

Media Statement – 21. 06. 2017

Re: Statement made by the Justice Minister on Attorney-at-Law, Lakshan Dias

Free Media Movement vehemently condemns the speech by the Justice Minister Wijedasa Rajapakse, which was made based on the statement by Lakshan Dias, Attorney-at-Law and a human rights activist regarding the violent attacks against minority religious groups in Sri Lanka. The Minister’s statement is a severe threat to the freedom of speech and expression as well as religious freedom.

Free Media Movement, as an organization stands for freedom of expression including social democracy and media freedom, questions the Minister whether this is the transformation for democracy and good governance achieved by the Sri Lankan society on 08th January 2015.

In a situation where there are allegations on attacks on religious centers, the due process should be inquiring it from the IGP or any other responsible authority, not from a leader of another Mission. Without following such process, threatening Lakshan Dias for removing him from his profession is entirely unacceptable.

This statement by the Minister has exceeded the limitations of the behavior of a responsible and moral individual and we emphasize the fact that it is an intimidation against the right to freedom of expression.

Therefore, no matter the accuracy of the statement by Mr. Lakshan Dias, Free Media Movement emphasizes his right to freedom of speech and expression while affirming that the Justice Minister’s behavior is a menace to the rule of law and the democracy of the country.



C. Dodawatta
Convener



Dileesha Abesundara
Secretary