

Annual Report 2022



RIGHT TO LIFE
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



RIGHT TO LIFE HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

INDEX

1. Message from Executive Director	4
2. Vision & Mission	6
3. A journey through the history of R2L	7
4. Organization Framework	9
5. Our Geographical Presence	10
6. Working Context of R2L in the year 2022	11
7. Performance of 2022	12
7.1 Legal	12
7.2 Resource Mobilization	15
7.3 Media	16
7.4 Finance	21
8. Collectives	22
8.1 Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture	22
8.2 Lawyers for Human Rights	22
8.3 Journalist for Rights	23
8.4 Citizens for Rights	24
9. Events & Forums	25
10. Publications and Productions	27

1.

Message from Executive Director

Reflecting on a critical year

2022 was a critical year for Sri Lanka. In early 2022, Sri Lanka experienced a severe economic downturn, attributed to factors such as the government's implementation of extensive tax concessions, massive investments made to address the covid-19 pandemic, significant expenditure to stabilize the currency, the simultaneous ban on chemical fertilizers and swift transition to organic agriculture nationwide.

Due to this, people had to face an acute shortage of essential commodities, including fuel, gas, milk powder, and medicines and had to wait in lengthy queues at markets for days to get these commodities. Meanwhile, the ongoing power outage escalated to a continuous 12-hour blackout, triggering public

demonstrations and protests all over the country. Although the Governor of the Central Bank and the Minister of Finance were replaced in an attempt to contain the unrest, it did not make much difference. Meanwhile, the newly appointed Central Bank Governor made an official declaration that the Government of Sri Lanka is no longer capable of paying its debts. Since then, Sri Lanka has been listed in the bankruptcy register, leading to all transactions with the international market being conducted strictly on an upfront payment basis.

On April 09, 2022, protestors assembled near the President's Secretariat in Colombo and initiated a continuous protest, demanding the resignation of the President and the government, adequate provision of essential goods to the people, and a change in the governance system. This protest, named Rainbow Struggle, due to its inclusion of people of all races, religions, and social backgrounds, surpassing political affiliations, lasted almost four months from April to August.

Simultaneously, there were widespread protests across the island, gaining significant public attention and support from various regions. Tragically, one person lost their life, and 13 others were injured when the police opened fire at a protest in Rambukkana town, Kegalle, on April 19. This incident further fanned the flames.

Subsequently, on May 09, supporters of the ruling party violently attacked the peaceful protestors following a meeting at Temple Trees, the Prime Minister's official residence in Colombo. This incident led to a shift in the dynamics of the protest, with the situation turning increasingly violent.

Eight people, including a member of parliament from the ruling party, lost their lives as a result of the enraged public's reaction to the incident. Another member of parliament narrowly escaped an attack by a violent mob, surviving due to sheer luck. In a single day, over 70 members of parliament had their houses and properties destroyed.

The inability of the security forces, including the police, to effectively control the situation led to a state of semi-anarchy across the entire country. In response to the widespread public protest, the President and the cabinet were compelled to resign, seeking refuge or going into hiding for their safety.

The tragic loss of lives and destruction of property in a single day deeply affected countless people. Those who participated in or supported the protests strongly rejected the violence from both sides. They demanded swift action from the parliament to prevent the country from spiraling further into anarchy. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, all parliamentary parties proposed the formation of a caretaker government to restore

stability, emphasizing the need for collaboration in addressing the crisis.

Despite the inability to form the anticipated government, the successor president, the prime minister, and the cabinet, who were appointed by the majority of the parliament, have worked step by step to bring the country to a stable state.

Sri Lanka is facing an unprecedented crisis, with the country's economic decline and bankruptcy causing shockwaves throughout society. This dire situation has sparked intense conversations and concerns among the general public, leading to a discussion about overcoming these challenges.

To encourage the discussion, we have put together three detailed reports on recent events in Sri Lanka, including the police firing at the Rambukkana peaceful protest, the attacks on peaceful protesters near the Presidential Secretariat and the Prime Minister's residence, and the resulting backlash across the country. We were also able to offer recommendations to prevent similar situations in the future.

Also, we have made YouTube videos and released feature videos on social media to socialize the information based on our reports.

Furthermore, we organized a series of public conferences in five districts, inviting victims, journalists, lawyers, and social activists who had first-hand experience with these challenges to launch the reports and videos.

In 2022, we were also able to play a significant role in establishing the National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations to address the forthcoming challenges posed by the government's proposed Voluntary and Social Services Organizations (Amendment) Act No. 31 of 1980, which aims to control non-governmental organizations. We also played a crucial role in strengthening the coalition's local chapters.

Also, we were able to gather the main networks of the organization, Sri Lankan Coalition Against Torture (SLCAT), Journalists for Rights, Lawyers for Human Rights, and Citizens for Justice, amidst many challenges to exchange views on the crises faced by the country and our future activities.

Also, in 2022, we were able to provide medical and legal aid for the victims of the Rambukkana incident and support five cases related to fundamental rights violations.

Despite the numerous challenges we encountered in 2022, the explosion of the deep-rooted crisis within the state structure of Sri Lanka sparked important discussions on preventing the recurrence of similar crises in the future. We see this as a positive step towards a better future for our country.

The long-standing advocacy and efforts we have made to safeguard democratic rights, promote the rule of law, and advocate for clean and transparent governance have now received some recognition and value.

Including those values, it is crucial to foster an efficient and corruption-free small governing system, rather than an inefficient, unsustainable, colossal government body. Looking ahead to 2023, we plan to work in new dimensions to support essential political and economic reforms to establish a governance framework that upholds the rule of law and safeguards the human rights of all individuals.

Phillip Dissanayake

Executive Director, Right to Life Centre for Human Rights

17th May 2023



Vision

"A pluralistic Sri Lankan society that protects and promotes the right of citizens to enjoy justice, equality and respect for life".

Mission

"To be placed as an active platform in which diverse actors from national to local level engage with responsible institutions against (1) human rights violations including torture, extra-judicial killings, and (2) economic and social rights violations of people ensuring effective interventions that guarantee the full enjoyment of constitutional rights in Sri Lanka"

3.

