



**Parliamentary General Elections - 2010.**  
**Second Interim Report – 2010/03/30**

***Introduction:***

The Commissioner of Elections is at present making necessary arrangements to conduct the Parliamentary Election on 08/04/2010, to elect people's representatives for the legislature. Further, 14,088,500 voters are eligible to vote and 7,620 candidates from 22 districts are contesting.

Postal voting, which is the first stage of the Parliamentary elections was held on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2010. As in case of previously held Presidential Elections, at this Parliamentary Elections too, the identity card has been made compulsory. Voters who do not possess identity cards or a temporary identity card, may take with them a color photograph of the size of 1 ½" X 1" and meet the Grama Niladhari or the Estate Superintendent, as the case may be, and collect the temporary identity card. The period of issuing of temporary identity cards was extended up to 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2010. Furthermore, the distribution of official polling cards is already completed.

**Observational Activities:**

Observational activities of the PAFFREL organization will take place in three stages, i.e., pre-election period, Election Day and post-election period, and preliminary activities pertaining to observational activities are being finalized by PAFFREL. Selection of district/ field/ divisional coordinators have been done and preliminary training of them was held at PAFFREL Organization. Further, training of mobile and stationary observers of electoral level are being successfully completed by now. Considerable numbers of observers were engaged in observational activities of postal voting. Furthermore, for All Party Monitoring Committees, which were held at previous elections successfully, training of PAFFREL observers at district and divisional level is also being completed. In addition, as the approval had been received to appoint one observer of PAFFREL organization for each of the result releasing centers, suitable persons have been selected and are being given necessary instructions.

### ***Awareness programs for voters:***

Since the inception of observational activities of election, our organization has been involved in conducting awareness programs for voters. We conducted our awareness program for voters through electronic and print media, on the necessity of the identity card and the process that should be followed in obtaining temporary identity cards, as the identity card was made compulsory for voting. Through same media, we also conveyed our suggestions on selection of candidates. Apart from above, as in case of 2005 Presidential Election, we also conduct awareness programs for voters through street drama, which is a practical art media in two stages: one will be conducted in Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Ampara, Hambantota, Matara and Galle districts and the second stage will be in the Provinces of North and East.

### ***Pre-election Period:***

Immediately after the Presidential Election, PAFFREL Organization drew its attention on observational activities of the Parliamentary Election. Our observational activities commenced even before the official intimation of the Parliamentary Election, and these activities officially commenced after the day of nomination for the Parliamentary Election.

A special complaint service unit was established at the head office of the PAFFREL Organization, during the pre-election period. This unit is functioning successfully. Special attention is being paid at the pre-election period, as the effects of the pre-election period is more important than on the Election Day. Immediate interventions were made on all complaints received by this special complaint unit through all sources. Further, it is the duty of this unit to take follow-up action constantly on these complaints.

### ***Violent Activities:***

What especially could be observed at this election, when compared with the same period of the Presidential Election is a reduction of the level of violent activities.

According to incidents reported to our complaint unit, 179 incidents had taken place during the period from 19.02.2010 to 30/03/30. Out of these incidents, 162 were confirmed and 17 were not confirmed. Out of this total, there were 37 confirmed incidents of assaults of which 4 were cases of assault which had not been confirmed. Compared to other areas, more incidents were reported from the Central Province, and the number recorded was 39. Out of these, most number of incidents was reported from Badulla District and the figure stood at 22.

In addition to above, considerable number of incidents was reported from Kandy, Kurunegala, Ratnapura, Anuradhapura, Colombo etc.

