

**TAMIL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS - TCHR/CTDH**  
**CENTRE TAMOUL POUR LES DROITS DE L'HOMME**  
(Established in 1990)

(UN accredited NGO to the World Summit on Information Society and the Warsaw Conference)

[www.tchr.net](http://www.tchr.net)

Ref : SL68/PR/2013

21 February 2013

**CONTINUED HARASSMENT OF JOURNALISTS IN SRI LANKA**

According to international media watch dogs Sri Lanka remains a country that arrests, tortures, kidnaps, kills and disappears journalists. All this is done by "unknown/unidentified gunmen". Who are they?

Locally it is well known that these so-called "unknown/unidentified gunmen" are none other than Sri Lankan security forces working under direct orders from the Defence Secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, brother of the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

In the name of 'terrorism', Sri Lankan security forces in their uniforms have done, and are doing whatever they like in the North and East of Sri Lanka. There is no doubt that the North and East are under military occupation. Other parts of the country are also under military rule, but carried out by security personnel in civil attire.

Numerous civilians and members of civil society, especially journalists, suffer at the hands of the security forces.

The latest victim of these attacks was **Sunday Leader investigative journalist Faraz Shaukatally**. Last Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> February, he was shot and injured at his home in the capital Colombo, by so called unknown / unidentified gunmen.

We, TCHR, condemn this attack and the continued barbaric attacks by the government of Sri Lanka and its security forces on independent journalists who speak truth about the situation in Sri Lanka.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and many international organisations have spoken out about the attack on journalist Faraz Shaukatally.

What did he do to be targeted by "unknown/unidentified gunmen"? Being an investigative journalist he spoke about the realities in Sri Lanka.

Due to harsh and inhumane treatment by the government in Sri Lanka, many English, Tamil and Singhalese journalists have been killed or disappeared. Some sought asylum in foreign countries. When honest and credible journalists face all this harsh treatment at the hands of the government, some pro-government media and people come forward to justify the activities of the government and its security forces.

Four years ago the *Sunday Leader* Editor Lasantha Wickrematunga was murdered. His wife Sonali, also a journalist and the editor of the *Morning Leader*, escaped from Sri Lanka after death threats. Lasantha Wickrematunga's successor, Frederica Jansz, very recently sought asylum in a foreign country. And now this attempted murder of the *Sunday Leader* investigative journalist Faraz Shaukatally.

January 24<sup>th</sup> marked the 3<sup>rd</sup> year since Cartoonist Prageeth Ekneligoda disappeared. His wife and two sons are still waiting for his return. In the recent past, popular Tamil journalist Dharmeratnam Sivaram (Taraki) and many others were assassinated.

What is the message that emerges from this brutal treatment of journalists in Sri Lanka? Could all this happen in a country where democracy and good governance prevail?

**Situation of Journalists in Sri Lanka**

- 25 - Journalists killed since 1992
- 23 - Journalists fled from Sri Lanka
- 01 - Journalist missing

**HEAD OFFICE:**

Tamil Centre for Human Rights - TCHR/CTDH  
9, rue des Peupliers - 95140 Garches les Gonesse - FRANCE  
**Contact person : S. V. Kirubakaran – General Secretary**  
Tel/Fax: + 33 1 42 67 54 36 -  
Email: [tchrgs@hotmail.com](mailto:tchrgs@hotmail.com) / [tchgs@tchr.net](mailto:tchgs@tchr.net)

**TCHR-UK**

Tamil Centre for Human Rights - TCHR/CTDH  
PO Box 182, Manchester M16 8ED, UK  
**Deirdre McConnell–Dir. Inter. Prog**  
Fax: + 44 161 860 4609 -  
Email: [tchrdip@hotmail.com](mailto:tchrdip@hotmail.com) /