A journey through the history of R2L

Right to Life Human Rights Centre (popularly known as R2L) was started in 2003 by the founder members Mr. Brito Fernando, Mr. Philip Dissanayake and Ms. Jayanthi Dandeniya and was registered as a Non-Governmental Organization in 2007. The initial rationale of R2L was to promote and strengthen the fundamental human rights of the people in Sri Lanka and to empower victims of various harassment at the hands of government institutions by providing legal, technical, and financial assistance to assist them to fight for their rights. From 2003 to 2007 R2L operated as a regional civil society organization conducting training and awareness programmes for the employees working in the Free Trade Zones (FTZs) in Katunayake to educate them on labour laws and regulations, human rights, and encourage them to take necessary action to obtain restitution within the legal framework of the country. Soon, R2L found itself responding to various types of human rights violations that occurred in many parts of Sri Lanka, leading it to expand its scope of work. The organization, therefore, intervened in matters such as police torture, disappearances, health negligence and other fundamental rights violations on behalf of the victims and their families and relatives. From 2003 to 2014, R2L was located at Katunayake – about 35 km north of the capital Colombo. The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) provided initial funding and technical support at its initial stages. Mr. Philip Dissanayake – the current Executive Director and one of the founders of the organization – played a remarkable role to sustain the organization, especially during its initial phase which was marked by a lack of funding, intense attacks from government on human rights civil society organizations, and lack of public support on the issue of torture and extra-judicial killings. The work of R2L always attracted a high degree of personal risk to staff from government sources. Four specific eras can be identified in the history of R2L from 2003 to 2022. They are; 1. First era from 2003 – 2006, 2. Second era from 2007 – 2014, 3. Third era from 2015 – 2019, and 4. Fourth era from 2020 – 2022.

The First Era from 2003 – 2006

From 2003 to 2006 R2L carried out activities related to promoting human rights awareness in and around Katunayake FTZs. Specific interventions during this period are (1) promoting awareness of the 17th amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, and (2) advocating with the state actors to implement the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman Or Degrading Treatment Or punishment Act No 22 of 1994. In 2004, R2L formed a group of 7 CSOs to work on torture in Sri Lanka under the name of Peoples Against Torture (PAT).

The Second era from 2007 – 2014

With the war mentality that engulfed the Sri Lankan society since the election of a new President in 2005, human rights discourse in Sri Lanka took a dramatic twist with the repeated and organized extra judiciary killings, disappearances, abductions, and various violations of human rights. Media freedom was at stake too. Hence, a national, coordinated, and multi-stakeholder approach was needed both for the safety of the CSOs threatened including R2L, and to ensure rights protection for people in Sri Lanka. In 2007 a coalition of 17 CSOs was formed and by 2009 R2L partnered with national civil society organizations and platforms to respond to rising cases of human rights violations in the backdrop of the final stage of warfare leading to the total annihilation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) in 2009. On the assumption that lack of awareness of laws, regulations, and legal systems of the country are the main factors behind human rights violations, R2L started to carry out human rights training programs, seminars and workshops for vulnerable communities in the country to

safeguard them from future victimization. R2L then started to focus on building up Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and their groups at the grass-root levels.

At the same time, R2L took the initiative to form a network comprising civil society organizations - “Nidahase Wedikaawa (Platform for Freedom)” in 2009 and “Veediye Virodaya (Protest on the Street)” in 2011. These civil society initiatives established broad-based civic and political platforms targeting the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy, and good governance in Sri Lanka. As mentioned previously, the end of armed conflict in 2009 was accompanied by gross violations of human rights with rampant extra judiciary killings of HRDs, media personnel, political activists, and civic activists. Despite the great threat to personal lives, R2L and other like-minded organizations provided leadership to civic and political platforms that ultimately led to the formation of a good governance structure in 2015. In 2011 and 2014, R2L took the initiative to prepare an alternative joint report of the United Nations Combating Against Torture (UNCAT) in partnership with 31 CSOs active in the areas of torture, extra judiciary killings, and disappearances in Sri Lanka. R2L has continued to bear the responsibility of convening groups and formulating the alternative (or shadow) report. As a result, in 2013, R2L formed the Sri Lanka Civil Society Collective Against Torture (SLCAT), an active CSO network committed to making Sri Lanka free from police and institutional torture. To date, the SLCAT has an active membership of 28 CSOs including human rights organizations, and civic and political activists. In addition to SLCAT, R2L also formed a new network called Human Rights First Aid Centres (HRFACs) in selected districts (The initial stage of HRFACs).