*Table 1*

***No. of incidents – According to the victimized party***

<b>Ser. No.</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Un-confirmed</b>	<b>Total No.</b>
1	United People's Freedom Alliance	53	8	61
2	United National Front	26	2	28
3	Democratic National Alliance	8	-	8
4	Tamil National Alliance	-	1	1
5	Socialist Equality Party	1	-	1
6	People's Freedom Party	1	-	1
7	Independent candidates	3	-	3
8	Muslim Congress	2	-	2
9	People	58	2	60
10	Government officers	4	4	8
11	Government Property	6	2	8
Total		162	14	179

***Confrontations of Supporters of the Same Party:***

One striking aspect that we observed is that confrontations had taken place within the same party and most of the cases reported were assaults. Total number of such incidents was 34 and most was from the Kandy District. Number of confrontations between the supporters of the same party had also been reported to us.

On 26/03/2010, a confrontation had taken place at Walapone Electorate of Nuwar-eliya District, between two groups of supports of the U. P. F. A., and as a result of this incident, 6 persons were admitted to the hospital.

Similarly, a confrontation had taken place at Kalawewa Electorate of Anuradhapura District, between two groups of supporters of the U. P. F. A., and as a result, one person was treated for injuries.

According to available reports, a clash between the supporters of two candidates of U. P. F. A. had taken place at about 9.45 pm on 26/03/2010, at Kosgas Junction on Polgahawela Road in Kegalle District. Injured persons were admitted to the hospital.

In addition to above, confrontations had taken place between supporters of the same party in Kandy, Gampaha, Ratnapura, Matale, Anuradhapura and Ampara Districts. In these areas several party supporters were hospitalized and damages to 4 political party offices had also been reported.

**Table II**

***Hospitalizations – Within the same party***

<b>Ser. No</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>		<b>Un-confirmed</b>	
		<b>No. of times</b>	<b>No. of people</b>	<b>No. of times</b>	<b>No. of persons</b>
1	United People's Freedom Alliance	11	33	--	-
2	United National Alliance	-	-	-	-
3	Democratic National Alliance	-	-	-	-
4	Other	-	-	-	-
Total		11	33		-

Other incidents that were reported were mainly on damages to properties and destruction of political party offices. As for political party confrontations, 31 confirmed incidents and 3 non-confirmed incidents were reported between supporters of the U. P. F. A. Out of this highest number of incidents, were reported from Kandy District. Moreover 4. incidents from Gampaha District and 3 incidents from Matale District had also been reported. District and national level leaders should take necessary steps to control this situation.

***Confrontations within the same party***

**Table No. III**

<b>Ser. No</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Not Confirmed</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	United People's Freedom Alliance	31	3	34
2	United National Front	-	-	-
3	Democratic National Alliance	-	-	-
4	Other			
Total		31	3	34

### ***Illegal Publicity:***

We observe that candidates have resorted to illegal publicity activities violating election laws, severely. Our attention was drawn regarding this matter from the very beginning of the election campaigns and PAFFREL made a number of interventions on illegal political publicity activities. We conducted two Surveys on illegal cut-outs and banners and these reports were submitted to the Commissioner of Elections, for his attention and for further action. As a result Police had made some attempts to remove illegal propaganda. Yet, number of illegal publicity activities is still being conducted in several places in the country even today, and it is observed that most of the candidates act with scant regard for election laws that prevail.

The UPFA had the highest number of illegal cutouts on display as at 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010 which was a record figure of 1255 of which there were 231 very large cutouts of a height of more than 12 ft. The corresponding figure for UNP cutouts was 95 with only 17 with a height of more than 12 ft.

As for illegal banners that were on display on the above indicated date, UPFA had 263 while UNP had 16 such banners on display.

We also observed that candidates had engaged educational institutions, especially schools, for their publicity work.

### ***Misuse of State Property and State Authority:***

As in case of the Presidential Election, we observe misuse of state property and unlawful influence and intervention at this election as well. Misuse of government buildings, vehicles and services of officers was observed. We got several complaints in writing and also complaints received through the telephone were very frequent.

It has also been reported that due to the misuse of C. T. B. buses, commuters had to face difficulties. Further, misuse of state authority is taking place through the process of appointments, transfers and interdictions, and significant number of such incidents has been reported to us during this period. Especially incidents of this nature in a Department like Police, which provides an active contribution in the election, will have a direct bearing on fair and free elections.

