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இலங்கை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Press Notice No: HRC/P/ii/E/14/05/24

Press Notice

Letter to Hon. Attorney-General regarding Alleged Enforced Disappearance of Mr Kapila Kumara De Silva

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) wrote to the Hon. Attorney-General regarding the possible enforced disappearance of one Mr. Gonapinuwala Kapila Kumara De Silva, a resident of Horowpathana, Anuradhapura. The letter provided details with respect to Mr De Silva's alleged disappearance on 26 March 2024. Following a complaint made by Mr De Silva's mother to the HRCSL, the HRCSL inquired into the whereabouts of Mr De Silva. In response to a request for information, the Special Task Force of Sri Lanka Police reported to the HRCSL on 12 April 2024 that he was not in its custody but was wanted in relation to a shooting incident. Following several weeks in which his whereabouts were unknown, Mr De Silva was handed over to the Pitigala Police Station on 20 April 2024 and was produced before the Elpitiya Magistrate's Court on 21 April 2024. In a statement given to the HRCSL, Mr De Silva alleged that on 26 March 2024 he was abducted in what he described as a 'white van' by persons who claimed they were 'police officers'. Mr De Silva alleged that he was blindfolded and taken to an unidentified location at which he was interrogated for several days in relation to a shooting incident. Mr De Silva alleged that his interrogators assaulted him and threatened to execute him. He also alleged that, following realisation that he was not the suspect they were looking for, the said interrogators decided to hand him over to 'police custody'. He alleged that he was then handed over to a team of officials, who eventually handed him over to the Pitigala Police Station.

The HRCSL informed the Hon. Attorney-General that it is of the view that there are reasonable grounds to believe that an offence under section 3 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018 may have been committed. It also cited section 15(1) of the Act, which provides that 'no person shall be held in secret detention'. It recommended that the Hon. Attorney-General considers providing the requisite advice to Sri Lanka Police to initiate a criminal investigation into the possible enforced disappearance of Mr de Silva. It also urged the Hon. Attorney-General to consider, if applicable, the initiation of proceedings before the High Court under and in terms of the Act.

Media Spokesperson
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

14.05.2024