The Third Era from 2015 – 2019

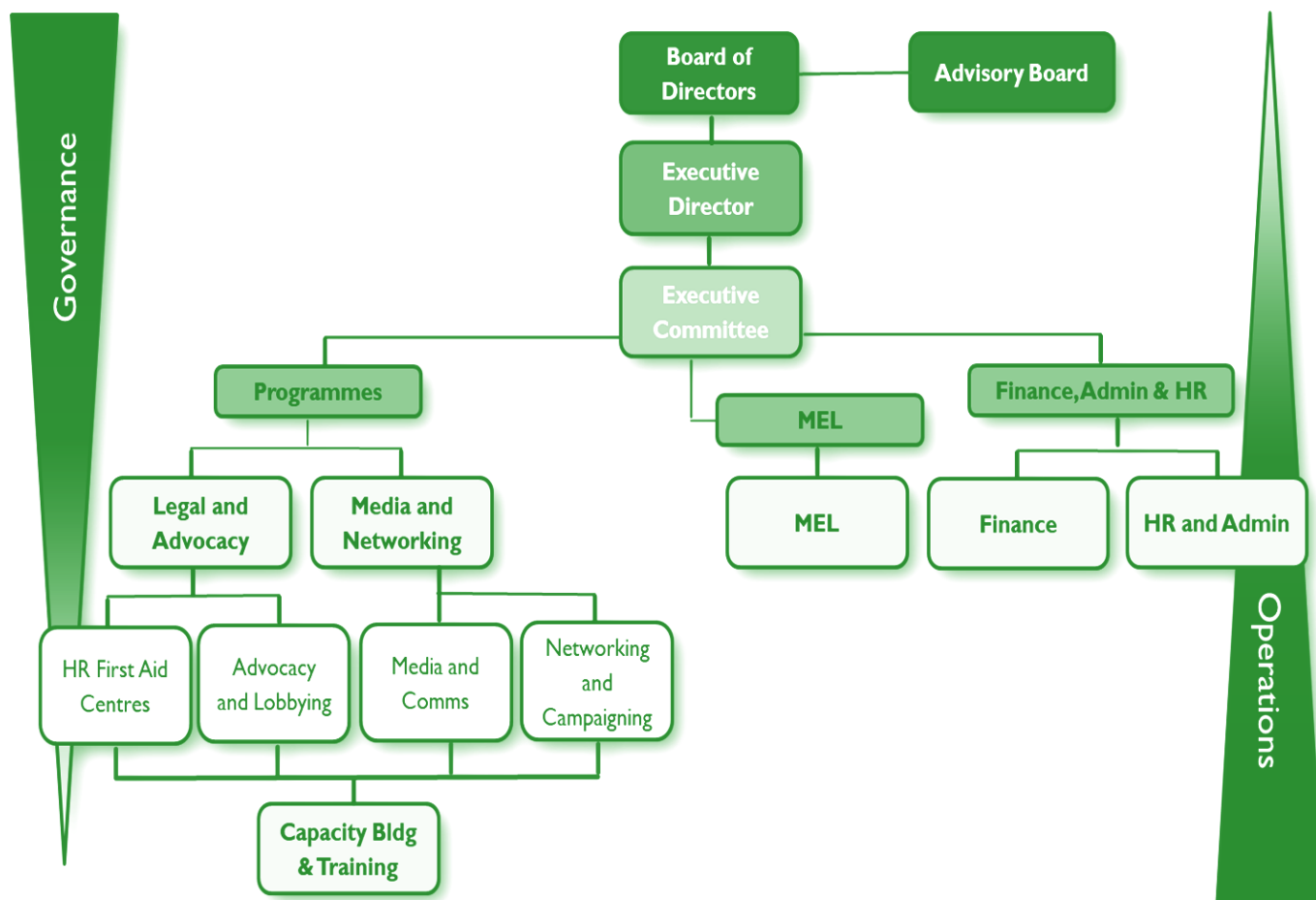
In 2016, R2L initiated the establishment of 15 district-based Human Rights First Aid Centres (HRFACs), a civic mechanism operating at the district level spearheaded by a group of trained HRDs. These mechanisms helped to address many cases of rights violations at the district level through multi-stakeholder partnerships including the victims, HRDs, government officers, CSO leaders, and religious leaders. The victims in particular continued to engage with district-based HRFACs even after their cases achieved due responses from state authorities. This resulted in the district mechanisms gaining popularity and attracting a solid support base for R2L's activities. The R2Ls' approach of converting the victims into activists made the support base stronger and more committed at district levels. As a result, victims who turned activists gradually started to support other victims at district levels. By 2022, R2L has managed to sustain 12 HRFACs in Sri Lanka. With the change of government in 2019, R2L along with a few leading CSOs in Sri Lanka carried out island-wide CSO educational campaigns preparing the CSOs to face challenges caused by the Voluntary Social Services Organizations (VSSO) Act introduced by the new government. This Act, widely seen as a way of further shrinking spaces for CSOs in Sri Lanka, provided an opportunity for R2L to play a significant role at the national level. And during this era, R2L formed another significant Journalists Collective which has been registered as a Union now, known as Aithiya Udesa Madyavediyo (Journalists for Rights).

The Fourth Era from 2020 – 2022

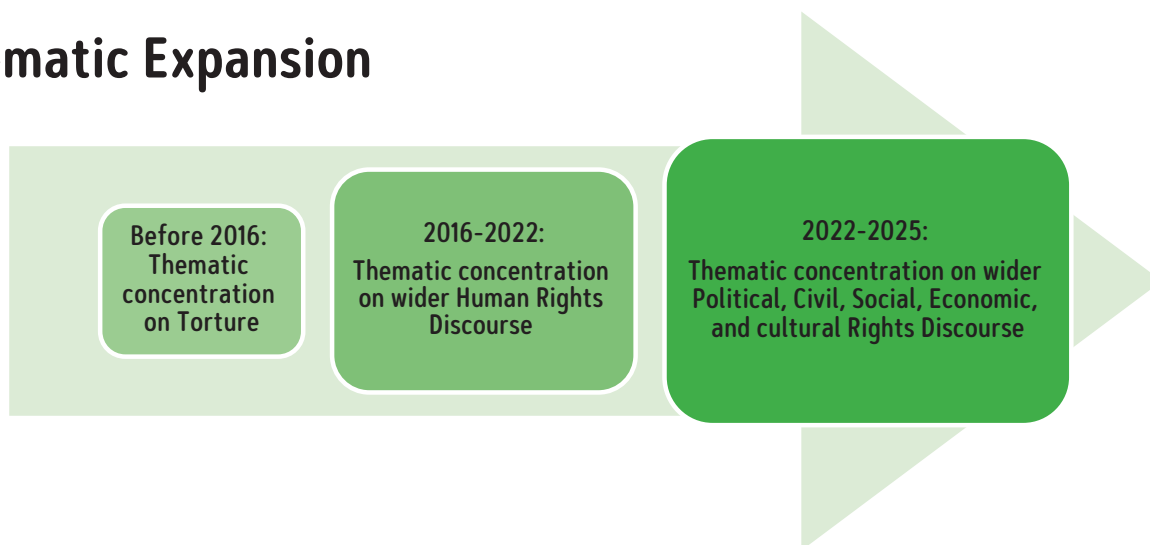
The new government that came into power through the 2019 and 2020 national elections started to systematically shrink the spaces of civil society and democratic reforms in Sri Lanka. Hence, R2L's main focus during this period was to expand and strengthen the civil society networks initiated by it and to promote new networks and civil alliances on human rights and democracy across the country. The media presence of R2L got systematically upgraded to cover large audiences including the youth and civil activists who remained discouraged due to growing ultra-nationalist ideologies in the country following the election victory of the current government. Also, this era was marked by the public uprising that started with peasants' and teachers' struggles that turned into massive-scale public protests of people of all walks of life in society due to severe shortages of essentials from March 2022.

4.

