disappearance apparently took place between two navy roadblocks on a long causeway connecting Punguduthivu Island and Kayts Island, where both men live.

As this disappearance occurred between navy roadblocks, it appears that the military has some responsibility in this matter.

I respectfully request that your ministry investigate these disappearances, and hold those responsible accountable.

We hope that this matter can be resolved in a timely manner, and that you will see to it that these two men will return to their respective families unharmed.

We are grateful for any intervention from your office.
Yours sincerely,
JK
Toronto, Canada



To contact the WWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact