



“I was harrassed by TID” -Tissainayagam

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[Daily Mirror By T. Farook Thajudeen]

Senior Journalist Jeyaprakash Sittampalam
Tissainayagam testified before Colombo High Court
Judge Ms. Deepali Wijesundera in the inquiry to

ascertain whether the confession made by him to the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) was a voluntarily one or made under pressure and threat.

The witness examined by his counsel Anil Silva said on Wednesday (5), said that he arrived at the TID on the March 7 to visit his friend Jasiharan and his wife, who had been taken into custody the previous day.

He was allowed inside after having waited for around an hour. Once he got inside the TID premises, a police officer had grabbed the mobile phone he was carrying. When Tissainayagam had asked for the mobile phone back he was told 'you are now inside the TID, it is not for you to ask for your phone back, but your job instead should be to get out of this place'

Later he was taken to the section head Inspector Janakantha's room at which time he was questioned on how he knew Jasiharan.

Tissainayagam had at this point requested for a lawyer at which Janakantha had laughed. Afterwards OIC Prasanna De Alwis questioned him. Once again, he (Tissainayagam) had requested to have a lawyer to be present to which the OIC had replied 'we are showing you respect by offering you a chair to sit on. Don't take advantage of this treatment'.

Director TID Nandana Munasinghe, while talking to Tissainayagam, referred to his friendship with the journalist Sivaram. Mr. Munasinghe specifically reminded of the way that Sivaram met his death - his body was later discovered in some bushes in close proximity to the Parliament premises. He had been alarmed at this line of questioning, as he did not understand what was meant by it.

Further questioning was carried out by OIC Prasanna De Alwis and Zubair of the TID. At one point, Tissainayagam said Zubair had walked in while the questioning was going on and had stated that if he (Tissainayagam) continues to lie in this manner he would slap him across the face so that one ear would come out of the other side.

Tissainayagam said on May 9th he was threatened by Sergeant Razik, telling him that what happened to Jasiharan that morning would happen to him. He said that he had seen Jasiharan crying in the OIC's room that morning and later seen him with a swollen face and bloodshot eyes. Razik then dictated a statement that Tissainayagam wrote in his own handwriting.

He said he was examined by several JMOs in their offices and he never mentioned to them about the assaults or the mental stress he underwent because during the medical examinations by the JMOs the TID officers used to wait out side the JMO's office and the office had swing doors.

He said he was unaware of certain clauses in the affidavit signed by him, which was submitted to Supreme Court with his FR petition.

Counsel Anil Silva with M.A. Sumanthiran Nalin Ladduwahetti and Ms. Sharmaine Gunaratne appeared for Journalist Tissainayagam. State Counsel Sudarshana de Silva with Miss. Samalka Samarasinghe appeared for the TID.

Further hearing was put off for today