Organization Framework

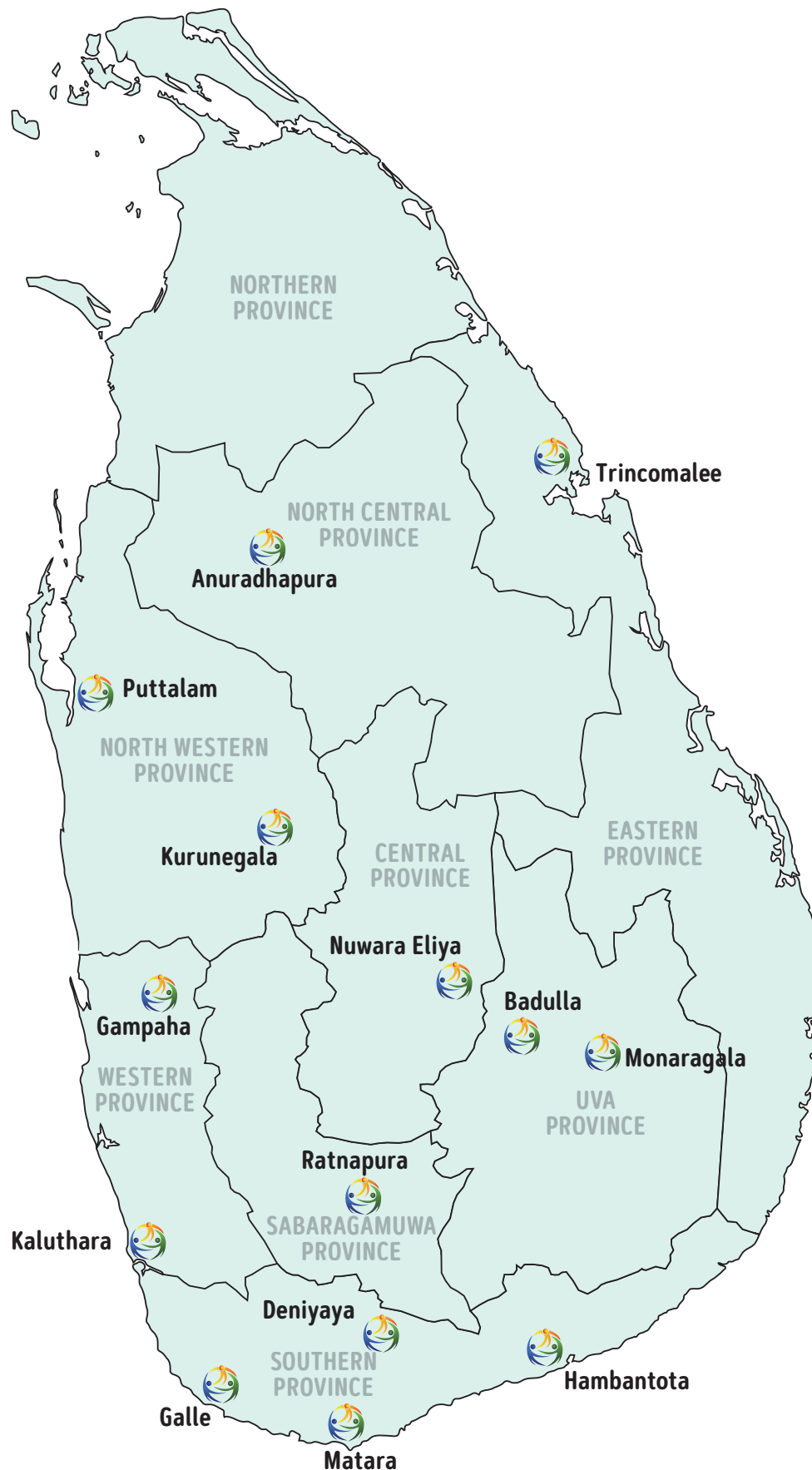


Thematic Expansion



5.

Our Geographical Presence



6.

Working Context of R2L in the year 2022

In 2022, R2L operated in a complex and challenging working context. Sri Lanka faced critical human rights issues, necessitating our unwavering commitment to advocate for and safeguard the rights and dignity of all individuals in the country.

Throughout the year, our organization worked tirelessly to address a wide range of human rights concerns, including but not limited to, freedom of expression, access to justice, gender equality, minority rights, and the prevention of torture and discrimination. We collaborated closely with local communities, human rights defenders, government institutions, and international stakeholders to bring attention to these issues, advocate for policy changes, and hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations.

Operating within this context, we recognized the importance of documentation and monitoring of human rights abuses. Our dedicated team worked diligently to gather evidence, conduct research, and provide comprehensive reports on human rights violations in Sri Lanka. These reports served as critical tools for advocacy, shedding light on human rights issues and urging necessary action from relevant authorities.

Our organization also played a crucial role in providing legal assistance and support to victims of human rights violations. We worked with local partners and legal professionals to ensure access to justice for affected individuals and promote a culture of accountability. Through training programs and capacity-building initiatives, we aimed to empower communities and individuals to defend their rights effectively.

The working context presented significant challenges, including limited resources, legal constraints, and risks faced by human rights defenders. However, our dedicated team remained resilient and steadfast in their commitment to promoting and protecting human rights. We express our deepest gratitude to our staff, volunteers, partners, and donors for their invaluable support and unwavering dedication to this endeavour.

Looking ahead, we recognize the continued importance of our work in defending human rights in Sri Lanka. We are committed to further strengthening partnerships, engaging with relevant stakeholders, and employing innovative strategies to address emerging human rights challenges. By working collectively, we remain confident that our efforts will contribute to a more just, inclusive, and rights-respecting society in Sri Lanka.

7.

Performance of 2022

7.1 Legal

The Legal Section of R2L played a crucial role in promoting justice and protecting human rights. Through our dedicated team of legal experts, we handled court cases and provided legal assistance to those in need. Additionally, we actively engaged in advocacy programs aimed at effecting positive changes in the legal system of Sri Lanka, ensuring fair treatment for all. We also prioritized legal education to empower individuals with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. Our commitment to the rule of law drives our efforts towards a just and equitable society.

Legal Interventions Court Cases – 2022

Court	Won	Dismissed	Pending	Total
Magistrate Court	07	-	12	19
District Court	02	-	03	05
High Court	06	-	06	12
Court of Appeal	04	01	02	07
Supreme court	07	02	23	32
Total	26	03	46	75

Cases filed in 2022

Leelani Dayarathne – SCFR180/22

Sisira Kumara – SCFR 118/22

Dharmabandu SCFR 38/22

Susil Indrajith SCFR 89/22

Human Rights First Aid Centres

2005-2007	Gampaha, Matara, Hambantota
2007-2010	Gampaha, Matara, Hambantota, Galle, Puttalam
2010-2012	Gampaha, Matara, Hambantota, Galle, Puttalam, Badulla, Monaragala
2012-2015	Gampaha, Deniyaya, Hambantota, Galle, Anamaduwa, Badulla, Monaragala, Kantale, Hatton
2018-2022	Gampaha, Deniyaya, Matara, Hambantota, Galle, Badulla, Monaragala, Hatton, Ratnapura, Kalutara, Anuradhapura, Kurunegala, Anamaduwa, Trincomalee

Programmes of HRFACs 2022

1) Public awareness campaigns

Leaflet campaign programs were held at Nuwara Eliya, Galle, Badulla, Kurunegala, Gampaha, Matara, Hambantota, Monaragala, Anuradhapura, Puttalam & Trinco districts to raise awareness on human rights and to promote HRFACs.



