



අතුරුදහන් වූ තැනැත්තන් පිළිබඳ කාර්යාලය
காணாமல் போன ஆட்கள் பற்றிய அலுவலகம்
OFFICE ON MISSING PERSONS

MEDIA RELEASE

28 FEBRUARY 2019

One year on: The Office on Missing Persons

The Office on Missing Persons (OMP) is marking one year since its establishment with a series of events during the month of March 2019. Created under the Office on Missing Persons (Establishment, Administration and Discharge of Functions) Act, No. 14 of 2016, it was operationalised with the appointment of its members on 28 February 2018.

The OMP has a primary mandate to search for and trace the tens of thousands of missing and disappeared persons. Thus, over the past year, it has strived to operationalize its office through a series of activities including planning the structure and processes of the organisation, developing protocols, engaging in outreach programmes to families of the missing and disappeared and state officials, in addition to initiating inquiries, making interventions in specific cases, undertaking a communication campaign to raise awareness on the disappearance issue, and making recommendations for legal and policy reform. In August 2018 the OMP issued an interim report proposing interim relief to the families as well as recommendations in the quest for justice and truth. The OMP calls on the Government to ensure the early implementation of its recommendations.

The OMP is committed to ensuring greater access of the office to families of the missing and disappeared and is planning to establish regional offices in different parts of the country. Coinciding with the first-year anniversary of the OMP, it will establish two offices in Mannar and Matara in the month of March. The Regional Office in Mannar will be at No. 5 Station Road, Mannar and the Regional Office in Matara at 54, Dharmarama Road, Fort, Matara.

One key aspect of searching and tracing the whereabouts of the missing and the disappeared, is through excavations and the identification of human remains, which the OMP seeks to undertake with the assistance of state agencies, families and others. In order to generate greater public understanding of the required processes, the OMP will be hosting a lecture on 'Respecting Humanity in the scientific search for truth' by Dr. Luis Fondebrider, an internationally renowned forensic anthropologist who is the current President of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology

Team. The lecture is scheduled to be held on Saturday 09 March 2019 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) at 5 pm.

The OMP recognizes the complex nature of the task of clarifying the fate of the missing. In the midst of significant challenges and delays, the OMP will continue to strive to uphold its mandate and work towards ensuring that the rights of the victims and their families are better protected.