

## Press Release

### **CEJ and “Siyane Jalaya Syurakeeme Jana Neguma” file legal action seeking justice for people suffered by water pollution in Rathupaswala**

**26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 Colombo, Sri Lanka.** Today Court of Appeal issued notice to the Central Environmental Authority (CEA), Board of Investment (BOI) and Venigross (Pvt) Limited after considering the writ application case filed by the Centre for Environmental Justice(CEJ) and a representative of “Siyane Jalaya Syurakeeme Jana Neguma (SJSS)” regarding the pollution caused by the factory.

CEJ, and the SJSS filed the Writ application bearing No.C.A.385/13 in Court of Appeal on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2013, seeking a writ of mandamus compelling the Central Environmental Authority and Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, to bring justice to the residents of Rathupaswala by taking legal action against the Venigros (Pvt) Ltd, for the pollution of the inland waters and soil and for violating the terms and conditions of the EPL in the performance of the statutory duty in compliance with the provisions of the National Environmental Act No.47 Of 1980, as amended .

Petitioners have stated in their petition that the CEA and the BOI has failed to undertake investigations and inspections to ensure compliance with this Act and to investigate complaints relating to non-compliance with the provision of the National Environment act as well as the non-compliance for the conditions of the EPL. Also that the Venigros (Pvt) Ltd has been disposed industrial effluents to the environment and especially the hazardous waste produced to the environment without being properly treated.

Furthermore, it is stated that some residents from the Nedungamuwa area had complained that they are unable to use their well water for consumption and they have been subjected to various diseases due to polluted water discharge by the Venigros (Pvt) Ltd. Petitioners have pleaded to issue an order in the nature of a writ of Mandamus to relocate the factory in consideration of the conclusion of the report prepared by the National Water Supply and Drainage Board.

The case was supported on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and court issued notice to be returnable on 27.01.2013.

The bench chaired by the Justice Anil Gunarathne.

Senior counsel Mr. Ravindranath Dabare with Attorney-at-Law Mrs. Nilmal Wickramasinghe appeared for the petitioners.

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