2) Victims' Meetings

2022/09/18 – Gampaha district

2022/05/03- Anuradhapura district

2022/10/16- Kandy district



3) HRFAC Education programmes

Human rights education programs in 10 districts with the support of National Endowment for Democracy.

Human Rights Defender Groups of Human Rights First Aid Centres

Centre	Members
Gampaha	35
Galle	34
Deniyaya	40
Hambantota	35
Monaragala	32
Badulla	30
Nuwara Eliya	39
Trinco	30
Matara	30
Rathnapura	30
Kurunegala	30
Puttalam	30
Anuradhapura	30

7.2 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The Project and Fundraising section of our organization plays a pivotal role in securing the financial resources necessary for our institution's vital work. This section is dedicated to developing innovative concepts, crafting compelling proposals for funding opportunities, and effectively implementing and maintaining projects. Through strategic partnerships and meticulous planning, we strive to secure the funds required to support our mission and make a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by human rights violations. This annual report highlights our achievements in project development and successful fundraising endeavors.

The main objectives for which the Right to Life Human Rights Center projects were launched in 2022 are as follows.

1. Supporting and advocating to ensure a rights-based society means taking actions and making efforts to promote awareness of human rights, advocate for policies that protect and uphold these rights, and support vulnerable groups to ensure that the rights of every individual in society are respected, protected, and fulfilled.
2. Strengthening collective civil society advocacy to ensure political and civil rights involves working together to build a stronger and more effective advocacy network that promotes and protects the rights of citizens to participate in the political process, express their opinions freely, and be protected from discrimination, harassment, and other forms of civil rights violations.
3. Protecting human rights defenders (HRDs) and advancing inclusion in Sri Lanka entails taking steps to ensure that HRDs can carry out their work safely and effectively and that all members of society are included and have equal access to rights and opportunities, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, or other factors.

4. Addressing violence against peaceful protesters and the aftermath in Sri Lanka involves taking steps to investigate, document, and hold accountable those responsible for the violence while providing support and redress to the victims and promoting measures to prevent the recurrence of such violence in the future.
5. Fostering a culture of moral journalism means promoting ethical reporting practices, including fact-checking and impartiality, to uphold democratic values and ensure that human rights are respected and preserved in the media industry.

The Open Society Foundation (OSF), United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT), Freedom House (FH), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and partner projects with AHRC and Rule of Law Forum are the are our partners who supported us for conducting projects to achieve these goals operating within society in collaboration with our networks. Implementation of some programs delayed in 2022 due to the instability that prevailed in the country due to economic and political crisis. It appears that there was a situation where projects were not able to be completed within their originally scheduled completion time. In order to finish these projects, additional time limits were obtained, extending the deadline by approximately two months and measures were taken to ensure that the projects were ultimately completed. This situation highlights the importance of proper planning and management to meet project deadlines and avoid unexpected delays.

RTL prepared a new strategic plan in 2022. It has led to the development of an annual operational plan as well as a plan for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for the current year. This suggests that the organization is taking a more strategic and systematic approach towards its work, which could potentially enhance its impact and productivity. By developing an annual operational plan, the organization is likely to be better equipped to prioritize its activities and allocate resources accordingly, while the M&E plan will enable it to assess the effectiveness of its programmes and identify areas for improvement. Overall, the development of these plans reflects a commitment to transparency and accountability, as well as a desire to ensure that the organization is using its resources effectively to advance its mission of promoting the right to life and human rights.

7.3 MEDIA

In an ever-connected world, the Media Section of our human rights organization plays a vital role in advancing our mission. Through the power of digital media, we actively promote human rights, shedding light on pressing issues and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. Moreover, we remain committed to advocating for ethical journalism, ensuring accurate and responsible reporting. This section's unwavering dedication fuels our efforts to create a just and equitable society through the dissemination of information and the preservation of human rights.

Salient Milestones on media platforms of R2L

2007	R2L Website
2011	Aithiya Website
2015	Aithiya Youtube
2018	R2L Youtube
2019	Daily Reporter
2021	SLCAT Website
2022	Ada Youtube

2022 Review of Work of Media Sector

2022 is a very important year for Sri Lanka as well as for the Right to Life Human Rights Center and its media department. 2022 is said to be a year spent on the road with the public protests. We as the media section took the information about the people's struggle to a wider audience locally as well as internationally through our web spaces such as YouTube and Facebook. We always focused on the violation of human rights through killings, attacks, torture, arrests, detention and prosecution.

Our media department produced a large number of videos to cover violence, human rights violations and people's voice regarding the situation. We have published many articles on our websites discussing burning social issues. For this, the media section visited the Rambukkana area where a brutal police violence took place three times and collected information.

We also produced a documentary on the attack on the May 09 violence and screened it to the public at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute.

In addition to these main activities, as the media section, we covered the programs of our organization.



Social Media:

Facebook

Aithiya

Examples for some most viewed Facebook videos in 2022

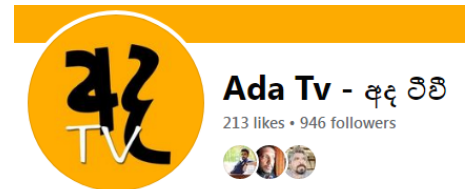
- දණහිසෙන් පහළ | කැරලි මර්ධනය හා පොලීසියේ අවම බලය
<https://www.facebook.com/aithiya.lk/videos/1449347565510444/> = 80K
- “ගිණි තිබ්බට මාව පරද්දන්න බෑ” ඇවෙන්නරා හිමිකරු කතා කරයි
<https://www.facebook.com/aithiya.lk/videos/874041666948068/> = 68.2K