### ***Casting of Postal Voting:***

There were 415,432 eligible postal voters at this Parliamentary Election. Accordingly, postal votes were cast on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, total of 14,314 more postal voters were eligible to vote at this election, compared to the Presidential Election held recently. Most number of postal

voting was from Kurunegala District, which was 43,281, while lowest was from Vavuniya District, of which the figure was 4,714. Further, there were deprivations of postal voting due to the carelessness of some heads of Departments, who had failed to submit applications for postal voting in time. Number of rejected postal voters as a result was 22,861. Heads of Departments should take the responsibility for this deprivation of postal voting, which had taken place due to their lackadaisical attitude, and legal action should be taken against them.

More than 1,000 persons were engaged in observational activities of the postal voting process. Illegal publicity work had been observed in number of areas. These were especially observed in Kalutara and Matale. Further, non-displaying of official lists were reported from 14 places. Another feature was the absence of polling agents in about 45% of postal polling centers, and in some centers, there were no representatives at all.

PAFFREL Organization engaged about 1,000 trained observers to polling stations where postal voting undertaken, especially at places which were politically sensitive and also where large number of voters were involved, such as in certain Police Stations, Army Camps, and Zonal Education Offices etc. During the first two days, about 45 % had used this voting facility.

#### ***Observations Pertaining to Results Releasing Centers:***

Due to the controversial situation experienced after the release of election results of Presidential Election, we made a request to the Commissioner of Elections to allow us to observe activities within the counting centers. Commissioner of Elections has responded stating that due to constraints on space inside counting centers, it is not possible to accommodate our request, but has allowed us to do observations at the centers where results are to be released. Thus, we have completed the selection of persons for this purpose for each district and during next few days they are due to be given a proper training. In addition we are in the process of preparing and printing a booklet, indicating the process that takes place within a counting center, and this book would facilitate representatives of political parties to fulfill their expected role, within a counting center.

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#### ***Position in North and East of the Country***

As in case of the Presidential Election as regards the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections no visible interest is noted among the people of these areas. Election related publicity activities could be observed, using posters and cut-outs in Vavuniya District.

Compared to other districts, very little election related incidents had been reported up to 30/03/2010. When two candidates of the government party were campaigning at the Menik Farm Camp, it is reported that people of this camp had threatened them.

### ***Facilitating Programs:***

Most of the persons, who had been displaced in North and East, due to the terrorist issue, now have been returned to their original villages, and few more are still living in internally displaced persons' villages. These villages are located in Vittikulam Divisional Secretariat Division of Vavuniya District. PAFFREL Organization has launched an awareness program to facilitate voters of these villages to vote at the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections. This will be undertaken in six villages (Zone 0, zone 1, zone 2, zone 3, zone 4, and zone 6). For this purpose we have established one divisional office at, No. 91, Mill Avenue in Vavuniya District and two branch offices at Vettikulam Division. Two supervisors and eight Assistant Officers are being attached to these offices.

For those eligible voters who are not having valid identity cards to cast their votes, photographs required for their temporary identity cards that are issued by the Commissioner of Elections will be made available, free of charge. The Commissioner of Elections has granted necessary approvals for the officers to enter these temporary camps for this purpose.

Awareness creation meetings for small groups are being conducted by these officers for eligible voters, to identify their polling stations as allocated by the Commissioner of Elections to cast their vote. Through this program, they will be facilitated to prove their identity and cast their votes. Although about 45,000 voters who have applied, have been allowed to cast their votes at the respective alternate polling stations, number of persons who had applied for this facility is less, due to the complexity of the of the application form which they have to submit to seek an alternate polling station and also due to their unawareness on their voting right.

In addition to the above activity, awareness programs were implemented for the benefit of voters through posters and banners and also through the conduct of street drama by our team, with the assistance of the Center for Performing Arts.

