



Sri Lanka

Silencing dissent

7 February 2008

AI Index: ASA 37/001/2008

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Published by:
Amnesty International International Secretariat
Peter Benenson House
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 0DW
United Kingdom

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Title: *Sri Lanka: Silencing dissent*
AI Index: ASA 37/001/2008

Original language: English

Printed by: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, United Kingdom

Front cover image: Schoolgirl parade on Independence Day, February 2007

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Back cover images: Media protest, December 2007

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Sri Lanka

Silencing dissent

Media workers in Sri Lanka are in great danger. The intensity of fighting and attacks by both the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has increased dramatically since April 2006. Journalists who report on the conflict increasingly fear for their safety against the backdrop of an armed conflict in which all parties are responsible for serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law abuses.

At least 10 media workers have been unlawfully killed since the beginning of 2006. Another has allegedly disappeared in the custody of the security forces, while others have been tortured and arbitrarily detained under emergency regulations granting the government sweeping powers.

In some cases attacks have been carried out by Tamil armed groups apparently acting with the consent of the security forces. A climate of impunity persists and not one investigation has led to those believed responsible for the killing of journalists and other media workers being brought to justice.

The Sri Lankan authorities must act. They must send out a clear message that attacks, threats and harassment of media workers will not be tolerated. Amnesty International calls on the government to ensure thorough independent investigations into the killings of all journalists.

Embargoed for
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