ADA TV

Most viewed Facebook videos in 2022

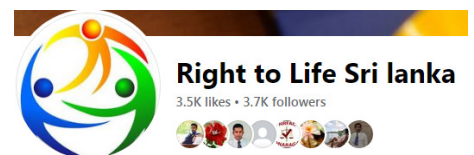
- කළු කපුටා ඉස්සරහට ‘කහ පාට’ වෙන්නත් පුළුවන් - සම්පත් ජයවීර
<https://www.facebook.com/100083179427563/videos/1594230804312142/> = 221.9K
- ගෝඨාභය හය ගැනුන්ට ද?
<https://www.facebook.com/100083179427563/videos/762628738248026/> = 17.6K
- විරෝධය හමුවේ ගෝඨාභය පාර්ලිමේන්තුවෙන් එලියට
<https://www.facebook.com/100083179427563/videos/603637944377775/> = 4.6K



Right to Life

Most viewed Facebook videos in 2022

- මේ බංකොලොත් රාජ්‍ය තුළ මානව හිමිකම් කොමිසමත් විශ්වාස නෑ
<https://www.facebook.com/r2lsrilanka/videos/322238713330450/> = 92.6K
- ඉක්කපාන පොලීසිය නිර්දෝෂී කරුණයකට කොච්චි ගල්වා දස වද දෙයි!
<https://www.facebook.com/r2lsrilanka/videos/1120921575284843/> = 13K
- මානව හිමිකම් ආරක්ෂකයින් සඳහා අධ්‍යාපනික පුහුණු වැඩසටහන
<https://www.facebook.com/r2lsrilanka/videos/593224368872836/> = 3.6K



YouTube

Aithiya YouTube

Most viewed YouTube videos in 2022

- දහමිරන්නගේ ඔලුකට්ට කුඩුකල කළුතර පොලිසිය
<https://youtu.be/PsX6m4iDMSw> = 226,316 views
- ඉත්තපාන පොලිසියේ කොච්චි ලුණු මිරිස
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v83LffgpZsk> = 8,321 views
- අත්තරේ වැඩ කරන්නේ උරග බුද්ධියෙන්
<https://youtu.be/-jZBITuWwAw> = 3,329 views
- රාජපක්ෂලාං එරෙහි පළිගැනීමේ ප්‍රවණ්ඩත්වය අහම්බයක් ද?
<https://youtu.be/onMyqyzlRXU> = 2,518 views
- ඩින් හංදිය කැලඹූ ජාතිවාදී හස්තය
<https://youtu.be/sA6Ds3DWEIA> = 2,451 views



Aithiya Media

@aithiyamedia2463 18.8K subscribers

Right to Life Human Rights Center works

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- ගිණි තිබ්බට මාව පරද්දන්න බෑ | AVENRA හිමිකරු කතා කරයි
<https://youtu.be/jEBT1SGVRrk> = 1,103 views
- මරලා පුනුරුත්තාපනය කරන කන්දකඩු
<https://youtu.be/Jqgnb8TKWjg> = 826 views
- අඟුණකොළපැලැස්ස ප්‍රාදේශීය ලේකම් වසන් කල තොරතුරු, තොරතුරු පනතින් එළියට | RTI
<https://youtu.be/iqQmcUB-UXY> = 627



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@mediarighttolife7131 440 subscribers 61 videos

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Ada YouTube

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- ඩඩ්ලිට මල පතී, මාධ්‍ය සාකච්චාව උණුසුම් වෙයි
<https://youtu.be/MLpitlKkJmk> = 36,351 views
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<https://youtu.be/2mYlAlhWnOE> = 12,436 views



adatv

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TikTok

ADA TikTok

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- ආදරේ අරන් කොළඹට එන්න
https://www.tiktok.com/@adatv_lka/video/7117866586815335707
- 8416 views
- පාලිත බණ්ඩාර යුපුන් අබේකෝන්
https://www.tiktok.com/@adatv_lka/video/7127920032486559003
- 629 views
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https://www.tiktok.com/@adatv_lka/video/7137882381498813723
- 186 views



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7.4 FINANCE

The Finance section of R2L plays a crucial role. It highlights the significant contributions we make by providing financial support for projects and various activities aimed at promoting and protecting human rights. Through meticulous budgeting, transparent financial management, and responsible resource allocation, we ensure that our funds are effectively utilized to create a meaningful impact in advancing social justice and equality. This section showcases our commitment to financial integrity and the sustainable growth of our organization.

#	Year	Donor	Project Title	Total Grant Amount (LKR)
1	2021/2022	Neelan Trichelwam trust (NTT)	Ensuring Justise for Torture Survivors	1,827,600
2	2021/2022	Management Systems International (IDEA)	Strengthening torture prevention mechanisms through community engagement	13,153,506
3	2022	United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT)	You Are Not Alone - Support Torture Victims	5,619,700
4	2022	Freedom House (FH)	Enhancing the Resilience of Civil Society.	6,884,104
5	2022	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	Addressing violence against peaceful protestors and aftermath in Sri Lanka.	8,199,700
6	2022	ALRC	Enabling greater national discourses on poverty alleviation through the strengthening of justice systems and orientation of state institutions towards human rights.	135,000
7	2022	OMCT		662,700
8	2022	AIGSL – FH (Advancing Inclusive Governance in Sri Lanka Project)		648,485
9	2022/2023	Open Society Foundation (OSF)	To protect and promote human rights of the marginalized	23,000,000
10	2022/2023	National Endowment For Democracy (NED)	To consult on and provide input into various current or pending legislation and build the strength and capacity of other CSOs to advocate against anti NGO legislation.	15,351,000
11	2023	UNFVT	You Are Not Alone - Support Torture Victims	7,962,200

8.

Collectives

8.1 Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture

The Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture is a coalition of 28 organizations and individuals committed to ending torture in Sri Lanka. The coalition is led by the Right to Life Human Rights Center and was formed to address the ongoing issue of torture in the country.

One of the key activities of the coalition has been the release of a best practice guidelines handbook on dealing with victims of police torture. This handbook provides guidance to law enforcement officials on how to treat victims of torture and prevent further instances of torture from occurring.

In addition, the coalition has also conducted a fact-finding report on the attack on the people who were protesting for fuel in Rambukkana area on April 19. This report seeks to hold accountable those responsible for the attack and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Another important activity of the coalition is the celebration of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. This day is observed every year on June 26th and is intended to raise awareness about the issue of torture and its impact on victims.

Finally, the coalition has submitted a universal periodic review, which is a process that allows United Nations member states to assess each other's human rights records. Through this review, the coalition hopes to bring attention to the issue of torture in Sri Lanka and advocate for the implementation of measures to prevent and end torture.