Displaced voters numbering 45,692 had applied this time to cast their vote. Highest number is from those who are living in Puttalam District, which stood at 26,582. Further requests have been made by voters of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura and Trincomalee to cast their votes in Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Jaffna, Vavuniya, Batticaloa and Ampara Districts respectively. The internally displaced persons who are living in camps in Vavuniya are also being made aware of this facility by PAFFREL organization.

#### ***Table No. 4.***

***No. of displaced voters, based on original hometown.***

<i>Ser. No.</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>No. of Voters</i>
01	Jaffna	13181
02	Vanni	32423
03	Batticaloa	55
04	Digamadulla	1
05	Trincomalea	32
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>45692</b>

*Table No. 5.*

*No. of displaced voters, according to the district that they have become qualified to vote.*

<i>Ser. No.</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>No. of voters</i>	<i>No. of polling stations.</i>
01	Colombo	111	1
02	Gampaha	567	6
03	Kalutara	150	2
04	Jaffna	408	4
05	Vanni	15,817	31
06	Batticaloa	9	1
07	Puttalam	26,582	37
08	Anuradhapura	2,048	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>45,692</b>	<b>88</b>

*A Comparison with the Parliamentary Election of 2004:*

When compared with incidents that had taken place in the pre-election period, 179. incidents had been reported, with 9 days ahead of the 2010 elections, and this is a lesser number than the figure of 2004 as indicated below.

*Table No 6*

<b>Ser. No.</b>	<b>Nature of the Incident</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2010</b>	
			<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Not Confirmed</b>
01	Homicides	5	-	
02	Attempted homicides	2	-	
03	Assaults	89	37	4
04	Thefts	5	-	-
05	Abductions	2	1	-
06	Attempted abductions	-	-	-
07	Bomb-throwing	-	2	-
08	Thefts & frightening	74	5	-
09	Shootings	-	1	1
10	Damages to fixed assets	51	10	-
11	Damages to mobile assets		4	1
12	Causing damages and arson (to political party offices)	-	21	1
13	Offences under election laws	44	-	-
14	Police assistance to do offences under election laws	9	-	-
15	Arson	12	-	-
16	Removing and putting fire on cut-outs and banners	-	6	1
17	Disturbing political campaigns	-	6	-
18	Appointment, transfer and promotion of government officers	-	-	2
19	Interdiction of government officers	-	-	2
20	Partisan of government officers	-	-	1
21	Misuse of state property and state authority	-	9	2
22	Treatment with political objectives	-	1	-
23	Illegal political campaigns (offences under election laws)	-	44	1
24	Objections and threats by security sectors	-	-	-
25	Pressurizations by security sectors	-	1	-
	Common	-	1	-
26	Others	-	12	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>17</b>

According to reports received regarding incidents, there had been a significant reduction at divisional level, during pre-election periods of Parliamentary Elections of 2004 compared with 9 days ahead of the Parliamentary Elections of 2010.

*Table No 7*

<b>Ser. No.</b>	<b>Parliamentary Election - 2004</b>		<b>Parliamentary Election – 2010</b>		
	<b>Electoral Area</b>	<b>No. of Incidents</b>	<b>Electoral Area</b>	<b>No. of Incidents</b>	
				<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Not Confirmed</b>
01	Hiniduma	43	Udunuwara	14	-
02	Kalawewa	12	Passara	9	1
03	Kolonna	11	Kelaniya	7	-
04	Kekirawa	10	Hali _ Ela	6	1
05	Nivithigala	8	Kalawewa	5	-
06	Thissamaharamaya	8	Galle	5	-
07	Galle	7	Maskeliya	5	-
08	Mathugama	7	Batticaloa	4	1
09	Ampara	6	Kothmale	4	-
10	Baddegama	6	Nikaweratiya	4	-
11	Habaraduwa	6	Badulla	3	1

According to the above Table, Hiniduma in Galle District was observed as the electoral district where highest number of incidents had taken place at the Parliamentary Election of 2004, while at the Parliamentary Election 2010, Udunuwara could be identified as the division in which the highest number of incidents had taken place.