Overall, the Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture is a vital coalition working towards the eradication of torture in Sri Lanka. Their activities and initiatives are aimed at creating a more just and humane society for all.

8.2 Lawyers for Human Rights

In 2021, the Right to Life Human Rights Centre worked for establish a Collective of Lawyers who works for the promotion and protection of Human Rights. This collective is still in the initial and expanding stage. In 2022, R2L has done many initiatives for expanding and establishing this collective sustainably.

Lawyers for Human Rights collaborate with the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL), worked for the promotion and protection of Human Rights.

The BASL established a center to provide legal assistance for the torture victims under their Legal Aid Unit. The Coordinator of the said BASL Centre, Mrs. Hashani Dayarathna, Attorney at Law, is also a member of the Lawyers for Human Rights. As a collective we have supported the cases handled by the said BASL Centre and BASL center also supports us.

This Collective held an advocacy session for Lawyers on Rehabilitation Bureau Act which has been vehemently criticized by human rights activists. R2L media team produced a video documentary on the extra judicial killings of Kandakadu rehabilitation center with the support of the lawyers of this collective.

The Lawyers of this collective have supported numerous fundamental rights cases and given legal aid services to several human rights violations including Rambukkana protest attack and the rights violations that took place against Galle Face Aragalaya. Pre- Preparation works also have been done for filing eight fundamental rights cases for the victims of Rambukkana protest attack and victims of Galle Face attacks by the lawyers of this collective.

The Lawyers from regional areas are also members of this collective. Therefore, we try to get legal aid support for the Human Rights First Aid Centres of the R2L through them. In next years this collective has planned to work more publicly establishing enhanced relationship with Human Rights Defenders.

8.3 Journalist for Rights

With the enormous enthusiasm and courage of the staff of the R2L and the Regional Journalists, the complete formation of the Journalists Collective as a legal body has been successful. This Collective was recognized as a Trade Union by the Commissioner General of Labour.

The General Assembly met on 17th of February and elected the office bearers. Mr. K. Sanjeewa has been elected as the President while Mr. Dulan Dasanayaka, AAL, has been elected as the General Secretary.



As the major annual event of the Organization, the International Day for Universal Access for Information was celebrated with the participation of the policy makers, Right to Information Commission members, and Journalists. The event was widely captured by the Media and the Participation of the Youth in the event is remarkable.

As a Journalists' organization, we commemorate the Journalists who lost their lives, disappeared, and harassed in Sri Lanka because of Journalism. An Outdoor Commemoration was held in front of the Vihara Maha Devi Park Colombo on 31st of January, as a joint event with the



Young Journalists Association. Artists also performed in the said event against the suppression of Journalists. 'Let's not forget' is the theme of the Event.

Regional Journalists are a larger portion of the membership of the Journalists for Rights Organization. Therefore In this year, we organized several Regional Programmes with the help of provincial journalists. With the help of the Regional Journalists in Kegalle District, we organized a public seminar on the police attack and

the human rights violations that took place in Rambukkana in 2022.

Then we conducted a series of public seminars in Chillaw and Kurunegala and organized two public seminars there with the participation of youth journalists and Journalism Students.

The President of the Organization K Sanjeewa directed a Documentary on the Rambukkana incident with the help of the Right to Life Human Rights Centre and we screened the film at the said three public seminars.

Another seminar series was organized by us with the Rule of Law Forum in the regional areas, for the education of the Journalists in the regional areas.

As a Special event, We held on the 30th of August, a press conference with the participation of Mrs. Sandya Ekneligoda to commemorate the day against involuntary and enforced disappearances. Several Journalists and Lawyers Participate in it.



8.4 Citizens for Rights

Work done for the year 2022

1. Providing legal assistance and legal advice to citizens who suffer torture and violate basic rights.
2. Taking necessary steps in connection with the cases filed in previous years and discussing the problem situations with the lawyers and victims.
3. Provide legal assistance to victims of Rambukkana incident.
4. Conducting Matara and Kurunegala legal clinics to reduce torture at the provincial level.
5. To create a social discourse in connection with the delay of justice and to bring a plan and the necessary legal reforms and make suggestions for it.



9.

Events & Forums

1. International Torture Day Commemoration – June 27

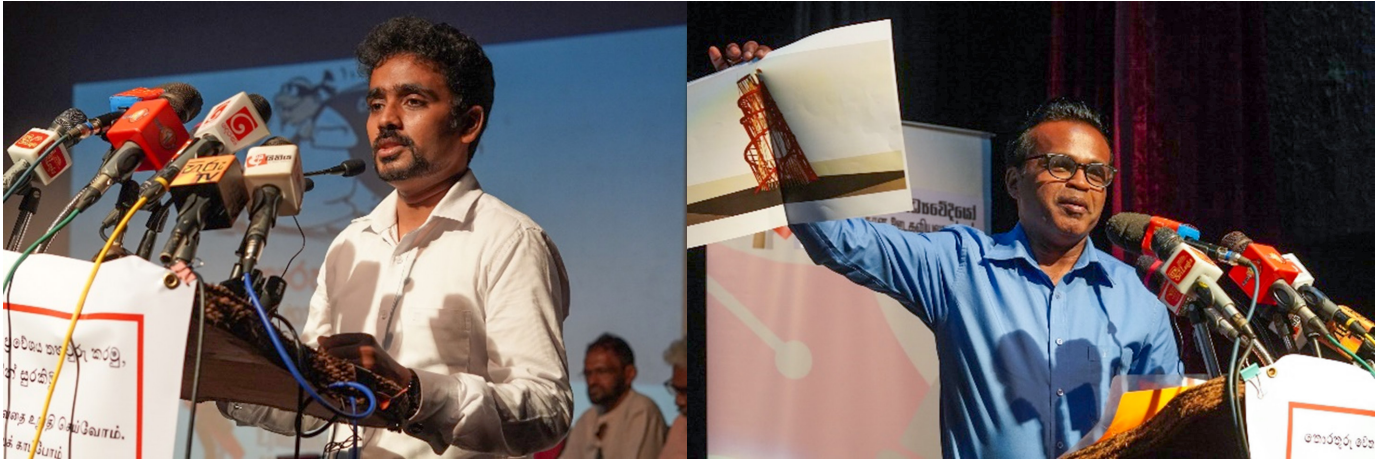
A panel discussion on marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was conducted under the theme “Are you a victim of torture?” on 27th of June 2022 at Cinema Lounge, BMICH. Ms. Ambika Sathkunanathan (AAL), Retired Senior DIG, Mr. Priyantha Jayakodi, Mr. Philip Dissanayake, Executive Director of the Right to Life Human Rights Centre participated as panelists in the discussion. Along with the discussion the study report done by Ms. Dinushika Dissanayake (AAL) on violence against peaceful protests in the face of economic crisis was launched.



2. International Day of Universal Access to Information – September 28

A discourse on the Right to Information was conducted under the theme of “Ensure Access to Information, Protect Rights” on the 28th of September 2022 at Namel Malini Punchi Theatre, Colombo 08. Former speaker Mr. Karu Jayasuriya, Executive Director of Centre for Investigative Journalism Ms. Dilrukshi Handunneththi, Convener of Jaffna Press Club Mr. Thayaparan, Former Deputy Minister of Media Mr. Karu Paranawithana, Editor of Anidda newspaper Mr. K.W Janaranjana (AAL), President of Journalists For Rights, Mr. K Sanjeewa participated as panelists in the discussion. Many journalists as well as civil and political activists took part in this event to make it a success.





3. International Human Rights Day – 10/12/2022

“Ensuring human rights with political and economic reforms” was the theme of the 74th international human rights day which was held at BMICH. Dr. Jehan Fernando, Dr. Nimalka Fernando, Mr Saliya Peiris (PC) – President of Bar Association, Member of Parliament Eran Wickramaratne, Mr. K.W Janaranjana (AAL), and Mr. Philip Dissanayake, Executive Director of Right to Life Human Rights Centre participated as key speakers and resource persons to the event. Apart from that human rights activists, civil and political activists participated in the event. Furthermore, one of the three study reports “Gotagogama Attack” published by the Right to Life Human Rights Centre was presented to the invitees.

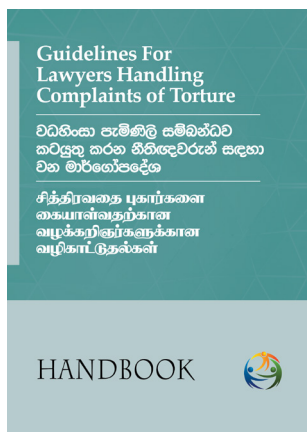


10.

Publications and Productions

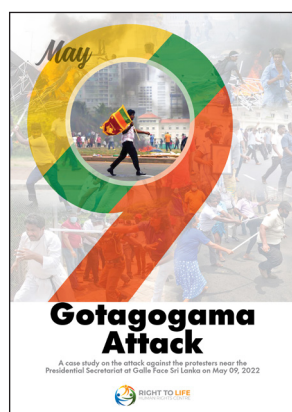
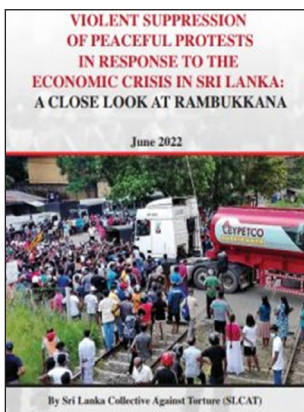
The year 2022 was another year in which many publications and research reports were published by the Right to Life Human Rights Centre like in previous years. A series of case study reports and many guide manuals were published based on the problematic situations and current needs of the country in 2022 in various fields.

Among those publications, we published in early 2022 an unofficial translation of the Executive Summary and Chapter on Prisoners Detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act from the report of the National Study of Prisons published by the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission. This publication primarily focused on the Executive Summary and chapter on prisoners held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of the Human Rights Commission's 2018 study on invisible issues affecting the human rights of prisoners in Sri Lanka. The treatment of the prisoners and the condition of the prisoners detained under the PTA and the basic conclusions of the investigation have been revealed in this publication.



Right to Life Human Rights Center also published Guidelines for Lawyers Handling Complaints of Torture. The purpose of this handbook is to guide lawyers handling cases involving torture, ill-treatment, or degrading treatment by public officials. Experiences of torture, ill-treatment, or degrading treatment place victims and their families in a particularly vulnerable position. Therefore, the primary purpose of this publication was to better equip lawyers to interview, advise and plan their legal strategies for such a victim. And also, the information and guidelines in this book are very helpful for law students, lawyers, human rights activists, and all the people who are interested in these relevant fields.

In addition, four case study reports based on human rights violations, acts of violence, and democratic problems that occurred during the year 2022 were also launched. The attention was drawn to 3 major incidents that happened during that time. They are about the police shooting and attack on civilians in Rambukkana on the 19th of April, the attack on the Galle Face protest site on the 09th of May, and the retaliatory violence that took place across the country after that. In June 2022, the Violent Suppression of Peaceful Protests in Response to the Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka: A Close Look at Rambukkana case study report was published. It was followed by a series of case study reports titled Violence in Rambukkana (a follow-up), the 9th of May Gotagagama Attack, and the 9th of May Retaliatory Attacks.



The violence in Rambukkana report was made as a follow-up regarding the police shooting in Rambukkana and there the study updated current situation of the people who were aggrieved due to the illegal actions of the police. It was also noted whether the victims had received compensation from the government and whether they had received any legal support. In the end, some recommendations have been given based on the study.

In the report regarding the Galle Face attack, attention has been drawn regarding the attack on protest sites near the Presidential Secretariat and the Prime Minister's official residence, the injured people, property damage, as well as the illegal behavior of the police, and the current status of the cases assigned to the court in this regard. Also, some recommendations have been given at the end of the study in this regard.

Also, in the report regarding the retaliatory attacks, attention has been drawn to the killings, torture, property damage, and violence that took place through counter-violence on May 9 and 10. An analysis has also been done on the police inaction, negligence, and the behavior of the media there. Some recommendations have been given at the end of the study regarding the incident.

Through all these publications, a dialogue was created in society and many programs were conducted based on those reports, through which the society was informed and social attention was created about human rights violations and torture.

Case Study Reports - the Violent Suppression of Peaceful Protests in Response to the Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka: A Close Look at Rambukkana, Violence in Rambukkana, Gotagogama Attack, & Retaliatory Attacks

Documentary videos – 5.9 Aragalaya Gana Thawath Kathawak and Awama Balaya Ahinsaka Na

20 video clips to cover violence on May 9th